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Editor's Note: The President was in Englewood, NJ, on June 30, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Statement on Action To Prosecute for the Killing of United States Department of Agriculture Inspectors

June 23, 2000

Today the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of California filed a complaint charging an individual with the intentional killing of two U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors in the course of their duties. I want to commend Federal and local law enforcement for working so quickly to investigate and prosecute this important case. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of the victims, their families, and the community during this difficult time.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a California State Democratic Party Reception in Los Angeles, California

June 23, 2000

The President. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, before I start my speech, there's one other thing I want to say. There's somebody else here I want to introduce, and I want to ask to come up here.

When we nominated Al Gore—we haven't formally, yet, but when he got through the primaries—he's the only candidate in our party's history in a contested primary, including me, who went all the way through the primaries and didn't lose a single one. And I want to bring up Bill Daley's partner, Donna Brazile, our campaign manager for the Gore campaign. Come on up here, Donna. Thank you.

I thank Joe Andrew for his leadership. And I want to thank Terry McAuliffe for coming in here to help us get this convention financed and get it off to a good foot. It sounds strange, but I'm grateful to Bill Daley for leaving my Cabinet—[*laughter*]—because he's going to lead the Vice President to victory. So I thank them all.

I want to say a couple of things about—first, I thank Art for reminding you that I kept my word—[*laughter*]—and I'm glad to be here. In 1995 a Presidential scholar named Thomas Patterson surveyed all the campaign commitments made by the last five Presidents and said by '95, I had already kept a higher percentage of my commitments than my five predecessors. And we've got a higher percentage now, thanks to you, and I thank you for that.

I would like to say just a few things to you. First, I am grateful that we are having this convention which will be, as you know, my farewell convention as President, in the State of California.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'm not going to shrivel up. I'll be around. [*Laughter*] But listen, I'm grateful that we're having this in California because so much of the texture of my campaign in '92—the energy, the ideals, the passion—was borne out of the inspiration I received from the pain and the faith, from the longing and the idealism that I saw in California in 1992, when we had a terrible economy, a profoundly divided society, and a level of political rhetoric that was making it worse.

And I asked you to give me a chance to turn it around. And starting with the California Democrats, you did. And you didn't give up on me. The day after I won the Democratic primary in California, they said, "How dumb are they? Clinton is in third place in the polls." There were all these people talking about the polls. They remember it. In June, I was in third place, at 25 percent. I've been buried more times than the undertaker's old suit. [*Laughter*] But you didn't quit because you had this idea that we could do something together to make a difference.

And then, after I got in, California had earthquakes, fires, floods—[*laughter*]—everything but the lotus arrived for you. [*Laughter*] And we just kept plugging away and didn't give up. And now, we had to rebuild a freeway, rebuild Cal State, Northridge. We had to do a lot of things, but I did try to help. And I appreciate that.

So 7½ years later, thanks to your work and your faith and the support I got from the people of California, along with Al Gore and our whole team, we've got the longest economic expansion in history and the highest homeownership in history and over 22 million new jobs and the lowest Hispanic- and African-American unemployment rate ever recorded and a 20-year low in poverty, a 25-year low in crime, a 32-year low in the welfare rolls. The air is cleaner. The water is cleaner. The food is safer. We set aside more land to be protected in history in the lower 48 States than anybody but the two Roosevelts. And we had the most diverse administration, the most diverse appointments to the courts in history, and we've been a force for peace and freedom and decency around the world. I'm proud of what we did in Kosovo—that caused me to have to miss my last chance at you. It made a difference. We stood up against ethnic cleansing.

Now, I'm grateful for the chance you gave me to serve and to do that. What do you want to do with that? That's the big issue in this election. In 1992 we knew what the deal was. I mean, the economy was in the ditch; California was in trouble; all the golden era seemed to be washed away. We knew what we had to do. We had to turn this country around. We had to prove it would work again. We had to pull people together. We had to move forward. It turned out it worked.

Now, the big question now is, what are we going to do with our prosperity? And what I want to say to you is a couple of things. Number one, I appreciate your support for me, but I didn't do it alone. Al Gore has done more good for more people as the Vice President than anybody that ever held that position, ever, by far. By far.

When no—not one—Republican would vote for our economic plan, he cast the tie-breaking vote. When we knew 6 years ago we had to do something to close the digital divide, we came here in California, began to wire the schools. At the time, only 16 percent of our schools were connected to the Internet; today, 95 percent are—only 3 percent of our classrooms connected; today, 75 percent are. He did that. He led our empowerment zone program, which has brought opportunity to poor areas. He managed a lot of our foreign policies. He cast the tie-breaking vote in the Senate on whether we would try to close the gun show loophole, and have child trigger locks. No Vice President in the history of this country ever had such a big impact in the Office of Vice President. A lot of them went on to be great Presidents—Teddy Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson—but none of them had any impact as Vice President remotely approximating what this man has done. He is the best qualified person to run for President in my lifetime.

Now, the second thing I want to say is, we could have been compassionate and caring and hard working and eloquent. And if our ideas had been wrong, we still wouldn't be in very good shape. Now, we have tested our ideas. They said—the other side, our friends in the Republican Party—when we presented our economic plan, it would wreak havoc; it would cause a disaster; the deficit would go up; the economy would be in the tank. That's what they said. If you will notice, they're not running their quotes about my economic policy in this election. [*Laughter*]

Then when I was advocating the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban and the 100,000 police they said, "Oh, these cops won't do any good," and, "This law won't keep any guns out of the hands of criminals." And now we've had a 35 percent drop in gun crime and a 25-year low in crime and a 30-year low in homicide, and you don't hear them criticizing our crime policy publicly anymore. I don't know why they're not publicizing their positions on all these issues.

And every time we tried to have cleaner air, cleaner water, set aside more land, you know, it was a "land grabber;" it was going to "break up the economy." And now you don't hear that.

So the second thing I want to say to you is this. This is a real important election. It's just as important as '92 and '96 were. What

a country does with its prosperity is just as stern a test, if not a sterner one, of our character and our judgment as what we do in times of distress.

In my lifetime we have never had a chance like this. The last longest economic expansion we had in American history was in the 1960's. When I graduated from high school in 1964, I thought it was going to go on forever. I didn't think anybody could mess it up. [*Laughter*] I thought—I did. And I was optimistic. Lyndon Johnson was my President. I thought all these civil rights problems were going to be solved in the courts and the Congress, not in the streets. I didn't believe we'd get all mired down in Vietnam.

Four years later, when I graduated from college, it was 2 days after Robert Kennedy was killed here, 2 months after Martin Luther King was killed, 9 weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for President because the country was too divided. And just a few months later, the longest economic expansion in American history was history. Nothing lasts forever, folks. We're going to be judged by what we do with what we have built over the last 8 years. That's what this election is about.

Now, I will remind you, there are differences between us and the Republicans—the second point I want to make. [*Laughter*] But they matter. What I'm saying is—and it's not like we hadn't had a test run here. [*Laughter*]

So the three points are: It's an important election; there are real differences; the third point you've got to remember is, only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. [*Laughter*] Why is that? Because we've had a test run here. They want to talk about how the economy is so prosperous, and we've got this big projected surplus so we can spend it all on a tax cut and on their plans to partially privatize Social Security and build a missile defense system and that kind of stuff. We can just spend it all.

Well, I would like to remind you that that word is "projected." Al Gore says, "No, no. Let's save at least 20 percent by taking your Medicare taxes and walling it off and using it to pay down the debt and protect it for Medicare, because it may not materialize. And we don't want to go back to the bad old days of deficits and high interest rates and putting California's economy at risk and America's economy at risk."

Now, it's not like we hadn't had a test. We did it their way for 12 years and our way for 8 years, and our way works better. People need to understand that.

Now, look at crime. They tried to abolish my program to put 100,000 police on the street. They opposed the Brady bill. They opposed the assault weapons ban. They won't close the gun show loophole. Now they're trying not to do the 50,000 more police that I want. And it's not like we hadn't had a test. We tried it their way for 12 years and our way for 8 years. Our way works better. Crime goes down more.

And they say if they get in they will reverse my order for 43 million roadless acres in the national forests. The Audubon Society says it's the most significant conservation move in the last 50 years. Al Gore says, "I'll keep it, but I'll do better. I'll build on it." And they say all this stuff we're trying to do to clean up the air and the water is just terrible for the economy. I tell you what, if I was trying to hurt the economy with my environmental policies, I've done a poor job of it. [*Laughter*]

So they say they won't be so tough on this clean air, clean water, safe food, all this environmental stuff. Now wait a minute. We tried it their way for 12 years and our way for 8 years, and we proved you can make the economy very strong and make the environment cleaner at the same time. It's not like we hadn't had a test.

So I want you to tell people this: It's an important election; elections are about the future; there are real differences. We want you to know what the differences are.

And I want to make this last point. It's also important that we have a leader who understands the future. Al Gore understands the implications of the information technology revolution. He understands the implications of the foreign policy changes happening all around the world that will affect our children's lives. He understands the challenges that ordinary families face in this new economy. He and Tipper Gore were holding an annual family conference in Nashville, Tennessee, even before I named him to be

Vice President. And so much of the things that we have done, from family and medical leave to parity for mental health in health insurance policies, are things that came out of the work he and Tipper did.

So people ask me—I say, "I'm for Vice President Gore because he'll keep the prosperity going, because he'll do more to spread it to people and places left behind and to help all American families, and because he understands the future and can lead us there. I am for the Democrats in the Senate and the House races." And you're going to give us, by the way, four or five new ones out here in California alone. And I'm for them. And I have a special interest in one in New York, as you know. [*Laughter*] But I'm for them because we've had a test run here.

And if you listen to this rhetoric in the campaign, you know the Republicans never talk about their primaries. They're hoping you'll forget that and have amnesia. [*Laughter*] And all the commitments they made, and all the things they said, and they really don't want to talk about, they want this to be a blur. They want you to think that nobody could mess up this economy. Take your tax cut and run.

And it's kind of like a—they kind of want you to say, "Well, their fraternity had it for 8 years. Give it to ours for a while." [*Laughter*] Let me tell you something, this is about people's lives, folks. This is about our children's future. You've got to go out and tell people in California and beyond California, because we've been here a lot. I've been here more than any President ever had. [*Laughter*] You know what's going to—you live this, and you have—here in California, you have a searing memory of what it was like in 1992. You remember what it was like.

So you need to reach out across the country. And in this convention and after the convention, you need to say to the American people, "Hey, we don't want a negative campaign. We want a positive campaign. We don't want to say anything bad about our opponents, personally. We want to assume that they're honorable, and therefore, they will do exactly what they say." [*Laughter*] But we don't want them to be too selective with you in pointing out our honest differences. So we want this to be a campaign in which we honestly expose our differences, and we measure those differences against the experience we have had.

And then we say to people—you've got to make this about the future. We may never have a time like this in our lifetime, and we owe it to the children in this room and throughout this country to build them the future of our dreams. We can do that.

And if we make that the issue, then Al Gore and his new running mate will be elected, my favorite candidate for the Senate and a lot more will be elected, and Dick Gephardt will be the Speaker of the House. And we will get what we should get because we have delivered for the American people.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:45 p.m. in the Century Room at the Century Plaza Hotel & Spa. In his remarks, he referred to William M. Daley, general chair, and Donna L. Brazile, campaign manager, Gore 2000; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; and Art Torres, chair, State Democratic Party. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Saxophone Club Reception in Hollywood, California

June 23, 2000

The President. Well, thank you very much. I never thought I'd live to hear Bill Maher say those things. [*Laughter*] And he said it in front of the press, which means he'll have to dump on me twice as hard next week. [*Laughter*] But it'll be worth it. I love it. Thank you, Bill. Thank you, Vivica. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

I want to thank our hosts for having us here. I was coming over here with my buddy Terry McAuliffe tonight, and he said, "Now, tell me where we're going?" He's a good, Irish-Catholic boy. I said, "We're going to a place called the Garden of Eden." [*Laughter*] He said, "We can't go." [*Laughter*] I said, "Why?" He said, "They'll accuse one of us of being in search of original sin." [*Laughter*] But here we are, and they did a nice job for us. Thank you very much, all

of you. It's really beautiful, thank you. Thank you so much.

Now, look, you all came here to have a good time, and you probably don't want to hear a political speech. But I do want to say one or two things. First of all, I am very, very grateful for the chance that I have had to serve as President these last 7½ years. I am grateful for the support I received from California, from southern California, from Los Angeles, and from this community, and I thank you very, very, much.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

Audience member. Run for Governor of California. [*Laughter*]

The President. I don't think so. You've got a good Governor, and you've got to get a good President.

The second thing is, somebody might ask you why you came, tomorrow, and I want you to be able to give a serious but brief answer. There are three things you need to know about this election. Number one, it is real important. It's just as important as it was in '92 and '96. And I want all the young people here, everybody here under 40, to listen to me about this.

In '92, when I got elected, California was in the dumps. We had had riots in the streets. We had the politics of division. Everybody knew what had to be done. We had to get the show back on the road. We had to turn the economy around. We had to get the society coming together again. The political system had to work. You didn't have to be a genius to know what we needed to do.

But now things are going well. And what I want to say to you, if you're young, is this: It is just as stern a test of a nation's judgment and character what you do with the good times as what you do with adversity. And everybody here who is over 30 can remember at least one time in your life when you made a significant mistake, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Nobody who's lived any length of time has failed to make a mistake like that.

So the first thing I want you to know is this is a big issue, this election. What's the question? The question is, what are we going to do with the prosperity? Are we going to indulge ourselves, take all the short-term fixes, pretend there are no consequences, or take this opportunity to build the future of our dreams? That's really what this is about.

And there are a lot of things out there to do. What are you all going to do when all the baby boomers like me retire and there's only two people working for every one person drawing Social Security and Medicare? We need to prepare for that. We have more kids in our schools than ever before, and they're more diverse. What are you going to do 20 years from now, if you're young, and we don't succeed in giving them all a world-class education?

We still have people in this country, in this city, on the Indian reservations, and the rural areas, that aren't part of all this prosperity. If we don't give them a chance to participate now, when will you ever get around to it?

What are you going to do 20 years from now if we don't do something about global warming and prove that we can still grow the economy and improve the environment? If all these people that say you can't do that and don't worry, just keep putting stuff in the air, what are you going to do if the sea level rises a foot? What will it be like here? What will you be making movies about?

So you've got to think about these things. We have never in my lifetime had the chance we have now for you, as citizens, to decide that you want to do big things and get them done. So it's an important election.

The second thing I want to tell you is—as if you needed reminding—there are huge differences between the two parties, from the candidates for President to the Senate to the House. Now, Bill made a joke about Governor Bush, and people have made a few jokes about me, as he pointed out. [*Laughter*] People made a few jokes about Al Gore. Al Gore makes jokes about himself. We all ought to make a few jokes and laugh and have a good time.

But I want to be dead serious about this. You have a chance here to have a positive election. That is, most of these elections the last 20 years have been fueled by fanatics or people who wanted power, and they thought that the best way to win an election was to keep everybody home that could think

and then try to persuade those that were going to vote that their opponents were just one notch above a car thief. I mean, how many elections have you seen like that?

Now, you don't have to say anything bad about anybody in this election. All we ought to do is just have a debate about what we think we ought to do with our prosperity, and know what the differences are. So, number one, it's a big election. It's about your future. Number two, there are real differences.

And here's the third point, and it's real important. Only the Democrats really want you to understand what the differences are. You listen to the Republicans talk, you'd think they never even had a primary. [*Laughter*] And when the lobbyist for the NRA says that if they win the White House, then the NRA will have an office in the White House, it's probably true, but it's inconvenient for him, so they sort of hide that.

We differ. They want to spend all this projected surplus we've worked so hard to get over the next 10 years on a big tax cut which would benefit a lot of you—a big tax cut—and spend the rest of it on partial privatization of Social Security and a big national missile defense program and whatever else they've promised. And there won't be any money left, even if all the surplus materializes. If it doesn't materialize, we'll be back to deficits, high interest rates, not such a good economy, and you will pay the price.

We say—and I'm proud of Al Gore for saying this—it may not be popular, but we're going to save some of this money, because it may not materialize. The taxes you pay for Medicare, we're going to save. Pay the debt down, and know we can take care of the baby boomers when they retire without bankrupting the rest of you. It's time to think about the long run.

We have differences on the environment. We have differences on education. We're for putting 100,000 teachers in our schools and modernizing our schools and providing extra funds and requiring schools to turn around if they're failing or shut down—and they're not.

We're for raising the minimum wage, and they're not. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. We think all seniors on Medicare ought to have access to affordable prescription drugs, and we ought to take this time and provide it, and they don't. We have big differences.

Now, there are lots of others, but you get the idea. If we have a debate about this, we will win.

Now, let me just say one other thing. In the history of America, we have always had a Vice President—we've had some pretty great Vice Presidents. Thomas Jefferson was Vice President, made a pretty good President. Theodore Roosevelt was Vice President, made a good President. Harry Truman was Vice President, was a great President. But we have never had a person in the office of Vice President who, while he was Vice President, had anything like the positive impact on the economy and the society of our country that Al Gore has had. He's by far the best Vice President in the entire history of the United States.

And therefore, he is by far the best qualified person to be President who has run for office in my adult lifetime, because of the way he spent the last 8 years and because I had sense enough to give him a lot to do. [*Laughter*] It's self-serving for me to say, but he has performed magnificently. And there are three reasons you ought to be for him: number one, he will keep this prosperity going because he won't change our economic policy; he'll build on it.

Number two, he'll try to include everybody in his vision of America, the people in places left behind, all the families that are working for a living but need help to raise their children, need help with child care or long-term care for their parents or their disabled family members, or after-school programs for their kids. He'll try to do that. And everybody will have a place. We led the fight for the hate crimes victory that we got in the Senate this week, which a lot of you like. We think everybody should be part of our America.

And the final reason you ought to vote for him is, he understands the future, and he can lead us there. He understands the implications of the Internet revolution. He understands that all your medical records and all your financial records are going to be in somebody's computer file somewhere, and your privacy ought to be protected, and they

ought not to be invaded unless you give permission to do it. That's an important issue.

He understands that global warming is real. He's the first politician in American life that said anything to me about climate change, long before it was widely accepted that it was happening.

So what do you need in a President? Somebody with the best experience; somebody that will keep the prosperity going; somebody that cares about all of us; someone that understands the future. If you want—all of you, so many of you said, "Thank you very much for being a good President. I wish I could do something for you." You can do something for me: Make sure that everybody you know in this State and across America understands it's a big election; there are real differences; and we want you to know that they are and that we intend to build the future of your dreams. And we need Al Gore. We need these candidates for the Senate and the House.

And if you'll go out and tell people that, and tell people we don't want to badmouth anybody, just let's talk about what our honest disagreements are, we're going to have a big celebration in November. And more important, you young people here are going to have the best days America has ever known.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. in the Fireplace Lounge at the Garden of Eden nightclub. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Maher, host of "Politically Incorrect"; actress Vivica A. Fox, who introduced the President; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; Gov. Gray Davis of California; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Los Angeles, California

June 23, 2000

Thank you. Well, first of all, I was very touched by what you said, Kenny, and I thank you and Tracy for having us here in your beautiful home in this little pup tent. [*Laughter*] I'm going to call home tonight, and Hillary is going to say, "Well, what did you do tonight?" And I'm going to say, "Well, I went camping with K rations." [*Laughter*]

Anyway, I thank you for doing this, and I thank all of you for coming. And you make Joe Andrew and Terry and Donna and Yolanda and all of us who are going to fight this election out have heart and feel good about it. And we're very proud that people like you are supporting our party. And I thank you for what you said about me.

I guess tonight I would like to make not just kind of a traditional political speech, but I would like to say three or four things. I have been very fortunate in my life. I got to do something I wanted to do for a long time. And when I started, only my mother thought I could win. I never will forget how President Bush, in '92, used to refer to me as the Governor of a small southern State. And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [*Laughter*] And you know what? I still do.

I mean, the thing that makes this country work at its best is that people get a chance to live their dreams. And the thing that makes it improvable is there are still too many who don't or there are still people who find folks standing in the way.

When I ran for President in '91 and '92, I did it not because I was dissatisfied being the Governor of a small southern State—I actually was having a heck of a good time. But I really was worried about our country. Our economy was in bad shape, but it was about more than money. We had all these—the social problems were getting worse; they had the riots here in L.A.—you remember that—and the political rhetoric was so divisive.

And the more I listened to it, the more I thought there's something funny about Washington, because where I come from, everybody tried to work through their differences, and in Washington people said, "Well, I've got an idea. You've got an idea. Let's fight." Then I realized that they did it partly because they thought it was the only way they'd ever get on the evening news.

Anyway, we set out on this odyssey to try to change the way the political system works and change America for the better, and it has worked out reasonably well. The country is in better shape than it was 8 years ago.

And I'm just very grateful. And I appreciate what Kenny said about hard work and all that, and I believe that. But most people who amount to anything in politics want you to believe that they were born in a log cabin that they built themselves. And I think it's important to recognize that, but for one or two fortunate turns in the road, I could be home doing $200 divorces and deeds tomorrow, instead of being here doing what I'm doing with you.

The things that makes a democracy work truly great are the kind of shared values that people have and the fact that ordinary citizens get to participate and that over a long period of time—Mr. Martin Luther King said, "The arc of history is long, but it bends towards justice." And if you look at the whole history of America, it basically has been a struggle to live up to what the Founders said we were about, that all of us are created equal, and that we ought to have a chance to pursue life, liberty, and happiness, and that, in order to do that, we have to make this a more perfect Union. And when they said that, only white male property owners could vote, but the smartest ones among them had enough sense to know it was a fraud, and they'd have to do better. And they just set in motion a set of ideas that have carried us all the way to the present day.

Now, what I would like to say to all of you is, you have earned your success. And most of you didn't have much to start with, and it's a real tribute to the power of the mind and the spirit and the openness of America. But you have to ask yourself now, just as you're asking yourself in your personal lives what you're going to do with your success, what is our country going to do with its success?

And I think about it a lot, and I'm not running for anything. This is the first time in over 25 years I haven't been on the ballot. And most days, I'm okay about it. [*Laughter*] A distinguished world citizen called me last week and said, "You know, Mr. President, for a lame duck you're still quacking rather loudly." And so I think about it.

And I think anybody in this room tonight over 30 can remember at least one time in your life when you made a mistake, not because times were so tough but because times were good and seemed easy and there seemed to be no consequence to the failure to concentrate. That's the thing I'm worried about in this election.

And I hear people talking about the election. I read all these articles like you do. I follow all these polls. And a lot of it's not real substantial yet. People haven't, obviously, kind of come to terms with what this is about. And a lot of you are in a position to influence a lot of other people. And I just want to tell you that there's never been a time like this in my lifetime, where we had so much economic prosperity, so much social progress, so much national self-confidence, so few real crises at home and threats abroad. There are problems, but if you compare this with the last time we had a long economic expansion, for example, it was in the sixties when we were also dealing with Vietnam and the civil rights struggle. We have never had a period like this.

And I think we ought to give it to our kids. I think we ought to really spend a lot of time this year thinking about how we can build the future of our dreams for our children. And if we think that's what the election is about, then we have to take on the big challenges that are still out there. And I'll just mention three or four of them.

One is, what are we going to do when all these baby boomers like me retire, and there's only two people working for every one person drawing Social Security and Medicare? What are we going to do when everybody that lives to be 65, has a life expectancy of another 20 or 25 years? It's going to happen here directly. Are they going to be able to work? Are they going to be able to get medicine if they need it? How are they going to be able to make the most of these years?

What are we going to do now that we have the largest and most racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse student population in the history of the country, to give all our kids a world-class education? And I'll tell you this. We know we can do it now. I was in a public school in Spanish Harlem. Some of you mentioned tonight you saw me on the "Today Show" the other day pushing the VH1 music in school program.

I was at a school in Spanish Harlem that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids reading

and doing mathematics below grade level—2 years ago. Today, 74 percent of them are performing at or above grade level—in 2 years. So all children can learn. The public schools can work. But what are we going to do to make that story true everywhere? What are we going to do to make sure that everybody gets a chance to participate in this economy, to make sure that the people who served our dinner tonight have their chance at their dream, just like we've had our chance at ours?

What are we going to do to help people balance work and childrearing? You'd be amazed how many people I've talked to that make real good incomes that still worry about whether they can do all the stuff they're supposed to do at work and do right by their most important job, raising their kids.

What are we going to do to meet the big environmental challenges of the 21st century? The globe is warming up, folks, and your kids are going to have to live in a very different and much less pleasant world unless we turn this environmental situation around. And it is now possible to do it and still grow the economy, but a lot of people don't believe that.

What are we going to do to continue to stand against hatred and bigotry here at home? There are still people who get killed just because of their race, their religion, or because they're gay in America. That's why I'm glad that hate crimes bill passed the Senate this week. And if you want America to be the force for good around the world, we have to first be good at home.

Now, I think if the election is about that stuff, Al Gore will be elected President, and Hillary and a lot of other Democrats will be elected to the Senate. We'll win our majority back in the House.

Very often an election turns on what people think it's about. And most of you are younger than I am, but I came of age in the 1960's, and I thought the economic prosperity was on automatic. And when I finished high school, I thought the civil rights problems would be solved in the courts and Congress. And I never dreamed that our country would be consumed by Vietnam, but it happened. And the longest economic expansion in history, at that time, vanished a few weeks after Dr. King got killed and Bobby Kennedy got killed and Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for reelection.

I'm not saying this to be a downer. I'm saying this to point out nothing lasts forever, and when we're going through the tough times—Kenny mentioned that—we're going through the tough times, we have to keep reminding ourselves of that. We say, thank God, nothing lasts forever, right? Take a deep breath, get up, put one foot in front of another. But it's also important to remember in the good times.

That's what this election ought to be about: What in the world are we going to do with this prosperity? I worked as hard as I could to turn this country around, to give everybody a chance to be a part of it, to give people the confidence that we can actually do things together, and to beat back all those people that think politics is just about grabbing power and destroying your enemy and doing things that I don't agree with, anyway.

But now we have to decide, okay, we've got the ship of state turned around; we're moving in the right direction; we built our bridge to the 21st century—now, what in the wide world are we going to do about it. That's what this election has to be about.

We Democrats, we can go to the people and say, "Look, we don't have anything bad to say about our opponents as people." I think we should assume they're honorable, and they will do what they say. But what you need to know is that we're really the only—our side is the only side that wants you to know what the differences between the two parties are.

They're making arguments that remind me of the way I felt when I was 18, in 1964, and I thought the economy was on automatic. They're basically saying, "Oh, heck, this thing—nothing—nobody can mess up this economy. So let's just take the biggest tax cut we can and spend all this projected surplus—not actual but projected over the next 10 years—and just do what we want to do."

And here's Al Gore saying, "Hey, I don't think so. I think we should save at least 20 percent of it, what you pay in Medicare taxes, and put it over here in a box so nobody can get at it, and pay the debt down some more and make sure the money is there when all

these baby boomers retire so their retirement doesn't bankrupt their kids and their ability to raise their grandkids."

Now, it's not as popular because the other guys are saying, "Here, take your money back." And he's saying, "Don't stop thinking about tomorrow." But that's how we got here. People ask me all the time, they say, "You must be some economic genius. What great new idea did you bring to Washington?" And I say, "arithmetic." [*Laughter*] That's what I brought to Washington. I said, "If you're going to spend it, you've got have it. And if you don't have it, you shouldn't spend it. And don't pretend that two and two makes either six or three"—arithmetic.

Now they're saying, "Oh, man, you couldn't mess this economy up if you tried. Let's just take all that surplus and give it to the voters right now and make everybody fat and happy, and we'll ride off into the sunset." Don't you believe it. You've still go to be thinking about tomorrow.

And the reason that I support Al Gore so strongly—yeah, I feel indebted to him because he's been good to me, a good Vice President, but I think I know him better than anybody outside his family now. And I want this economic expansion to continue, and I want it to go and reach people and places and neighborhoods that are still left behind. Do you know what the unemployment rate is on the Navajo Reservation at Window Rock in New Mexico? Fifty-eight percent. Do you know what it is at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota? Seventy-three percent. In many places in the Mississippi Delta, where I come from, it's still in double digits.

Al Gore ran our empowerment zone program. We proved we could bring investment and the free enterprise system to poor people. So now we've got a program to bring it everywhere. That's one reason I'm for him. I think he cares about that. We care about that. We want to raise the minimum wage, and they don't. We want to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they don't. We want all the seniors in the country to be able to get affordable prescription drugs, and they don't.

But all these things will tend to be blurred, and I want you to just remember what I'm telling you tonight. This is a chance of a lifetime. This is an important election. There are real differences. And right now, we're the only side that wants you to know what the differences are. Their argument is almost like, "I'll give you a bigger tax cut now. Besides, their fraternity had the ball for 8 years. Why don't you let us have it for a while?" This is a serious deal.

Most of my life has been lived, and my child is now grown. Most of you have little kids, and you're looking at your future. Some of you have grandkids. We ought to be thinking about them. And I'm just telling you, I was 18 years old the last time my country had an economy like this. I have waited for 35 years for us to have this chance. And you've got to make the most of it.

We've got a guy running for President that has done more good for the country as Vice President than anybody ever has. Thomas Jefferson was Vice President. Theodore Roosevelt was Vice President. Harry Truman was Vice President. They were all great Presidents, but they didn't do anything remotely as important as what Al Gore has done as Vice President. He's the best qualified person in my lifetime to run for President. He'll keep the prosperity going. He'll care about all the people and try to make sure we build one America.

And the last thing I'll tell you is, he understands the future. And we need somebody that really understands the future. Don't you want somebody that understands science and energy and technology and all this information stuff? All your medical records, all your financial records on somebody's computer somewhere—wouldn't you like to have a President that would fight for your right to privacy so nobody could peer into them unless you said yes? Don't you want somebody that understands climate change and can figure out how to deal with it without breaking the economy?

So if somebody asks you why you came, tell them it's because it's real important. Tell them there are real differences. Tell them we're running somebody for President that's the best qualified person in your lifetime, who understands the future and can lead us there and wants everybody to go together. And tell them we've got to keep this prosperity going.

But mostly, if you have kids, tonight when you go home, look at them, and remember what I told you: I've waited 35 years for this chance. I don't know when it will come again. And we can't pay any attention to the polls or anything else. We've just got to get up and saddle up and fight for their future. And if we do, we win.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to singer Kenneth Edmonds, popularly known as Babyface, and his wife, Tracy, dinner hosts; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; Donna L. Brazile, campaign manager, Gore 2000; and Yolanda Caraway, president, Caraway Group. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Internet Webcast
June 24, 2000

Good morning. Here in America, a revolution in technology is underway. It is more than a time of innovation; it's a time of fundamental transformation, the kind that happens, at most, every hundred years. Today, in my first Saturday webcast, I'd like to speak to you about how we can seize the potential of this information revolution to widen the circle of our democracy and make our Government much more responsive to the needs of our citizens.

Early in our history, people often had only one option when they needed the help of the National Government. They had to visit a Government office and stand in line. Indeed, as Vice President Gore has pointed out, after the Civil War the only way our veterans could collect their pensions was by traveling all the way to Washington, DC, and waiting for a clerk to dig out their war records. Those war records were actually bound in red tape. That gave rise to the universal symbol of bureaucratic delay that has existed down to the present day.

Thankfully, things have gotten a lot easier for citizens over the years. In recent years, advances in computing and information technology have led to remarkable gains. Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, we have greatly expanded the spread of information technology throughout the Government, cutting reams of redtape, putting vast resources at the fingertips of all of our citizens. Citizens now are using Government websites to file their taxes, compare their Medicare options, apply for student loans, and find good jobs. They're tapping into the latest health research and browsing vast collections in the Library of Congress and following along with NASA's missions in outer space. This is just the beginning.

Today I'm pleased to announce several major steps in our efforts to go forward in creating a high-speed, high-tech, user-friendly Government. First, we're going to give our citizens a single, customer-focused website where they can find every on-line resource offered by the Federal Government.

This new website, FirstGov.gov, will be created at no cost to the Government by a team led by Eric Brewer, who developed one of the most successful Internet search technologies with the help of Government grants. In the spirit of cutting through redtape, this new website will be created in 90 days or less. It will uphold the highest standards for protecting the privacy of its users.

When it's complete, FirstGov will serve as a single point of entry to one of the largest, perhaps the most useful collection of webpages in the entire world. Whether you want crucial information in starting a small business or you want to track your Social Security benefits, you can do it all in one place, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Second, now that we're poised to create one-stop shopping for Government services, we'll also greatly expand the scope of those services. Increasingly, we'll give our citizens not only the ability to send and receive information but also to conduct sophisticated transactions on-line.

For example, this year the Federal Government will award about $300 billion in grants and buy $200 billion in goods and services. Over the coming year, we will make it possible for people to go on-line and compete for these grants and contracts through a simplified electronic process. Moving this enormous volume of business on-line will save a great deal of money and time for our taxpayers. It will also expand opportunities for community groups, small businesses, and

citizens who never before have had a chance to show what they can do.

Third, in conjunction with the nonprofit Council for Excellence in Government, we're launching a major competition to spur new innovative ideas for how Government can serve and connect with our citizens electronically. The Council will award up to $50,000 to those students, researchers, private sector workers, or Government employees who present the most creative ideas.

In the early years of our Republic, Thomas Jefferson said, "America's institutions must move forward hand in hand with the progress of the human mind." Well, today, the progress of the human mind is certainly racing forward at breakneck speed. If we work together, we can ensure that our democratic institutions keep pace. With your help, we can build a more perfect, more responsive democracy for the information age.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President's webcast was recorded at 3:15 p.m. on June 23 at a private residence in Los Angeles, CA, for broadcast at 10 a.m. on June 24. In his remarks, he referred to Eric Brewer, cofounder, Inktomi. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

The President's Radio Address

June 24, 2000

Good morning. This week we mark the beginning of summer, another summer of national prosperity, continuing the longest economic expansion in our history. The big question now is what we intend to do with this economic prosperity. One of our most pressing needs, clearly, is providing voluntary prescription drug coverage under Medicare for older Americans. We should do it this year.

The American people have made their feelings clear. They know our seniors are paying too much for prescription drugs that help them live longer, healthier, more fulfilling lives. Three in five older Americans don't have dependable insurance coverage for prescriptions, and too many seniors simply aren't getting the drugs they need.

Again and again I've said it should be a high priority to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare this year. But we must do it the right way, by making the benefit affordable and available for everyone who needs it.

I'm deeply concerned that the proposal House Republicans put forward this week will take us down the wrong road. What they have proposed is not a Medicare benefit; it's a private insurance program which many seniors and people with disabilities simply won't be able to afford. It will not offer dependable coverage to every American in every part of the country. Rural Americans will be at particular risk because private insurance is often unavailable to them or very, very expensive.

The plan doesn't ensure that seniors will be able to use the local pharmacist they trust. Insurance companies have already said this model won't work. It benefits the companies who make the drugs, not the older Americans who need to take the drugs.

There is a better way. I propose giving all our seniors the option of a prescription drug benefit through Medicare, wherever they live, however sick they may be. My plan would be affordable and dependable and give every senior equal coverage.

Because our economy is so strong and because we worked hard to put the Medicare Trust Fund back on sound footing, we have the money to do this now and do it right. We should use a part of our hard-earned budget surplus to meet America's most pressing priorities, like paying down the national debt, strengthening Medicare, and providing a prescription drug benefit.

That's why next week I will propose using the surplus to improve my plan. I will unveil specific protections for catastrophic drug expenses to ensure that no senior pays more than $4,000 in prescription drugs and keeping premiums at $25 a month. And I'll propose making that benefit in the full prescription drug initiative available in 2002, instead of 2003. To do that, I'll ask Congress to add about $58 billion to our funding for Medicare over the next 10 years.

Providing a voluntary prescription drug benefit is only one of the challenges we must

face to keep Medicare healthy for generations to come. We also have to increase payments to hospitals, teaching facilities, home health care agencies, and other providers, to make sure Medicare patients get high-quality care. Earlier this week, I proposed that we use $40 billion of the surplus to do that.

We should also follow Vice President Gore's proposal to take Medicare off budget, like Social Security, so that the Medicare taxes you pay cannot be diverted for irresponsible tax cuts or other Government spending that could lead us back to the bad old days of deficits and give us higher interest rates. This will protect Medicare and make a major contribution toward paying down the debt. And I propose using the savings from debt reduction to extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund through at least 2030, when the number of Medicare people will be double what it is today.

We're fortunate—very fortunate—to live in a time of budget surpluses and remarkable prosperity, but we didn't get there by accident. We maintained our fiscal discipline, invested in our people, made good on the commitments that matter most. We can't let up now. And we have few responsibilities more important than helping our older Americans live out their lives with quality and in dignity.

We have the opportunity to meet that responsibility with a straightforward plan that all seniors can buy into. We have growing bipartisan agreement in the Senate that this is the way to go.

I hope as we mark the 50th anniversary of the Korean war tomorrow we'll remember that a generation of Americans who did not let us, their children and grandchildren, down. And in return, we owe it not to let them down.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:45 p.m. on June 23 at a private residence in Los Angeles, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks to the Democratic National Convention 2000 Host Committee Breakfast in Los Angeles

June 24, 2000

Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor. And Nancy, thank you for having us in your home. Since you said I had done pretty well for a young fellow from Arkansas, I can't resist—I have a lot of friends here, but I cannot resist the temptation at this apt moment in history to introduce another contribution that my State made to your success: Mr. Derek Fisher of the Los Angeles Lakers.

I was watching one of the Lakers games, actually, one of the games against Portland. And Derek comes in at the end, steals the ball five or six times, and confuses everybody. And somebody says, "God, that guy is aggressive." I said, "If you come from Arkansas, you have to be." [*Laughter*] It's just sort of our deal. You did us proud, and congratulations.

I want to thank the host committee, every one of you. And I thank my good friend Terry McAuliffe. And I thank Secretary Daley—I don't know why I'm thanking Secretary Daley for leaving my administration; he was doing such a great job. But he's doing—it's a very important thing for us to continue our work, and I thank him for taking over the leadership of the Vice President's campaign.

I want to thank Joe Andrew and all the people here from the Democratic Party and recognize two of my very old friends, Henry and Mary Alice Cisneros. Thank you for the help you've given us on the convention, and thank you for being my friends, and congratulations on being new grandparents—most important thing. They will shamelessly show you the pictures if you ask. [*Laughter*]

I also want to congratulate Governor Roy Romer on his new job here in Los Angeles and thank him. When this was announced, I told—Hillary and I were talking. I said, "This is really what Romer's always wanted to do. He's the only guy I ever knew who ran for Governor and served 12 years just so he could be a school superintendent." [*Laughter*] But you could go all the way across the country and not find a single

human being who wants to do the right thing by our children and prove that our schools can work for all kids more than Roy Romer.

And what I want to tell all of you is, I've been in a lot of Los Angeles schools, and I've been in some that are working very, very well, indeed. And I've been all across this country, and when several of us who are involved in this—and Secretary Riley and I, we go back to the seventies; we were involved in school reform; and Hillary and I rewrote all the school standards in Arkansas nearly 20 years ago now—there was a long period of time when everybody thought they knew what the answer was to failing schools and how to help kids in poor neighborhoods, sometimes in very difficult family situations, or just people whose first language was not English, learn up to world-class standards. But the truth is we didn't know as much for a long time as we thought we did.

That's not true anymore, and we now have—this is the most exciting and important time in modern American history to be involved in the education of children from kindergarten to the 12th grade, for two reasons. One is, for 2 years we've had, for the first time, a group of school children bigger than the baby boom generation. It's the biggest group of kids ever in school. And those of us among the baby boomers, which are basically people today between the ages of 36 and 54 years old, we were the biggest group of people ever in school until this crowd. And this group is far, far more diverse racially, ethnically, religiously, culturally—much more diverse. So, obviously it's important—self-evidently.

But the second thing you need to know is, we actually do know how to provide excellence in education to all kinds of children in all kinds of circumstances. And so now the question is how to replicate what works somewhere everywhere. But there's no excuse anymore; we really do know how to do it.

I was in a school in Spanish Harlem the other day, appearing on the "Today Show" for the VH1 music in schools program. Some of you may have seen it, where I tried to help VH1 get instruments donated, money donated to start school music programs again, because a lot of them were lost in the schools over the last 20 years, along with, I might add, the physical education programs for people not involved in team sports.

And so, we were working on it. And in this school, I met this magnificent principal. Now 2 years ago, this grade school, P.S. 96 in Spanish Harlem in New York, had 80 percent of the kids—80 percent—reading and doing math below grade level—2 years ago. Today, 74 percent of them are doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years.

I was in this little school in Kentucky the other day in this real poor area, where more than half the kids are on free or reduced lunches. Four years ago, it was supposed to be one of the worst schools in Kentucky. Today, it's one of the top 10 or 20 grade schools in the entire State. Listen to this; in 3 years this is what they did. They went from 12 percent of the kids reading at or above grade level to 57 percent; from 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent; from zero percent of the kids doing science at or above grade level to two-thirds—3 years. And I can tell you there are hundreds of stories like this.

So I want all of you to support your school system. We need to put this beyond partisan politics; we need to put this beyond everything else. But you do need to know that it can happen. And I have seen it with my own eyes in every conceivable different kind of circumstance. It can happen, and you can do it.

Now, in 1991, before I had decided to run for President, as chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council, I came to Los Angeles to look at an anticrime program. And they had arranged for a young student who came from the East but who was studying out here in California, named Sean Landress, to drive me around. You might be interested to know he subsequently went to divinity school, got a graduate degree, studied in Romania, talked about how to rebuild the economies of central and eastern Europe. He's a remarkable young man. He was 20 years old at the time and had been in school at Columbia in New York.

So we're driving across Los Angeles on one of these beautiful days, when I then did not have the benefit of not having to stop for the traffic. [*Laughter*] So this 20-year-old

young guy that I'd never met before looks at me, he says, "Well, let's get right down to it. Cut it out. Are you going to run for President or not?" I'd never seen this kid before in my life. I said, "Well, I don't know. Maybe." He said, "Well, if you do, here's what your theme song ought to be." [*Laughter*] So he puts this tape in the tape deck—we didn't have CD players in cars back then—and it's Fleetwood Mac's "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow."

And so we asked them later if we could do—I said, "That's sounds pretty good." So I decided to run for President and I asked Fleetwood Mac, and whoever we contacted had the same attitude that President Bush used to express, that I was just a Governor from a small southern State; why should I use their song. [*Laughter*] I was so naive I thought that was a compliment, being a Governor, and I still do.

But anyway, eventually we found them, the Fleetwood Mac people, and they said, okay. So that became the theme song of the '92 campaign. And I just want to pick up on something Terry said about Los Angeles. The best elections are always about the future. No matter how good a job you've done, they're always about the future.

I remember once when I was trying to decide whether to run for my fifth term as Governor in Arkansas, I went out to the State Fair. And I used to have a booth at the State Fair, and I'd just sit there and talk to people, anybody that wanted to come up. And everybody in the State comes to the State Fair in a little State like that.

This old boy in overalls came up to me, and he said, "Bill, are you going to run for another term?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. If I do, will you vote for me?" He said, "Yes, I guess I will. I always have." And I said, "Well, aren't you sick of me after all this time?" He said, "No, but everybody else I know is." [*Laughter*] And I said, well—and I got kind of hurt—I said, "Well, don't they think I've done a good job?" He said, "Oh, yeah, they think you've done a good job, but you did draw a paycheck every 2 weeks didn't you?" He said, "That's what we hired you to do, a good job." [*Laughter*]

And so I say that to make this point. I think the record of our administration is a relevant consideration in this election but mostly because it's evidence of whether we will keep the commitments we make to the American people, or whether the Vice President will, and what we will do in the future.

But one reason I wanted to be in the millennial year in Los Angeles is that you do represent the future. And you've got all the challenges and all the opportunities of the future within 20 miles of where we're having breakfast today. And that's what I want you to help us show America. I want America to see the future, the diversity, the youth, the vibrancy, the technology, the creativity, the whole 9 yards.

I'm a little superstitious about things, and I'm—one of the things I'm happy about is the Lakers won in the Staples Center, and 4 years ago, we met in Chicago right after the Bulls won in the United Center. So I think if we can just keep this basketball-Democratic Party partnership going, we're in pretty good shape. [*Laughter*]

But I hope you will think about this. Many of you, in ways that you can't even imagine now, will come in contact with people from other States, people from other countries, the thousands of people that will be here for the media. And I hope that you will say that, because the thing that's most important to me right now—and I admit it's self-serving—but the thing that's most important for me right now is that the American people make the right decision in trying to figure out what this election is about.

My experience in life is that a lot of you get—the answers you get sometimes depend on the questions you ask. So when people say, "Well, who do you think's going to win this or that other election?" I often say, "Well, what's the election about?" What the election's about depends on—will determine in large measure who wins.

And we've got this enormous opportunity now to give America a gift, which is an honestly positive election, not a saccharine election, not a "let's all just kind of wander through in a fog" election, but an election that is a genuine debate about the future of the country, at the time of the greatest prosperity and social progress we have enjoyed in my lifetime, with the absence of dramatic internal crises or external threats. And a time

like this comes along once in 50 years, sometimes once in 100 years. And I think it is a very stern test of the judgment and character of the American people, what we do with this moment of prosperity.

You know, when I came here in '92—you heard the mayor talking about it—I mean the economy was in the tank. You'd had riots in Los Angeles. The people in Washington were—had what I call the combat mentality. "I've got an idea. You've got an idea. Let's fight. Maybe we'll both get on the evening news." [*Laughter*] And people didn't worry about what was going to happen.

So it was—to be fair, you didn't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out we needed a new economic policy, a new social policy, and a new way of doing politics. And we brought our ideas to the table, and thankfully, they worked out pretty well for America. And I am very grateful for the chance I have had to serve.

But I, too, think this election is about tomorrow. And I've worked as hard as I could to help turn this country around, and I'm very proud of where we are. And I'm proud of the Vice President for running, and I'm very proud of my wife for running for the Senate in New York, and I'm proud of all these people who want to keep doing, keep the direction going that we have worked on.

But for you, whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, what you should want now is for the American people to come out of Los Angeles, because it will be the second convention, thinking this is great, the country's in great shape, and we now have the opportunity and the responsibility to chart a course for the future, to think about the big issues.

Now, I'll just mention some of them. What are you going to do when all of us baby boomers retire and there's only two people working for every one person on Social Security? What are you going to do to make sure all these kids do get a world-class education? What are you going to do to deal with the fact that we have a lot of people that have jobs in America today who still can barely pay their bills and have a hard time raising their children, because our country does less than other countries to help people balance work and childrearing?

What are we going to do about the fact that global warming is real? These environmental challenges are real, and we have to find a way to grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time. What are you going to do about the fact that we still do have hate crimes in America? We had kids shot at a Jewish community center here; a Filipino postal worker killed—clearly, the person who went after him thought he had a two-fer, an Asian and a Federal Government employee; a former basketball coach at Northwestern, an African-American man killed by a fanatic in the Midwest who then went and shot a young Korean Christian as he walked out of his church. The guy said he didn't believe in God, but he did believe in white supremacy, and he belonged to a church that elevated it. So we still have these.

How are we going to build one America? How are we going to build a global economy that has a human face, that gives everybody a chance to participate? How are we going to make sure that the people and places who have not fully been part of our economic recovery get a chance to share in the prosperity? That helps the economy grow and keeps the recovery going.

What's your position about what we should do with this projected surplus? They now say the projected surplus will be huge—I'm going to talk about it the day after tomorrow. And the Republicans say we should spend way over half of it in a tax cut and spend the rest of it on the cost of partially privatizing Social Security and building a missile defense scheme and other things, and it will materialize.

We say—even though I think our economic policy has produced this happy projection—that we shouldn't spend our money before it materializes, that we ought to save a good portion of it, pay down the debt, keep interest rates down, protect Medicare, and give a tax cut, but keep it within bounds in case all this money doesn't come in. Because once you cut taxes, if we don't have this projected surplus, we'll be back in the soup—old deficits, old interest rates, California 1991–1992.

Anyway, these are big issues. And when you're getting ready to do a convention you think about, well, who's going to do the party;

what is the entertainment; how are we going to work out the security; what are we going to do if all the people who think the global economy is terrible show up and demonstrate? You've got all these practical problems to work out. But what I want you to remember is how they're worked out and the spirit in which you work them out and what you say to people you come in contact with will determine what people think of Los Angeles, but also what people think the election is about right now.

I trust the American people to get it right; nearly always, they get it right. Otherwise we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. If the alternatives are clear and they have time enough to digest it and hear both sides, they nearly always make the right decision. And what my mission is going to be is to make sure people understand this is a very big election, that we have an enormous responsibility to deal with the big challenges and opportunities facing the country, that there are dramatic differences between the two parties and we don't have to badmouth our opponents to say that—that we can just say, let's lay the differences out there, and you decide what you want for the future of America.

And Los Angeles can help us do that. You can embody the future and clarify the choices to be made. And you can do it and have a heck of a good time doing it. I told the staff at the convention yesterday I've been to every Democratic convention since 1972—makes me feel kind of old. And what I think is important is that there be competence, a sense of mission, a sense of energy, and a sense of joy and pride. Our country has got a lot to be proud of; this State and this community have a lot to be proud of. I want you to have a good time. I want you to help everybody else have a good time. But never let people forget, it's still important to think about tomorrow.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard Riordan, and his wife, Nancy Daly Riordan; William M. Daley, general chair, Gore 2000; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Los Angeles Unified School District Superintendent Roy Romer, former general chair, Democratic National Committee; former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry G. Cisneros and his wife, Mary Alice; and Victor Lopez, principal, Joseph C. Lanzetta School (Public School 96), New York City.

Remarks at a Brunch Honoring Senator Dianne Feinstein in Los Angeles

June 24, 2000

Thank you very much. I'm delighted to be here. I always try to show up on Dianne's birthday. [*Laughter*] I was just thinking, one time in 1994 I made an appearance in northern California for Senator Feinstein, and she didn't come—[*laughter*]—because she had to stay back and vote in the Senate. So I was sort of her surrogate.

And I was talking about that the other day, and Hillary said, "Well, if you did it for her, you can do it for me." [*Laughter*] So now I've started—now we're actually doing it on purpose in her election, so we'll see. [*Laughter*] I hope the results are just as good, and I'm inclined to think they will be. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want to thank our friend Ron Burkle for giving us this beautiful home to have this event. And I'd like to recognize Joe Andrew, the chairman of the Democratic committee, and Terry McAuliffe, the chairman of our convention. Thank you both for being here.

I want to thank Governor Davis for many things, two in particular: Number one, the extraordinary example he has set in pushing for reforms in education and criminal justice and other things; and secondly, I want to thank you for being so loyal and helpful to Vice President Gore. And when we win, we will never forget that you were there, and I appreciate that.

Sharon Davis is here, and I want to thank her for going down and being with me in San Diego the other night. We had a great time down there. We're actually swelling the ranks of the Democrats in San Diego.

And we have a lot of mayors here: Mayor Vicki Reynolds of Beverly Hills; Mayor Miguel Pulido of Santa Ana; Mayor Bill Bogaard of Pasadena; and my great friend

Mayor Beverly O'Neill of Long Beach. Thank you all for being here.

I want to introduce one other person and ask him to stand, because I believe he is one of the reasons that Dick Gephardt will be the new Speaker of the House, State Senator Adam Schiff, candidate for—[*inaudible*]. Adam, stand up here. Thank you. You ought to help him. He deserves to be elected to Congress. He'll do a great job.

Now, I want to be brief. Gray has already talked about Dianne's remarkable record. I have said many times, but I will say again, I can't think of any first-term Member of the United States Senate, particularly one who had to labor in the minority—and I know she got the short straw, she's actually sort of in her second term because she was elected in '92 and '94. But if you think about what she did with the Headwater Forest, the Mojave Desert National Park, the other national monuments we set aside in California—with the assault weapons ban, with the water agreement, it's really, truly astonishing. And I literally can't think of anybody else who accomplished so much in such a short time.

I think one reason is her extraordinary ability, her persuasiveness, and her persistence. I remember one time 4 or 5 years ago, somebody called and said Senator Feinstein had called and asked us to do something in the White House, and what did I think. I said, "Well, there's only one decision to make. Are we going to do it now or later?"—[*laughter*]—"because I can tell you, no will not be an option." [*Laughter*] "When she makes up her mind, no is not an option."

I think also the fact that she was a mayor had something to do with her success, that she was willing to approach people with different views in good faith and try to work things through.

One of the reasons I ran for President in 1992 is, I was just—Washington drove me crazy. They had—the basic mode of operation in the Congress was, "I've got an idea. You've got an idea. Let's fight. Maybe we'll both get on the evening news." [*Laughter*] And it worked pretty well, I guess, to get on the evening news. It didn't have much to do with what was happening in America, and we weren't very well off as a result of it.

So I'd like to tell you, I am very grateful for the chance I've had to serve as President. I am very grateful for the opportunity I've had to work with people like Dianne Feinstein. I'm glad the results have been good for California and good for America.

But I think the most important thing that we should be thinking about is, what do we plan to make of this moment, and what is this election about anyway? And I want you to know three things. I think Dianne's going to be reelected, overwhelmingly, because she's done such a great job and because people will agree with her. It will be better for her, and she'll do more for you if we pick up a dozen or 15 House seats, if we pick up five or six Senate seats, and if the Vice President is elected President. And I believe that whether those things happen depend in large measure on what the American people believe this election is about. Sometimes the answer you get depends on the question you ask.

And there are three things I want you to know about this election. And you know, I'm not running for anything. [*Laughter*] Most days I'm okay about it. [*Laughter*] I got a call—this is the first time in 26 years they've had an election roll around, and I can't go ask somebody to vote for me. [*Laughter*] Sometimes I have, you know, kind of DT's about it, but most days I'm okay. [*Laughter*]

A distinguished citizen of the world called me last week and said that for a lame duck, I was quacking rather loudly. [*Laughter*] And I'm trying to do that. We're trying to get things done.

Oh, I want to tell you one other thing, one other Californian I want to brag on. You should be very proud of Henry Waxman, because this week he got a bipartisan majority in the House to vote to let us proceed with the tobacco litigation. And he beat the tobacco interests and the Republican leadership, and I'm really proud of him. It was great.

So what is this election about? When you leave here and you go around and you talk to people and they ask you, why did you show up at this, what are you going to say? "Burkle's got a pretty spread." [*Laughter*] "Dianne makes a great speech." [*Laughter*] "I want to see Clinton one more time before

he withers away." [*Laughter*] What are you going to say?

You're laughing, but I'm serious. I want you to laugh, but I want you to think, because I'm telling you—here are the things you need to know about this election. It's really important. It's just as important as the '92 and '96 elections were. I mean, to be fair, you didn't have to be a rocket scientist to know that '92 was important. I mean, California was in the dumps. We had riots in the streets. The economy was bad. The political environment was rancorous. It was obvious that we needed a new economic policy, a new social policy, and a new political approach. We knew that.

And in '96 it was obvious, I think, to the people that we had to keep working on this. A lot of stuff was in transit. So now I've worked as hard as I could to help turn this country around. And what's the election about? It's about, what are you going to do with this magic moment? And it is not self-evident yet that the American people understand or accept that that is what this election is about.

Once in maybe 50 years a country gets a chance to have a set of circumstances like this, where you really can build a future of your dreams for your children. So, I think what the election ought to be about is how are we going to meet the big challenges; how are we going to seize the big opportunities? What is it going to be like when all of us baby boomers retire and there are only two people working for every one person going on Social Security and Medicare? How are we preparing for it?

We have the largest group of school children in history, and the most diverse one, racially, ethnically, religiously. How are we going to give them all a world-class education? And are we prepared to live with the consequences if we fail to do so?

What about all the people that aren't part of this prosperity, all the people in places that have been left behind? If we don't bring them into the circle of opportunity now, when will we ever get around to doing it? What about all the people who have jobs and have children and have a really tough time balancing work and family? Because our country is still way behind most others in giving support to working parents.

What about global warming and these big new environmental challenges? Are we going to prove we can grow the economy and improve the environment, or are we going to keep our heads stuck in the sand and say it's going to be unfortunate when the sugar cane fields in Louisiana flood and the Florida Everglades flood, and we can't grow crops on part of our land anymore, but we just aren't going to do anything about this?

What about the fact that there is still manifest hatred in our country against people just because of their race or their religion or just because they're gay? What are we going to do about that? I mean, here in Los Angeles, one of the most diverse places, one of the most exciting places, and often, one of the most tolerant places in the country, you had those kids shot at that Jewish community school—shot at; you had that Filipino postal worker murdered by a person who apparently thought he got a two-fer, he got an Asian and a Federal employee; Matthew Shepard killed because he was gay; James Byrd dragged to death because he as black. In the Middle West, we had a young Korean Christian shot, walking out of his church, and an African-American former basketball coach at Northwestern shot, walking in his neighborhood, by a guy who said he belonged to a church that didn't believe in God but believed in white supremacy. We still have these things in our country. We have less grievous manifestations of it.

How are we going to build one America? And if we want to build a human face on the global economy and we want to be a force for peace and freedom and decency, from the Balkans to the Middle East and Northern Ireland to the African tribal conflicts, we have to be good at home if we want to do good around the world. How do we propose to deal with this? Now, that's what I think this election is about. These are big things.

You know, when I got elected it was, how are we going to pay the bills and get out of debt and get interest rates down, so people can go back to work; what are we going to do to make the streets safer so people can walk down the streets? Now we have these big questions. You can get America out of debt if you want to. I think you ought to want to. I think the liberals ought to want America

to pay off its debt. Why? Because it means lower interest rates, more jobs, more money for ordinary working people. The people that serve our food today will be better off if America is not borrowing money that they can then borrow for lower costs to send their kids to college or to get an education themselves or make a car payment.

Yes, the crime rate is down to a 30-year low. So what? Anybody think America is safe enough? What are we going to do to make America the safest country in the world? Yes, we have a Children's Health Insurance Program, and 2 million kids are now getting insurance, but just like Hillary warned in 1994, the number of people uninsured has gone up. One Democratic Member of Congress told me the other day, he said, "You know, they told me if I voted for Hillary's health care program, the number of uninsured Americans would go up, and I voted for it, and that's exactly what happened." Think about it. [*Laughter*]

So what are we going to do about this? So that's the first thing. If the American people believe that this is a moment that we cannot afford to squander, her election is a cinch, and I believe the Vice President will win; I think Hillary will win; I think we will definitely win the House and probably win the Senate—if that's what people really believe. So it's a big election.

The second thing I want to tell you is there are huge differences.

And I'll just go to the third point now. There are three points you need to remember—big election, big differences. The third point, only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. [*Laughter*] Now, you laugh, but it's true. Can you believe this Republican campaign? They've tried to get you to develop amnesia about the primary they had. [*Laughter*] And their nominee did not go to his own State party convention this year because he didn't want to have to answer questions about the Texas Republican platform.

I urge you to get a copy of that. [*Laughter*] I mean, you can get rid of every other reactionary tract in your library, if you just got a copy of the Texas Republican platform. [*Laughter*] You would never have to do any research again for the rest of your life about what the most reactionary position is on any issue. Just that one little document, you'll have it forever.

There are differences. I'll just give you a few. We think we ought to be spreading this benefit to everybody. We think we ought to raise the minimum wage, and they don't. We believe in managed care, but we don't think people should be abused in managed care, so we favor a Patients' Bill of Rights. And if people get hurt, we think they ought to be able to sue for redress, and they don't. We favor a Medicare prescription drug program that every senior that needs it can buy into on a voluntary basis, and they don't. We favor continued aggressive efforts to improve the environment, even as we grow the economy. They won't fund our initiatives for global warming. They never want to fund our initiatives to develop alternative sources of fuel on more efficient cars, even though you see what's happening to gas prices in the Middle West today, and why we need to diversify our energy sources.

Al Gore says, "If I get elected President, I'm going to build on President Clinton's order, setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forests," something the Audubon Society said was the most significant conservation move in the last 50 years. [*Applause*] I don't want you to clap for the self-serving part. [*Laughter*] So Gore says, "Clinton did a good thing. I'll build on it." His opponent says, "Vote for me, and I'll reverse it. It is an unconscionable land grab."

We believe that we should build on Senator Feinstein's assault weapons ban and ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips, which allow people to evade the assault weapons ban. We think we should mandate child trigger laws. We think we should close the gun show loophole, and they don't. They don't.

We know that in the next election, there will be—we'll produce a President who will get to make at least two, and maybe four, appointments to the United States Supreme Court—at least two, and maybe four. And we have a candidate who is committed to support a whole range of personal liberties, including a woman's right to choose, and they have one who is committed to do what he can to do away with it.

Now, they don't want to talk about that anymore. That was all stuff that happened in the primaries. But my view is, we ought to run this election not in a hateful way, not in a negative way. I hate these campaigns the last 20 years where you get these forces in opposition, they're running down their opponents, and they want you to believe that whoever they're running against is just a step above a car thief. I don't believe that. I don't like that. I think we should assume that from top to bottom, the people running are honorable and intend to do exactly what they say they will do. But let's not have a shaded definition of what they have said. Let's get it all out there and let people see the choices, and let them make their decision.

So, big differences. Only we want you to know what they are. You've got to go out and tell people. There are consequences here. Their position is, "Hey, this economy is on automatic now. You couldn't mess it up if you tried. Their fraternity had it for 8 years. Give our side a chance." Their position is, "Hey, we're going to have all this money in the surplus. We want to give you way over half of it in a tax cut, spend more than the rest of it that's left in our Social Security privatization plan, spend a little more on our national missile defense or whatever other commitments we've made, and it will all be there, even though it's just projected."

Al Gore stands up and says, "Look, I know I'm running for President, and I'd like to have all the votes I can, but we don't know if we're going to have all this money that we're projecting." What's your projected income over the next 10 years? Would you go spend it all today? [*Laughter*] Anybody here that's sitting down right now and projecting your income for the next 10 years and is willing to make an ironclad commitment that will land you in the poorhouse if you don't do it—spend every nickel of it—you ought to vote for them. The rest of you ought to vote for us.

And you need to tell people that. I mean, Gore says, "Look, let's take at least 20 percent of this money that is being produced only because you're paying more in Medicare taxes than we're spending now, and set it aside and not spend it, not fool with it, use it to pay down the debt, and take the interest savings and put it into Medicare so it will be there when the baby boomers retire. And we don't have to bankrupt our kids. Let's do for that what we're doing for Social Security. And then if the money doesn't materialize, we haven't spent it, and we won't go back to deficits and interest rates. And let's have a tax cut, but let's use it to help people like the folks that are working here establish their own savings account, create a little wealth, prepare for the future; help families with child care, with long-term care for their parents and their disabled family members; open the doors of college to everybody and still have some money to invest in education and the environment and making a safer world."

Now, I think that that's more likely to keep this economy going. People ask me all the time, "Well, what great new innovation did you bring to Washington? How did you do this economic magic? What did you bring?" And I always say, "arithmetic." [*Laughter*] We brought arithmetic back to national policymaking.

So I want you to think about this, folks. We've got to have California. California can influence Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada, people all over the country you've got friends with. You need to tell people when you leave here, "I'm glad I went there yesterday because I understand clearly now that this is a really important election. I understand clearly that there are real differences with real consequences. I'm for Dianne Feinstein because I agree with her, and she has gotten more done in less time than anybody I ever saw. And I'm for Al Gore because he's had more impact for the good as Vice President than anybody in history, because he will keep the prosperity going, because he cares about people that too often get forgotten in our society, and because he understands the future and he can lead us there." Now, if people think that's what the election is about, we win.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:37 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to brunch host Ron Burkle; Gov. Gray Davis of California and his wife, Sharon; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Brunch Honoring Senator Dianne Feinstein in Los Angeles

June 24, 2000

Thank you very much. When I get home and they ask me how Dianne's campaign is doing, I will say it is really hot. [*Laughter*] I want to thank all of you for being here. I want to especially thank our friend Ron Burkle for opening his home and being so generous on this and on so many other occasions. And I thank the other officials who are here. And I'm glad to see Roz Wyman here. It reminds me of my ties to my roots. And her loyalty to our party and our candidates is something I hope I can emulate for the rest of my life.

Let me say to all of you, it's hot, and you've been here a long time, and I'm preaching to the saved, so I'll be brief. Once I came to a fundraiser for Dianne 6 years ago in San Francisco, and she didn't show up—[*laughter*]—because she had to stay and vote. So I was her surrogate. And I told the folks out here, I said we were talking about this, and Hillary suggested that I make it a habit for her. So now, last week I went to a couple of events for Hillary, and she didn't show up on purpose. [*Laughter*] So we can be in two different places. So I'm not the surrogate-in-chief of the country, and I'm having a good time. If Dianne hadn't provided me that opportunity, it never would have occurred to me. [*Laughter*]

Let me say—I want to say one thing seriously about Senator Feinstein. In my experience I know of no Member of the United States Congress of either party, in the majority or the minority, who got so much done in his or her first term of service. Now, you think about, the assault weapons ban would not have happened without her; the resolution of the northern California water problem; the Mojave Desert National Park and the other expansions of the parks we've done in California; the Headwater Forest, the preservation of the priceless redwoods—none of this stuff would have happened without her. It's unheard of for somebody in his or her first term of service to have this kind of constructive impact. Nobody does that. And so she has become not only California but the Nation's resource. And you've got to send her back for that reason alone. And I mean that.

Now, the second thing I want to say, again very briefly, is I think we'll have a very good election this year. I think we'll pick up a lot of seats in the Senate and the House, and I think we'll win the White House if the people believe the election is about what I think it's about. If they understand there are real differences between the two candidates and the two parties, and if they understand what those differences are, then we'll do just fine.

I tell everybody the three things you need to know about this election: It's real important; there are real differences; and only the Democrats want you to know what the real differences are. But it's really worth remembering that.

And I won't go into it all. Basically, if you heard my State of the Union Address, you know what I think. But I want to tell you this. We've had some children here at this event today; we've still got this young lady here and this young lady over there, and Steve and Chantal Cloobeck brought their little boy here. You ought to be thinking about these kids between now and November. And you ought to be thinking about what their life will be like when all the baby boomers retire; what their life will be like in the most diverse society we ever had if we have the ability to provide excellence in education to all of our kids and if we don't; what their lives will be like if we have a society that values both work and family and the importance of childrearing and giving all of our kids a decent upbringing and if we don't; what their lives will be like if we can deal with climate change and other environmental problems and still grow the economy or if we don't; and what their lives will be like if we continue this economic expansion and extend it to the people in the places that were left behind or if we don't; what their lives will be like if we continue to follow Senator Feinstein's lead and make America a safer and safer country or if we decide to give crime policy back to the interest groups; what their lives will be like depending on the attitudes of the next two to four Justices of the Supreme Court that the next President will appoint.

This is a big election. And I can only tell you that not only from my life's experience, which, regrettably, is getting increasingly longer—although I prefer it to the alternative—[*laughter*]—and from my reading of American history, a time like this comes along at the most once every 50 years or so. Sometimes maybe once every 100 years. We have economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence, no overwhelming domestic or foreign threats to the fabric of the Nation's life. And those of us who are older, particularly those of us who have lived most of our lives, have a heavy responsibility not to squander this, to make sure that people understand what a profoundly important gift this election is.

And I tell people all the time, I don't want this to be a negative campaign. I don't want to see people trying to attack the character of their opponent. We've had too much of that. And there's a verse in the New Testament that says that they who judge without mercy will themselves be judged without mercy. And we don't have to have that kind of campaign. What we ought to have is an old-fashioned debate. We ought to have civics 101. Because you should assume that we have good people who in good faith will attempt to do exactly what they say, and then we can identify the differences, clarify them, and say we want to build the future of our dreams for our children, which choice is better?

Now, believe me, if that's what the election's about, if people understand it's big, that there are real choices, and they understand what the choices are, then on January the 20th, Al Gore will be inaugurated President; Dianne Feinstein will be overwhelmingly reelected, and she'll have a lot more Democrats helping her. Dick Gephardt will be the Speaker of the House, and I'll be a member of the Senate spouses' club. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to brunch host Ron Burkle; Roz Wyman, chair, Feinstein 2000; and Steve Cloobeck, president and chief executive officer, Diamond International Resorts, and his wife, Chantal.

Remarks to the Association of State Democratic Chairs in Los Angeles

June 24, 2000

Thank you very much. First, I thank you, Joan, for 8 years of friendship and for the remarkable support that you and the State of Massachusetts have given to me and Al Gore and our whole team.

Thank you, Governor Davis, for your friendship and for the extraordinary example you've set here in California, with your education legislation, your crime control legislation, and your devotion to our party. And we thank you, and we thank you for the day you had with the Vice President up in northern California yesterday. I liked reading about it. It was good press, and we thank you.

Thank you, Joe Andrew, for leaving their ranks and coming to ours. It's hard for me to say—I thank Bill Daley for leaving my Cabinet. [*Laughter*] But he might take it wrong. But I thank him for his willingness to assume the chairmanship of the Vice President's campaign. And I thank you, Donna Brazile. And thank you, Johnny Hayes, who is my political memorabilia partner. I thought I had a lot of it until I met Johnny.

I want to thank Maxine Waters, who had me in her home in 1992 to meet with people from Los Angeles after the riots here, to deal with the economic and the social problems. And we walked down the streets together, burned out streets, and talked to people in a very different Los Angeles, a very different California, and a very different America than we have today.

I thank Dennis Archer and Kathy Vick and Bill Lynch and Lottie Shackelford and all the rest of you, so many of you I've known a long, long time. When you were introduced, ma'am, as having been at every convention since '36, I've been at every one since 1972 and that makes me pretty creaky, I guess. [*Laughter*]

But I'd like to say a few things. First, I just got off the phone with the Vice President, and he told me to tell you hello and to thank you. Secondly, I don't think you can possibly know how grateful I feel to all of you for your loyal support in '92 and '96 and in the all the times in between, in the good

times and the bad times. I've had a real good time doing this job, and I'm glad it has worked out so well for the American people.

But I want to have a brief, but serious, conversation with you now. We have to win. We have to win the White House. We have to win the Senate. We have to win the House. We have to win these governorships. We need to get some more of them back. And to win, we have to make sure that the election is about the right subject. People ask me all the time, "Who's going to win this or that election?" I say, "It always depends on what the voters believe the election is about." Very often, the answer you get depends upon the question you ask.

And for me, it is a pretty simple matter. I have worked as hard as I could to turn our country around, to get us going in the right direction. You know, you didn't have to be a genius in '92 to figure out what the election ought to be about. The economy was in the tank. All the social indicators were going in the wrong direction. Washington politics was basically a matter of lobbing rhetorical bombs, or, as I like to say, "I got an idea, and you've got an idea. Let's fight. Maybe we'll both get on television tonight." [*Laughter*] And it often got people on television, but it didn't often change the way we were living.

This country is in good shape now. But there are some huge challenges out there still and huge opportunities. And I would argue to you that how a country deals with its prosperity is at least as big a test of its judgment and its character as how a country deals with adversity.

For me, it's not even close, because I know that a time like this comes along maybe once every 50 years, where you have a strong economy and improving society, a lot of national self-confidence, the absence of crippling domestic or foreign threats. And those of us who have lived most of our lives have a profound obligation to make sure that this election is about building the future of our dreams for our children.

What are they going to do when all those baby boomers retire, about Social Security and Medicare? How are we going to make aging meaningful in terms of helping people to work who want to work, making sure people have affordable prescription drugs who need it? What about the largest and most diverse group of school children in our country, will they have world-class educations or not? Will they all be able to go on to college or not?

What about the environment? Will we continue to improve it as we grow the economy, or will we go back to the old idea that you can't improve it and grow the economy? Will we really seriously take on this problem of global warming and climate change that Al Gore has been talking about for years and years and years now, and now everybody recognizes it's real, and he was right all along? Or are we going to continue to deny that it's a real problem until we see the flooding of the sugar cane in Louisiana, and the Everglades in Florida and a lot of farmland dry up and blow away?

What about all the people that have jobs but still have problems raising their children and doing their work? Are we going to do more for child care, for after-school programs, for long-term care for elderly and disabled relatives? Are we going to do more for family leave? Are we going to do more, in short, to help people balance work and family? What about people like a lot of the people who work in this hotel that are doing the best they can, but they need some help to reward their work so they can raise their kids, too? We're going to take account of them in the tax policy of the country, in the education policy of the country.

What about the people in places that have been left behind? Are we going to bring them into the free enterprise revolution or not? What about the digital divide? Are we going to close it or let it gape open? What about our responsibilities around the world? What about here at home, where people still get hurt and, unfortunately, sometimes killed because they're black or brown or Asian or gay or they work for the Federal Government or some other reason? We may never get another chance in our lifetime to take on this big stuff.

So the first thing you've got to do is to convince people back home that this is a huge election. It is just as important as the election of '92 or '96. Every bit as important. Point number two, there are real differences.

Point number three, only the Democrats want you to know what they are. [*Laughter*] Now, you laugh, but it's true, isn't it? Do you ever hear them talk about their primary campaign? They want America to develop amnesia about their primary campaign—who was on what side, who said what, what commitments were made. You don't see them passing out copies of that Texas Republican platform, do you? [*Laughter*]

I was down in Texas the other night when that thing came out, with a bunch of my old friends. And one of them said that it was so bad, you could get rid of every Fascist tract in your library if you just had a copy of the Texas Republican platform. [*Laughter*] And I noticed their leader didn't go to the convention, and he didn't repudiate it. He just said, well, he was talking about other things. I say that in a good natured way.

But let me say this. I don't believe we have to have a negative campaign this year. I don't think we should. I'm sick and tired of these campaigns where this vast amount of money and effort is spent to try to convince people that there's something wrong with their opponents. How many elections have we had in the last 20 years where basically the whole deal is designed to put everybody into a white heat, including our friends in the press, to convince the voters that your opponent is just one step above a car thief? Now, we don't have to do that this year. This country is in good shape.

And what we ought to do is to have a real debate here. We ought to say, "Let's assume that everybody is honorable. Let's assume that they're pretty much going to do what they say they're going to do." That's what history indicates is the case, by the way. Most Presidents do pretty much what they say they're going to do, and when they don't, we're normally glad. Aren't you glad Lincoln didn't keep his campaign promise not to free the slaves? Aren't you glad President Roosevelt didn't keep his campaign promise to balance the budget when unemployment was 25 percent? But basically, Presidents do what they say they're going to do. So we can have this debate. So you've got to go out and say, "Folks, whatever your take on this is politically, this is a huge election. We may never get another chance in our lifetime to actually vote to make the future of our dreams for our children."

Secondly, we have real differences. I'll just mention a few. We think we ought to raise the minimum wage, and they don't. We think we ought to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights—if somebody gets hurt, they ought to be able to sue—and they don't. We think we ought to have a voluntary prescription Medicare drug benefit available to everybody who needs it, and they don't. We think we ought to close the gun show loophole, require child trigger locks, and not import large capacity ammunition clips that make a mockery of our assault weapons ban. And we don't believe anybody is going to miss a day in the deer woods if we do that. But they're not for it.

We think we ought to put 50,000 police on the street in the highest crime neighborhoods, because the 100,000 we put on worked so well, and they disagree. We think we ought to build 6,000 new schools and modernize another 5,000 a year for the next 5 years, and they don't. We think that we ought to require schools to turn around or shut down failing schools, school districts in States, but we ought to give them enough money so that every child who needs it can be in an after-school or a summer school program, and they don't. We think we ought to put 100,000 more teachers out there in the early grades to lower class size, because it has a direct impact on student achievement, and they don't.

We think we ought to keep trying to clean up the air and the water and deal with climate change and develop alternative sources of energy and support the development of cars that get better mileage, and they voted against that stuff every year I put it up. They just don't agree. If you're buying gasoline in Chicago and Milwaukee now, you probably wish we'd move faster to develop alternative sources of fuel and higher mileage vehicles.

So in all these things, I think we're right, and I think they're not. But they ought to be given a chance to have their piece—say their piece. Most important of all, on how we're going to keep the prosperity going, they think that we ought to have a tax cut that costs over half of the projected new surplus, which is real big, and that we ought

to spend the rest of it on—the projected surplus—on the partial privatization of Social Security, on a big national missile defense system, and on whatever else they promise to spend money on, even though all that together is more than even the new surplus projections.

Now, we're taking a more politically risky position at a time when people feel kind of relaxed. The Vice President says, "Why don't we not spend all our projected surplus?" What's your projected income for the next decade, folks? Are you ready to spend it all tomorrow? Everybody that wants to spend your entire projected income for the next decade should seriously consider changing parties, because that's their position. And everybody that doesn't, who's not in our party, should seriously consider changing parties.

So what does Al Gore say? He says, "Why don't we just start by saying there is at least 20 percent of this projected surplus we are not going to spend, because we're getting it from your Medicare taxes, anyway. So we'll put it over to the side, and we'll pay the debt down with it. And then we'll take the money we save from doing that and put it into Medicare so when the baby boomers retire, we can keep Medicare alive, we won't bankrupt our kids. And, by the way, we're not going to spend all this projected surplus.

"And why don't we have a generous tax cut that helps working people, especially at modest incomes, to set up their own retirement accounts and invest, if they want, in the stock market and generate wealth, while we don't mess up Social Security, and then help others with the cost of child care or long-term care or paying for our children to go college, so we can open the doors of college to all; and one that gives wealthy people the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America to create jobs we give them to invest in poor areas in Latin America or Asia or Africa. And why don't we do that, and then we'll still have some money to invest in the future."

I know what I think is more likely to keep this prosperity going. People ask me all the time now that I've just got a few months left, 7 months left. They say, "What was the secret of your economic policy? What was the genius that Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and all of them brought to Washington?" And I look at them, and I say, "arithmetic." [*Laughter*] The Democrats brought arithmetic back to Washington. If we didn't have it, we didn't spend it. We made a commitment to cut out programs that we didn't have to have, so we'd have more to invest in education and technology and the future.

But I'm just telling you, these are big issues, and you ought to clarify them. But if the public believes that this is a big election and it's about building the future of our dreams for our children, and if the public believes that there are real differences—and I only touched on a few of them—there are real differences in our position on what it really means to include women and gays and people of color, people of all different backgrounds in the Government and in the life of America.

The next President is going to get two to four appointments to the Supreme Court. They've made different commitments about what their heartfelt positions are on the right to choose, for example. And I think you have to assume that both these people now running for President will do what they have promised to do on this. You have to assume that they are honorable and they will. So you have big differences. And we can have a great debate.

Let me just say one other thing I want you to know. I think I know Al Gore about as well as anybody alive except his family. And I've seen him at every conceivable kind of circumstances, in good and bad times for him, good and bad times for me, good and bad times for our administration. There are three things that I think you ought to know—or four.

Number one, this country has had a lot of Vice Presidents who made great Presidents. Thomas Jefferson was Vice President. Teddy Roosevelt was Vice President. Harry Truman was Vice President. Lyndon Johnson was Vice President. But we have never had anybody who, while he was Vice President, made so many decisions and did so many things that helped so many Americans remotely compared with Al Gore. He has been by far the most important Vice President in the history of the United States of America.

Whether it's breaking the tie on the economic plan or leading our empowerment zone program to bring economic opportunity to poor people or leading our efforts in technology or our efforts to reinvent Government that has given us the smallest Federal Government since Kennedy was President or our efforts to continue to improve the environment while we grow the economy or our efforts with Russia or South Africa, or our arms control policy or sticking by me when I made very, very tough decisions in Haiti and Bosnia and Kosovo, in financial aid to Mexico—a lot of them some of you didn't agree with me on—he was always there.

The second thing I want you to know is, it's my opinion, based on a lifetime of experience with this economy and some fair understanding of it, that our economic policy, the one he has embodied, is far more likely to keep this economic expansion going and get the most out of it.

Thirdly, and in some ways most important of all to me, I think that we ought to have a President in a time of prosperity who is genuinely committed to helping all families participate in it, to giving all people a sense that they belong in America, and to giving everybody a chance to express their opinions and to be part of the future.

And fourthly, I think it's quite important that we have a President that really understands what the future is going to be like, that really gets it. I don't know how many people I've said—heard tell me that Al Gore is the first person that ever talked to them about the Internet. He said when we took office that someday the whole Library of Congress would be on the Internet, and I thought it was something that would happen in 20 or 30 years, and it's just about there right now.

He was the first person I ever heard talk about global warming. The first lunch we ever had, in January of '93, he was showing me his charts. Now everybody says it's real. I had to listen to 8 years of some people saying it was some sort of subversive plot to undermine the American economy. [*Laughter*]

I'll give you another example, something really important in the future. We're going to have all of our medical records and all of our financial records on somebody's computer somewhere. I think it's important whether you have privacy rights. I think you ought to be able to—you ought to have to give specific approval before somebody goes into somebody else's computer and gets your financial records or your medical records in ways that can affect your life. I think that's important. That's a big issue.

I could give you lots and lots of other examples. I'll give you one chilling one. The same things that are working in the information technology revolution that are going to give you little computers you can fit in the palm of your hand, with a screen that works just like the Internet so you can bring up things—you'll even be able to watch CNN news or something on a little screen you're holding in your hand. All that's going to happen in weapons systems. The biggest challenge we're going to face in the future, I think, over the next 20 years will be from the enemies from the nation-state, from the terrorists, the drug runners, the weapons peddlers, and people who will have miniature weapons of mass destruction, chemical, biological—God forbid—maybe even nuclear weapons. We need somebody who understands this stuff, somebody that's worked at it for years and years, somebody that gets it.

So that's my pitch. We've got—our nominee is the best Vice President the country ever had. He is clearly the person who is offering an economic strategy most likely to keep the recovery going. He has a clear commitment to help all the people to make sure nobody gets left behind. And he understands the future and can lead us there.

Now, if the public understands, if the people we represent believe that this is a huge election, that it's a chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children, if they believe there are real differences, if they understand what the differences are, then he will be elected President, and Hillary will be elected to the Senate, and so will a lot of others, and we will win the House back, and we will be celebrating.

Now, that's your job. You've got to make sure people understand what the deal is. That's what our job is. This is a happy job. You never have to say a bad word about a

Republican. All you have to do is go out and say, "Here is where we are. Here is where we want to go. Here are the honest differences, and at least our party would like you to know exactly what they are."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. in the Century Room at the Century Plaza Hotel & Spa. In his remarks, he referred to Joan M. Menard, president, Association of State Democratic Chairs; Gov. Gray Davis of California; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Kathleen M. Vick, secretary, Bill Lynch, vice chair, Dennis W. Archer, general co-chair, and Lottie Shackelford, vice chair, Democratic National Committee; William M. Daley, general chair, Donna L. Brazile, campaign manager, and Johnny H. Hayes, finance director, Gore 2000; former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks on the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War

June 25, 2000

Thank you very much, Secretary Cohen, for your remarks and your outstanding service. General Myers, Mr. Ambassador, thank you so much for being here today. Chaplain Craven, Chaplain Sobel; especially, my friend Senator Glenn, whose life is a testament to the triumph of freedom.

I would also like to thank Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Gober for being here, and acknowledge that Secretary West and Congressman Charles Rangel, a Korean war veteran, are in Seoul today leading the American delegation at the commemoration activities there, and we ought to give them a big hand. They're representing us well. [*Applause*]

I want to recognize Congressman Bishop and Congressman Faleomavaega. And thank Senator Paul Sarbanes, who did so much to keep this Korean War Memorial beautiful. I want to thank the members of our Armed Forces here and around the world and, especially, those in Korea, whom I have had the honor of visiting on several occasions. And of course, and especially, the veterans and their families here today.

Five years ago I had the honor of dedicating this remarkable memorial, and on that day, many who were seeing the 19 beautiful statues for the first time, commented on how very lifelike they seemed. But one veteran wryly said, "They were lifelike in every way but one. They were all 7 feet tall." He said, "When I think about the courage of those who fought in Korea, I remember them as being 20 feet tall."

All across our Nation today, our fellow citizens are coming together to say to men and women who fought for freedom half a century ago, half a world away, we will never forget your bravery; we will always honor your service and your sacrifice.

As we meet today, we are blessed to live, as Secretary Cohen said, in a world where, for the first time, over half the people on the globe live under governments of their own choosing. It has happened so rapidly that we may fall into the trap of thinking that it had to happen, that communism's fall and freedom's victory was inevitable.

But 50 crowded years ago, the world we know today was anything but inevitable. Hitler was gone, but Stalin was not. Berlin was divided. A revolution across the Pacific began a fierce debate here at home over the question, who lost China? In 1949 the Soviet Union had detonated its first atomic bomb. As we struggled to rebuild Europe and Japan, the free nations of the world watched and wondered when and where would the cold war turn hot and would America meet the test.

Fifty years ago today, the world got its answer in Korea, in a place known as the Uijongbu Corridor. In the early morning hours of June 25th, 1950, 90,000 North Korean troops broke across the border and invaded South Korea.

The only American there that day was a 31-year-old Army captain and Omaha Beach veteran named Joseph Darrigo. He was awakened by what he thought was thunder. But when the shell fragments hit his house, he ran half-dressed to his Jeep and drove. Within half mile of the local train station, he couldn't believe what he was seeing, a full regiment of North Korean soldiers getting off the train. Now, he later recalled, "Over 5,000 soldiers came against one person, me."

Captain Darrigo escaped that day. He went on to serve another year in Korea before an illness brought him home. Time has slowed him down some but not much. And we are honored that he could be with us here today.

I'd like to recognize Captain Joseph R. Darrigo. Please, sir, stand. [*Applause*]

The truth is, the leaders of the Communist nations did not believe America would stand up for South Korea. After all, Americans didn't want another war; the blood still hadn't dried from World War II. Nobody wanted more rationing. Nobody wanted more Western Union boys riding up with telegrams from the War Department. Americans wanted to start families. They wanted to see gold stars on report cards, not gold stars in windows.

But from the moment Harry Truman heard the news at home, on his first trip to Missouri since Christmas the year before, he knew this was a moment of truth. If an invasion was permitted to triumph in Korea without opposition from the free world, no small nation again would have the courage to resist aggression. He knew American boys didn't fight and die to stop Nazi aggression only to see it replaced by Communist aggression.

So Korea wasn't just a line on a map. It was where America drew the line in the sand on the cold war and where, for the first time, the nations of the whole world, together at the then newly created United Nations, voted to use armed force to stop armed aggression.

The papers ordering Americans to combat in Korea included the marvelously romantic phrase, "for duty beyond the seas." Some duty. For those who fought it, there was no romance. The war was bitter, brutal, and long.

In the first weeks, not much went right. Troops from the Occupation Force in Japan were thrown into the middle of combat, not prepared to fight a war. Their weapons were rusty. Rockets from World War II bazookas bounced off Russian tanks like stones. In many ways, it wasn't a modern war at all. Oh, there were jets and helicopters, but most of the fighting was done with rifles, machine guns, bayonets, and mortars. Soldiers lived in sandbagged bunkers and stood watch on lonely ridges. It has been said that the Americans who fought in France in 1917 would have understood Korea, that the men who served under Lee and Grant would have recognized Korea.

And then, of course, there was the weather. The cold war was never so cold as in Korea. It may be hard to believe today, but imagine. They spent a few minutes in temperatures from time to time more than 50 degrees below zero. Now, imagine trying to fight a war in it. I'm told that pins even froze inside grenades. Many died from shock brought on by the cold. And then, when summer came, there was no relief, but instead, 100-degree heat and dust so thick, supply trucks had to keep their lights on at midday.

There is no question: Korea was war at its worst. But it was also America at its best.

These are men and women, as the memorial says, who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and a people they had never met. Throughout most of the war, they were unbelievably out-gunned and outmanned, in some places 20 to 1. But they never gave up and never gave in.

At Pusan Perimeter, troops were so spread out, if you looked left and right, chances were you couldn't see another soldier. But the line did not break. At Inchon, troops had to scale a dangerous sea wall within a 2-hour window. They went on to take back Seoul. At Mig Alley, Americans encountered the world's fastest fighter jets. For every jet the enemy shot down, our pilots shot down 10. At Heartbreak Ridge and Pork Chop Hill, wave after wave of enemy soldiers came crashing in, but our troops stood their ground. And at the Chosen Reservoir, when legendary marine Lewis "Chesty" Puller heard that the Chinese troops had them surrounded, he replied, "Good, now they can't get away."

The Americans, South Koreans, and our allies who fought in Korea set a standard of courage that may someday be equalled but can never be surpassed. Korea was not a police action or a crisis or a conflict or a clash; it was a war, a hard, brutal war. And the men and women who fought it were heroes.

There is another subject that has to be addressed here today. When the guns fell silent, some asked what our forces in Korea had done for freedom, after all, for after all, the

fighting began at the 38th parallel and ended at the 38th parallel. I submit to you today that looking back through the long lens of history, it is clear that the stand America took in Korea was indispensable to our ultimate victory in the cold war. Because we stood our ground in Korea, the Soviet Union drew a clear lesson that America would fight for freedom.

Had Americans and our allies from South Korea to as far away as Turkey and Australia not shown commitment and fortitude, we could well later, as Harry Truman foresaw, have faced world war III. It is, therefore, not a stretch to draw the line of history straight from those brave soldiers who stood their ground on ridged lines in Korea 50 years ago to the wonderfully happy young people who stood and celebrated on the Berlin Wall 10 years ago.

Because they all stood their ground, today, South Korea is a free and prosperous nation, one of the great success stories in the world, as the Ambassador said, with the world's 12th largest economy and, I might add, a remarkable democratic leader in President Kim Dae-jung.

Because we have continued to stand with our democratic ally, South Korea, with 37,000 American troops, standing watch on the border today, just as we have since 1953, we have kept the peace. And because of all that, there is now a chance for a different future on the Korean Peninsula.

Last week's summit between President Kim Dae-jung and Chairman Kim Chong-il, the first of its kind in 50 years, was a hopeful and historic step. It was courageous of President Kim to go to Pyongyang. He had no illusions, however. Nor should we. There is still a wide gulf to be crossed; there is still tension on the Peninsula. North Korea still bears the wounds of self-inflicted isolation. The people there are suffering terribly. But if we hadn't done what we did in Korea 50 years ago, and if the United States and its allies hadn't stood fast down to the present day, South Korea might well look the same way.

Korea helped remind us of a few other lessons, too, that our people and all our rich diversity are our greatest strength, that a fully integrated military is our surest hope for victory, that our freedom and security depends on the freedom and security of others, and that we can never, ever, pull away from the rest of the world.

And finally, for all the talk about Korea being the "forgotten war," we must never forget that for some, Korea is still alive every single day.

In 1950 a young woman from Hannibal, Missouri, named Virginia Duncan, saw her older brother, Hallie, go off to fight in Korea. He skipped his high school graduation because he wanted to join the service so badly. In Korea he sent letters home about every week. In one, he told them he was looking forward to a shipment of cookies from his mother.

At the same time, in Belham, Kentucky, another young woman, named Betty Bruce, watched her brother, Jimmy, go off to war. He was the 10th of 11 children. His parents had to sign a permission slip so he could join the Army at 17. When he got there, he sent a letter home saying that no matter what happened, he was all right because he had given his heart to the Lord.

Betty and Virginia never met. But in the winter of 1950, they both received the same awful news. On the day after Thanksgiving, Betty and her family got a knock at the door and two Army officers told her, her brother was missing in action. Two weeks later, 4 days before her own wedding, Virginia and her family were told that her brother, too, was missing in action. Not long after, the cookies they sent came back home, marked "return to sender."

For 50 years, Virginia and Betty asked questions without answers. Oh, they made sure their children came to know the uncles they had never met. They kept the pictures, and they prayed. They both had just about given up hope, but earlier this month, their prayers were answered. Three weeks ago, they both learned that a search and recovery team, working out of Hawaii, had identified the remains of two soldiers in North Korea.

Today I am honored to say that the remains of Betty's brother, Sergeant Jimmy Higgins, and Virginia's brother, Sergeant Hallie Clark, Jr., are finally coming home to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. I'd like to thank Virginia Duncan and Betty

Bruce and their families for being here today and ask them to stand and be recognized. [*Applause*]

Before I close, I also want to say a special word of appreciation to the men and women of the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii, known as CIL–HI. Since 1996, they have recovered more than 40 sets of remains from Korea. On Memorial Day I announced that we had resumed talks with North Korea in hopes of recovering more. The talks were successful. Today I am pleased to announce that as we are here meeting, the latest team from CIL–HI is in the air, on the way to North Korea. We will not stop until we have the fullest possible accounting of all our men and women still missing in action there.

To my fellow Americans and our distinguished allies and friends from Korea, and those representing our other allies, we all know that Korea isn't about Hawkeye and Houlihan but about honor and heroes, young men and women willing to pay the price to keep a people they had never met free.

To the veterans of the Korean war—those here, those around the country, those whom we must remember today—let me say, on behalf of a grateful nation: Fifty years ago you helped make the world that we know today possible. You proved to all humanity just how good our Nation can be at its best. You showed us, through your example, that freedom is not free, but it can be maintained. Today your fellow Americans say: We remember, and we are very grateful.

God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:47 p.m. at the Korean War Memorial in West Potomac Park. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, Commander, U.S. Space Command; Hong Koo Lee, Korean Ambassador to the United States; Chaplain John N. Craven, USN (Ret.); Chaplain Samuel Sobel, USN (Ret.); former Senator John Glenn; and General Secretary Kim Chong-il of North Korea

Remarks on Completion of the First Survey of the Human Genome Project

June 26, 2000

The President. Good morning. I want to, first of all, acknowledge Prime Minister Blair, who will join us by satellite in just a moment, from London. I want to welcome here the Ambassadors from the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, France. And I'd also like to acknowledge the contributions not only that their scientists but also scientists from China made to the vast international consortium that is the human genome project.

I thank Secretary Shalala, who could not be here today, and Secretary Richardson, who is here. Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, Dr. Ari Patrinos, scientists of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Energy, who have played an important role in the human genome project.

I want to say a special word of thanks to my science adviser, Dr. Neal Lane, and of course, to Dr. Francis Collins, the Director of the International human genome project, and to the Celera president, Craig Venter. I thank Senator Harkin and Senator Sarbanes for being here, and the other distinguished guests.

Nearly two centuries ago, in this room, on this floor, Thomas Jefferson and a trusted aide spread out a magnificent map, a map Jefferson had long prayed he would get to see in his lifetime. The aide was Meriwether Lewis, and the map was the product of his courageous expedition across the American frontier, all the way to the Pacific. It was a map that defined the contours and forever expanded the frontiers of our continent and our imagination.

Today the world is joining us here in the East Room to behold a map of even greater significance. We are here to celebrate the completion of the first survey of the entire human genome. Without a doubt, this is the most important, most wondrous map ever produced by humankind.

The moment we are here to witness was brought about through brilliant and painstaking work of scientists all over the world, including many men and women here today. It was not even 50 years ago that a young Englishman named Crick and a brash, even younger American named Watson, first discovered the elegant structure of our genetic code. Dr. Watson, the way you announced your discovery in the journal "Nature," was one of the great understatements of all time: "This structure has novel features, which are of considerable biological interest." [*Laughter*] Thank you, sir.

How far we have come since that day. In the intervening years, we have pooled the combined wisdom of biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, mathematics, and computer science; tapped the great strengths and insights of the public and private sectors. More than 1,000 researchers across six nations have revealed nearly all 3 billion letters of our miraculous genetic code. I congratulate all of you on this stunning and humbling achievement.

Today's announcement represents more than just an epic-making triumph of science and reason. After all, when Galileo discovered he could use the tools of mathematics and mechanics to understand the motion of celestial bodies, he felt, in the words of one eminent researcher, "that he had learned the language in which God created the universe."

Today, we are learning the language in which God created life. We are gaining ever more awe for the complexity, the beauty, the wonder of God's most divine and sacred gift. With this profound new knowledge, humankind is on the verge of gaining immense new power to heal. Genome science will have a real impact on all our lives and even more on the lives of our children. It will revolutionize the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of most, if not all, human diseases.

In coming years, doctors increasingly will be able to cure diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, and cancer by attacking their genetic roots. Just to offer one example, patients with some forms of leukemia and breast cancer already are being treated in clinical trials with sophisticated new drugs that precisely target the faulty genes and cancer cells, with little or no risk to healthy cells. In fact, it is now conceivable that our children's children will know the term "cancer" only as a constellation of stars.

But today's historic achievement is only a starting point. There is much hard work yet to be done. That is why I'm so pleased to announce that from this moment forward, the robust and healthy competition that has led us to this day and that always is essential to the progress of science will be coupled with enhanced public/private cooperation.

Public and private research teams are committed to publishing their genomic data simultaneously later this year for the benefit of researchers in every corner of the globe. And after publication, both sets of teams will join together for an historic sequence analysis conference. Together, they will examine what scientific insights have been gleaned from both efforts and how we can most judiciously proceed toward the next majestic horizons.

What are those next horizons? Well, first, we will complete a virtually error-free final draft of the human genome before the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the double helix, less than 3 years from now. Second, through sustained and vigorous support for public and private research, we must sort through this trove of genomic data to identify every human gene. We must discover the function of these genes and their protein products, and then we must rapidly convert that knowledge into treatments that can lengthen and enrich lives.

I want to emphasize that biotechnology companies are absolutely essential in this endeavor, for it is they who will bring to the market the life-enhancing applications of the information from the human genome. And for that reason, this administration is committed to helping them to make the kind of long-term investments that will change the face of medicine forever.

The third horizon that lies before us is one that science cannot approach alone. It is the horizon that represents the ethical, moral, and spiritual dimension of the power we now possess. We must not shrink from exploring that far frontier of science. But as we consider how to use new discovery, we must also

not retreat from our oldest and most cherished human values. We must ensure that new genome science and its benefits will be directed toward making life better for all citizens of the world, never just a privileged few.

As we unlock the secrets of the human genome, we must work simultaneously to ensure that new discoveries never pry open the doors of privacy. And we must guarantee that genetic information cannot be used to stigmatize or discriminate against any individual or group.

Increasing knowledge of the human genome must never change the basic belief on which our ethics, our Government, our society are founded. All of us are created equal, entitled to equal treatment under the law. After all, I believe one of the great truths to emerge from this triumphant expedition inside the human genome is that in genetic terms, all human beings, regardless of race, are more than 99.9 percent the same.

What that means is that modern science has confirmed what we first learned from ancient faiths. The most important fact of life on this Earth is our common humanity. My greatest wish on this day for the ages is that this incandescent truth will always guide our actions as we continue to march forth in this, the greatest age of discovery ever known.

Now, it is my great pleasure to turn to my friend Prime Minister Tony Blair, who is joined in the State Dining Room at 10 Downing Street by Dr. Fred Sanger and other world-renowned scientists. With the generous support of the Wellcome Trust, British scientists have played an invaluable role in reaching this milestone.

On behalf of the American people, I would like to thank the Prime Minister, the scientists, and the British nation for the brilliant work you have brought to this international effort.

And Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to salute not only your unwavering support for genome research but also your visionary commitment to sparking ever-greater innovation across the full spectrum of science and technology.

And on a personal note, I can't help but think that the year of your son's birth will always be remembered for the remarkable achievements we announce today. I think his life expectancy has just gone up by about 25 years. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, made remarks by satellite.*]

The President. Tony, if I could, I would like to pick up on your last remark. I think everybody genuinely is concerned about the issues you raised, the privacy issues, and the whole general set of ethical, social, and legal issues. And it strikes me that our scientists—the British and the American scientists, our French, German, Chinese counterparts who worked on this—were working toward a single, clearly defined goal in all those countries and in the other countries of the world that will have to live with both the benefits and the challenges of these discoveries.

There are different legal systems, different social mores, but I think that it would be a very good thing if the U.S, the U.K., and anybody else that wants to work with us, could have the same sort of joint endeavor we've had with the human genome, to deal with the implications of this, to deal with the legal, the social, the ethical implications. We may have differences from country to country, but I think that, if we work together, we'll give a higher sense of urgency to the project, and we'll get a better product.

And so I'm offering you another partnership. It's easy for me to do, because you'll have to do it, and I'll be gone. [*Laughter*]

[*Prime Minister Blair made remarks by satellite.*]

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much, Tony.

Now, in a few moments, we'll hear from Celera president Dr. Craig Venter, who shares in the glory of this day, and deservedly so because of his truly visionary pursuit of innovative strategies to sequence the human genome as rapidly as possible. And I thank you, Craig, for what you have done to make this day possible.

And now I'd like to invite Dr. Francis Collins to the lectern. I also want to congratulate him. From his development of some of the central methods for finding human disease genes to his successful application of those methods to the discovery of the cystic fibrosis

gene in 1989 to his current leadership for the International human genome project, he has combined the talents of rigorous science and a profound sensitivity to ethical, legal, and social issues. He is a physician scientist of great faith, compassion, energy, and integrity. And he has truly helped us more than anyone else to understand how the marvels of genome science will actually improve human health.

So Dr. Collins, please come up to the lectern.

[*Dr. Francis Collins, Director, National Human Genome Research Institute, and Dr. J. Craig Venter, president and chief scientific officer, Celera Genomics Corporation, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, thank you both for those remarkable statements. I suppose, in closing, the most important thing I could do is to associate myself with Dr. Venter's last statement. When we get this all worked out and we're all living to be 150—[*laughter*]—young people will still fall in love; old people will still fight about things that should have been resolved 50 years ago—[*laughter*]—we will all, on occasion, do stupid things; and we will all see the unbelievable capacity of humanity to be noble. This is a great day.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:19 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to British Ambassador to the U.S. Christopher Meyer; Japanese Ambassador to the U.S. Shunji Yanai; German Ambassador to the U.S. Juergen Chrobog; French Ambassador to the U.S. Francis Bujon de l'Estang; Aristides Patrinos, Associate Director, Office of Science, Department of Energy; James D. Watson, president, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory; Francis H. Crick, researcher, Cambridge Laboratory of Molecular Biology; Frederick Sanger, 1958 and 1980 Nobel Prize-winner for chemistry; and Prime Minister Blair's son, Leo. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the Prime Minister Blair, Dr. Collins, and Dr. Venter.

Remarks on the Midsession Review of the Budget and an Exchange With Reporters

June 26, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. This is a great day for America. First we had the announcement of the sequencing of the human genome; now I have just received a report from my Chief of Staff and the members of my economic team on our latest budget projections, and it's more good news.

In 1993, when I became President, the Federal budget deficit was $290 billion. It was projected to rise to $455 billion this year. The American people wanted a better future, and we offered a new economic course of fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and greater investment in our people and our future.

The result has been the longest economic expansion in history, a fiscal turnaround that is stronger, frankly, than any of us had imagined. In fact, in each year since 1993, both economic growth and Federal revenues have surpassed our forecasts. And this year is no exception.

Today, as required by law, I am releasing the midsession review of the budget that shows that our overall budget surplus this year will be $211 billion, more than a $700 billion improvement over where we projected to be in 1993. And we're forecasting a surplus for the next 10 years that is over a trillion dollars larger than was forecast just 4 months ago.

The American people should be very proud of this news. It's the result of their hard work and their support for fiscal discipline. It's proof that we can create a better future for ourselves when we put our minds to it, and it provides a tremendous new opportunity to build an even brighter future if we sustain our prosperity by maintaining our fiscal discipline.

These new surpluses put us in a position to achieve something that would have seemed unimaginable in 1993. As this chart

shows, we can now pay down the debt completely by 2012, a year earlier than we projected just 4 months ago. This is my last drawing as President. [*Laughter*]

Now, why should we do this? Because by paying down the debt we can keep interest rates lower and free up more capital for private sector investment, creating more jobs and economic growth for years and years to come. We can eliminate the burden of paying interest on the debt, which today takes up 12 cents of every Federal tax dollar. And we can use part of this savings, as I have suggested, to extend the solvency of Social Security to 2057 and of Medicare to 2030.

Now, think about what this means. A 6-year-old today—we may have some out here—is living in an America that is $3.5 trillion in debt. If we follow the course I'm laying out, we can eliminate that debt by the time the child enters college. The economy will be stronger; his parents' incomes will be greater; the interest rates on college loans will be lower. And 12 years from now people of my generation will be entering retirement knowing that Social Security and Medicare will be there for them.

Quite simply, an economic plan that invests in our people and pays down the debt is the wisest choice we can make to honor our values and ensure a better future for our children.

To that end, I propose that we follow Vice President Gore's recommendation and lock away that portion of the surplus that comes from the Medicare taxes people pay. Medicare payroll taxes should not be used to finance tax cuts or other spending. They should be saved for Medicare, and Medicare alone. There is already broad bipartisan support for saving the Social Security surplus for debt reduction. It's time to do the same for Medicare by taking Medicare off budget. By protecting both the Social Security and Medicare surpluses, we can lock in $2.7 trillion of debt reduction in just the next 10 years, enabling us to get the debt entirely gone by 2012.

Before we make any other major budget decisions this year, I ask Congress to come together across party lines to protect the Medicare surplus. Now, a lot of people are saying that because this is an election year, Congress won't get much done. It does not have to be that way. Today I called House Speaker Hastert and Senator Lott with a proposal to break the logjam and do what we all say we want to do.

We all say we want to provide prescription drug coverage to the millions of senior and disabled Americans on Medicare who currently lack it. I have presented my plan; the Republicans have presented theirs. We all say we want to end the marriage penalty. I presented my plan; the Republicans have presented theirs. I believe their marriage penalty, standing on its own, and not part of an overall commitment to fiscal discipline, and also tilting, I believe, too much toward upper income Americans, is too big and not targeted toward those who need it most.

But if we can all agree to take Medicare off budget and not use Medicare money for tax cuts or for other spending, then I've told the Republican leaders I would like to make a simple offer: If Congress will pass a plan that gives real, voluntary Medicare prescription drug coverage, available and affordable to all seniors and consistent with the principles of my plan, costing roughly $250 billion over 10 years, then I will sign a marriage penalty relief law, which also costs roughly $250 billion over 10 years. This is a proposal for true compromise. It asks each party to accept some of the positions of the other party in the name of progress.

By adopting the Vice President's plan to save the Medicare surplus, we will achieve the most significant strengthening of Medicare since the proposal was created in 1965, and deliver the largest tax relief to families in decades. These are goals that both parties and all Americans agree on. It would be wrong to let politics keep us from seizing the opportunity to achieve them. We can take these actions and still have, according to our new budget projections, substantial resources left over for future budget priorities.

Now, I want to remind the people, however, that this is just a budget projection. It would not be prudent to commit every penny of a future surplus that is just a projection and, therefore, subject to change. Fiscal discipline helped to create these surpluses; fiscal discipline is what we should continue as we determine how best to use it.

In my midsession review, therefore, I propose to set aside a $500-billion reserve for America's future, a fund that could eventually be used for any number of key priorities from retirement savings to tax cuts to investments in education, research, health care, and environmental protection, to further debt reduction.

We should set aside this reserve fund. At this late date in the fiscal year, with elections looming, it would be unrealistic and imprudent for those of us in Washington to decide what to do with this money. That's something that should be debated in the coming months and decided on by the American people this fall. Our obligation is to move forward on those issues that have been fully debated, where there is bipartisan agreement for action.

So this summer let's set aside the Medicare surpluses and pay down the debt. Let's pass a voluntary prescription drug benefit for seniors and disabled Americans on Medicare, and marriage penalty tax relief for American families. When that's done, I hope we will also raise the minimum wage, pass a strong enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, pass a juvenile justice bill that closes the gun show loophole, hate crimes legislation, and the new markets legislation and make key investments in education, health care, and the environment.

Then in the election, let's have a vigorous debate about how the remainder of these new surpluses can best be used to advance our Nation. It's the right debate to have, and I think we can all agree that it's a debate we are very fortunate to be able to have.

How we use these surpluses in this moment of prosperity will determine America's future for decades to come. Nothing will more surely determine it than making the right choices, if we do the right things to keep our prosperity going, to extend its benefits to people in places not yet fully part of it, to help Americans balance the demands of work and family, to seize the remarkable potential and meet the challenges of globalization and the revolutions of science and information technology.

This is a good day for America. We ought to preserve it for the future and make the most of the moment.

Thank you very much.

Congressional Leaders' Reaction

Q. What did the Speaker and Mr. Lott have to say to you in response?

The President. I think they were interested in it, and obviously, I've also talked to the Democratic leaders, Senator Daschle and Representative Gephardt. And I told them that I would send the review up today and that, obviously, everybody needs time for their staffs to look at it to see what the options are. But I think this is a very good-faith offer where I want to meet them halfway. I want them to meet me halfway. We can clearly afford this, and we ought to do it.

Reliability of Budget Projections

Q. Mr. President, if in the course of 4 months these figures have changed a trillion dollars, how realistic is it to believe that these are sound figures that are going to last?

The President. Well, first, I think that they are reliable in the same sense—I would just remind you, I've been here for 7½ years, and I have never yet overstated the numbers. So we've got a pretty good record on this. Now, this is what the numbers show. But as I said to you, I believe it would be a big mistake to commit this entire surplus to spending or to tax cuts.

That's one of the reasons I like the Vice President's suggestion so much. If you start by taking the Medicare taxes out, then you know you're going to have further debt reduction, and you've got a big incentive for fiscal discipline right there.

The projections could be wrong; they could be right. That's why we shouldn't spend it all now. And moreover, we're having a debate in which the two candidates have very different notions about what should be done with this moment of prosperity, and the American people ought to have some say in this. But I think that it's my duty to tell you what I think the numbers are now and my duty also to raise a little caution and say, let's don't go off and spend it.

If I asked you what your projected income is over the next 10 years, and you told me, and I said, "Okay, now I want you to spend it all right now," I doubt if you'd do it. So

I don't think the American people should do it. But neither should we be blind to the fact that we have an enormous opportunity here to build the future of our dreams for our children, and that should inform what we do in this year's budget, and it should inform what we do, I believe, in making an agreement to get the right kind of Medicare prescription drug coverage in return for tax relief for American families.

Gasoline Prices

Q. Sir, even with this optimistic news, gas prices across the board continue to increase, threaten inflation, threaten to derail all of these projections. What can you do immediately to stop the spiraling cost of gasoline?

The President. Well, I think, for whatever reason, in places where it's highest, they seem to be dropping some. So I think that we need to keep up the pressure to make sure that there is no noneconomic basis for these price increases. And that's what the Federal Trade Commission inquiry is all about. Then I think it is very, very important for us to accelerate our efforts to get high mileage cars on the road and to develop alternative fuel sources.

And let me say, I've been trying for years to get more money into Federal research on this. The United States Government has been very active in our administration, in the Partnership for the New Generation of Vehicles that the Vice President's headed, in trying to develop alternative fuels from agriculture and other sources. The Senate did pass a bill last week on a bipartisan basis which should help us in the development of more biofuels. But we're not far away from being able to develop very high mileage vehicles and dramatically different fuel options for the American people.

But I would say this: I have not had the same level of support on a bipartisan basis for this kind of Federal research and investment that we've had, for example, for the human genome project. But the principle is exactly the same. When you're breaking new ground, a lot of the basic research should be paid for by the American people as a whole, and then the industry should do its part. Just like we're doing with the human genome project, we need to do more here.

And I think that you will see—what we really need and, I think, what the American people want to know is that we've got a plan that will move them away from being subject to these kind of radical swings. And we do have a plan. And we know that we can get cars on the road soon that can get 60, 80, maybe more miles to the gallon. We know we can get cars on the road soon using alternative fuels, from fuel cells to biofuels to natural gas that will cut the cost of transportation. That's what we need to be doing.

Q. Forgive me, sir, but the question was what can you do immediately. Will you consider relaxing——

The President. What we are doing immediately, what we're doing immediately is continuing this investigation. If the prices are being set for noneconomic reasons, then we ought to do what we can to pressure them down. Now, if the Congress wants to consider some sort of relief on the Federal gas tax, it would be modest compared to the price increase, and they would have to be willing to defer substantial Federal highway projects. That's something they have to come to terms with.

But I think that it's clear, over the next 2 years you're going to have all these cars that will then be coming out that will basically make this problem go away as we know it, and we need to do everything we can to accelerate it.

Budget Surplus

Q. [*Inaudible*].

The President. I don't know the answer to that. They'll tell you that. But it's $211 billion for this year.

Yes, sir.

2000 Election

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Republicans look at the $500-billion fund as a goody bag for Vice President Gore to use throughout the campaign to make promises in programs. First of all, do you agree with that assessment? And second of all, is that the proper use for a surplus fund?

The President. Well, I think—let me say this—that's a $500-billion fund; I'll tell you what I would do with it. Later on, I may make some suggestions what I would do with

it. But Vice President Gore will say what he thinks should be done. Governor Bush will say what he thinks should be done. The Republican leaders and candidates will say what they think should be done. The Democratic leaders and their candidate will say what they think should be done.

In other words, my position is that the Congress and I should not commit all this money. We should let the American people decide what to do by the judgments they make in the election and by the debates that they hear. I don't believe that—we're so close to the election. We have such an enormously crowded agenda of things that we can do that have been fully debated. I think the responsible thing to do is to let the American people hear from those who are running for office, who will be responsible for these decisions if they are elected, say what they should be doing.

So Vice President Gore has no more opportunity as a result of this proposal of mine than Governor Bush does. All candidates running for office can say this is what they think about the $500 billion. They can also say that they disagree with some of the things we're recommending now, if they choose.

Yes.

President's Book on Race

Q. Mr. President, your time is ticking away, and we understand you're still working on your book on race. When are you anticipating having this book out, and what can we expect to be in it?

The President. You just have to wait to see it. [*Laughter*]

Q. Is Taylor Branch working with you on it?

The President. No.

Elian Gonzales

Q. Mr. President, this week, probably by Wednesday, the legal case of Elian Gonzales will probably come to an end. Do you feel the relations between your government and the government of Fidel Castro have gotten a little better because of this case—relations between Washington and Havana?

The President. I don't know. That's the honest answer. I don't know.

President's Book on Race

Let me just say one other thing about the race book. You asked me a question about Taylor Branch. I did—I have consulted with him on it. I've shown him some drafts, but he is not working with me on it. But I don't want to imply that I've never asked him to look at it. I did.

Q. When do you think the book is coming out, though?

Q. [*Inaudible*].

Group of Eight Summit

The President. The Japanese Ambassador was here today for the human genome announcement, and we had a brief conversation about it, and he said that he expected Prime Minister Mori to continue as Prime Minister and to host us at the G–8 Summit. And I expect that's what will happen.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Pulitzer Prize-winning author Taylor Branch; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Japanese Ambassador to the U.S. Shunji Yanai; and Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan. A reporter referred to President Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

June 26, 2000

The Northern Ireland peace process has been given a tremendous boost forward by the announcement that Martti Ahtisaari and Cyril Ramaphosa have inspected several IRA arms dumps and issued a positive report on their findings through the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. The fact that the IRA has reestablished contact with the Commission is equally significant, representing a tangible step toward fulfillment of its undertaking to put arms beyond use in the context of full implementation of the Good Friday accord. I urge all paramilitary organizations and political parties to build on this progress. I believe all the people of Northern Ireland should take heart from these harbingers of lasting peace.

NOTE: In the statement the President referred to former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, chairman, and former African National Congress Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa, board member, International Crisis Group.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision To Uphold *Miranda* v. *Arizona*

June 26, 2000

In 1966 the Supreme Court decided in *Miranda* v. *Arizona* that law enforcement officials must give certain warnings, including a suspect's right to remain silent and to have counsel, before criminal suspects are questioned in custody. I am very pleased that today the Supreme Court by a large majority, has affirmed that ruling and upheld the important constitutional rights protected by *Miranda.* As Chief Justice Rehnquist's opinion notes, the warnings have become part of our national culture; they have worked for law enforcement by providing clear standards for our officers; and they have worked to protect the rights of our citizens. I am pleased that today's opinion so resoundingly reinforces the important place of the *Miranda* warnings in our Nation's criminal justice system.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Nicaragua-United States Investment Treaty With Documentation

June 26, 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 Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua Concerning the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investment, with Annex and Protocol, signed at Denver on July 1, 1995. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to this Treaty.

The bilateral investment treaty (BIT) with Nicaragua is the fifth such treaty signed between the United States and a country of Central or South America. The Treaty will protect U.S. investment and assist Nicaragua in its efforts to develop its economy by creating conditions more favorable for U.S. private investment and thereby strengthening the development of its private sector.

The Treaty is fully consistent with U.S. policy toward international and domestic investment. A specific tenet of U.S. policy, reflected in this Treaty, is that U.S. investment abroad and foreign investment in the United States should receive national treatment. Under this Treaty, the Parties also agree to customary international law standards for expropriation. The Treaty includes detailed provisions regarding the computation and payment of prompt, adequate, and effective compensation for expropriation; free transfer of funds related to investments; freedom of investments from specified performance requirements; fair, equitable, and most-favored-nation treatment; and the investor's freedom to choose to resolve disputes with the host government through international arbitration.

I recommend that the Senate consider this Treaty as soon as possible, and give its advice and consent to ratification of the Treaty, with Annex and Protocol, at an early date.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 26, 2000.

Remarks on the Unveiling of a Portrait of Former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin

June 27, 2000

The President. Secretary Summers, you pulled that off without a hitch. [*Laughter*] If that won't keep interest rates down, I don't know what will. [*Laughter*] In 7½ years, that's the first public comment I ever made—[*laughter*]—and I only did it to see which one of them would faint first. [*Laughter*]

Let me say—if I can't have a little fun now, when can I, right? [*Laughter*] Judy and Gretchen, thank you for being here today. Secretary Daley, Jack Lew, Gene Sperling, all the members of the economic team in the

White House, and all of our former administration members who are here, including Mickey Kantor and your old buddy Ken Brody back there. Mr. Strauss, we're delighted to see you here today. We thank you for coming.

I'd like to acknowledge one person who can't be here today, who had a lot to do with our early days together, Bob, and that is your predecessor, Lloyd Bentsen. I'm glad that your portraits will hang together, because you certainly hung together in the early years of this administration and helped us get off to a good start.

I thought it was kind of cruel the way Larry made fun of Bob not knowing about "The X Files." [*Laughter*] "The X Files"—Bob Rubin didn't know who B.B. King was. [*Laughter*] He thought he made air guns. [*Laughter*] He thought Jimmy Buffett was a caterer. [*Laughter*] Really, this man did not know who B.B. King and Jimmy Buffett were when he came to work for us. [*Laughter*] And so, yes, he gave us a good economy, but we've broadened his horizons in return. [*Laughter*]

Unlike me, Rubin got mostly good press here. [*Laughter*] But he did get the occasional dire assessment. Listen to this headline by one prescient pundit—no offense, Andrea. Listen to this: "Rubin is fading from power and will resign from fatigue. He won't be around past March of next year." That was written in December of 1993. [*Laughter*]

Well —

Robert E. Rubin. I think Judy wrote that. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*] Actually, Judy didn't write it, but she does wish it had been true. [*Laughter*] Well, anyway, you outlasted that prediction by more than 5 years, through impossibly long hours, a terribly tough commute, almost 7 years without a house and only a hotel room. We probably should hang a second portrait of you in the lobby of the Jefferson Hotel. [*Laughter*] You certainly did a lot to make sure their cash flow was steady. [*Laughter*]

You know, Bob joined our team in 1992, and I never will forget the first conversation I had with him in early '92, and the conversations since. And I want to say just a few serious words. Here was a guy who had done reasonably well on Wall Street. [*Laughter*] I used to joke that Bob Rubin came to Washington to help me save the middle class, and by the time he left, he'd be one of them. [*Laughter*] But he didn't think it was very funny. [*Laughter*] The longer he stayed, the less money he got. [*Laughter*]

But I wanted him because I knew he was committed at turning the economy around; I knew he wanted the economy to work for ordinary Americans; and I knew he cared very much about poor people in poor places that are too often forgotten here in Washington. You all know that he played a pivotal role in developing our initial economic strategy of fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and investment in our people and our future. Perhaps equally important, he made it possible to implement that strategy by putting together the National Economic Council, which we modeled on the National Security Council, and by being its first leader.

He had the skills to build a genuine team, to be an honest broker, to give every good idea and not so good idea a fair hearing, to bring out the best in other people and make them feel secure in stating their own opinions, and in every instance, to work for what was best for all the American people.

One measure of his success, I think, is it's so easy to forget now the feuds that divided previous administrations, the pitched, public battles that were once an inescapable part of making economic policy in Washington. But Bob changed all that. And that team produced the 1993 economic plan which was highly contentious but, clearly, struck a major blow in bringing the deficit down and reversing the budgetary and fiscal fortunes of this Government.

Five and a half years ago I asked him to be Secretary of the Treasury, not only because he would be a worthy successor to Lloyd Bentsen but because he would also be a worthy successor to Alexander Hamilton. I might say, his portrait is right back here. We walked out, and I said, "Bob, look at Hamilton. He was a fine looking fellow, wasn't he?" He said, "Yes, but they wouldn't let me wear that outfit for my portrait." [*Laughter*]

Hamilton also insisted that the United States pay its debts and practice prudence.

Bob Rubin has established, both as our National Economic Adviser and as a Secretary of Treasury, a standard of public service that is the envy of every American who loves his or her country and would like to serve.

I thank Larry Summers for carrying it on today and for the work that he did. Bob used to say that Larry thought up what they were going to do, and Bob presented it better. But they were a great team. [*Laughter*] And Larry does a pretty good job of presenting himself now.

We've had a wonderful run here because of your service. You know, yesterday we announced that the budget surplus this year was going to be $211 billion. When we leave office, we will have paid down nearly $400 billion of national debt. Over the next 10 years, we think the on-budget surplus will be $1.9 trillion and that we'll be debt-free by 2012, giving America, for a generation, lower interest rates, mortgage rates, college loan rates, more businesses and more jobs. It's a pretty good legacy, Mr. Secretary, and we thank you.

Now, before you come up, I just want to say one other thing. Larry said this, but it is true. We were having this meeting about the Mexican debt crisis on your first night. And we had already checked Chairman Greenspan's temperature about this. [*Laughter*] And so in comes Rubin with this, you know, "Gee, shucks, golly. I mean, what do I know? I just made a gazillion dollars on Wall Street, and you were some Governor of a small southern State. I mean, what do I know?" [*Laughter*] "And I mean, so what if it's 81-15 against us. You know, every now and then you've just got to step up."

Actually, it was a no-brainer. We made the decision collectively in about 5 minutes. And then we talked for another half hour to make it look good, so it would be respectable when we had to write about it later on in our memoirs. [*Laughter*] But it worked out okay. And then we had, in a way, a more complex job when the financial contagion struck in Asia in '97 and '98. But you worked really hard to make that work right. And it did. So I'm very grateful for that, as well.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I think the important way we can honor you is not to squander but to make the most of this moment. We didn't get here by accident. We got here, in no small measure, because of the strategy you devised. And I hope we can continue to honor it. I think we ought to take the Medicare taxes off budget. I think we ought to keep paying down the debt. I hope that we can make an agreement with the Congress now for a good prescription drug program and appropriate tax relief that leaves plenty of money left so they can debate it in this campaign but nothing that will in any way affect our overall commitment to fiscal discipline and paying down the debt.

And you have left us a legacy, Bob, that keeps on giving, just like you keep on giving. We all love you, and we thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:54 a.m. at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. In his remarks, he referred to Judy and Gretchen Rubin, wife and daughter-in-law of Mr. Rubin; former U.S. Trade Representative and former Secretary of Commerce Michael (Mickey) Kantor; former President and Chairman of the Export-Import Bank Kenneth D. Brody; former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Robert Strauss; former Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen; and musicians B.B. King and Jimmy Buffett. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Mr. Rubin.

Statement on Expanding Access to Smoking Cessation Programs

June 27, 2000

Today the Surgeon General is releasing updated guidelines, compiled by top public and private sector experts, to help more people overcome their tobacco addiction and to give health care professionals an important tool to help their patients quit using tobacco products. Tobacco addiction and related health disorders pose one of the greatest public health threats facing our Nation today. Over 400,000 Americans die every year from tobacco related diseases—more than AIDS, illegal drugs, alcohol, fires, car accidents, murders, and suicides combined.

While more than 25 percent of U.S. adults smoke, studies show that 70 percent of them would like to quit. To build on the new guidelines and progress we have already

made to help Federal personnel stop smoking, today I am issuing an Executive memorandum directing all Federal departments and agencies to: encourage their employees to stop, or never start, smoking; provide information on proven smoking cessation treatments and practices; and describe assistance they can provide to help their personnel quit smoking. I am also directing the agencies to review their current tobacco cessation programs using the updated guidelines, and to report on their effectiveness and opportunities for enhancement to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

Finally, I urge Congress to enact my budget proposal to ensure that every State Medicaid program covers both prescription and nonprescription smoking cessation drugs—helping millions of low income Americans gain access to medical treatments that would help them break their addiction to tobacco.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release until 4 p.m.

Memorandum on Expanding Access to Smoking Cessation Programs

June 27, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Expanding Access to Smoking Cessation Programs

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that smoking-related diseases claim more than 400,000 lives annually and cost the United States tens of billions of dollars in medical expenses and lost productivity. Smoking-related diseases devastate our families and communities by contributing to the premature deaths of our husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, siblings, and close friends. As we now know, the vast majority of adult smokers begin smoking as children, and most become addicted to nicotine. Research also shows that more than 70 percent of adult smokers would like to quit smoking.

On August 9, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13058, establishing a smoke-free environment for the more than 1.8 million civilian Federal employees and members of the public visiting or using Federal facilities. In that order, I encouraged agencies to establish programs to help employees stop smoking. And in 1998, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducted a survey to determine what steps agencies had taken to help employees stop smoking. The results of that survey showed that a majority of those who responded had smoking cessation programs in place at the worksite or were planning to initiate them.

For example, due to our efforts, 1.4 million members of the armed forces and their families have benefited from Department of Defense initiatives that have provided them with smoke free workplaces and readily accessible smoking cessation programs. The Postal Service's more than 800,000 employees and their customers have enjoyed smoke free environments since 1993.

Today, the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Public Health Service released new tobacco cessation guidelines that reflect the latest research on treating tobacco use and addiction. These guidelines will enable clinicians, employers, insurers, health benefits managers, and others to employ programs and therapies that have been proven effective, and help prevent more unnecessary tobacco-related illnesses and deaths. These new guidelines will also serve as a valuable resource for evaluating and improving current programs, including those offered by Federal agencies.

We need to build on our progress. Therefore, I direct the head of each executive department and agency (agency) to send a message to all personnel that (1) encourages them to stop smoking or never to start; (2) describes assistance the agency can provide in helping them quit smoking; (3) provides information on proven smoking cessation treatments and practices; and (4) encourages participation in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout scheduled for November 16, 2000.

In addition, I direct all agencies to review their current tobacco cessation programs and to provide a report on their achievements and effectiveness to the Director of OPM 60 days from the date of this memorandum. In conducting these reviews, agencies should

consult the new HHS guidelines to determine the key elements of an effective program and identify areas for program enhancement. Any new initiatives planned should also be a part of the report. The OPM will use this information to compile a list of best practices to be shared with all agencies, and to report to me on its findings 90 days from the date of this memorandum.

The OPM will provide assistance to agencies as needed. For example, its web-site contains information on establishing a "Model Smoking Cessation Program."

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was embargoed for release until 4 p.m.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the Expanded Threat Reduction Initiative

June 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

Enclosed is a report to the Congress on the Expanded Threat Reduction Initiative, as required by section 1309 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65).

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 27, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Sri Lanka-United States Extradition Treaty With Documentation

June 27, 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 Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, signed at Washington September 30, 1999.

In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty. As the report states, the Treaty will not require implementing legislation. The provisions in this Treaty follow generally the form and content of extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States.

Upon entry into force, this Treaty would enhance cooperation between the law enforcement authorities of both countries, and thereby make a significant contribution to international law enforcement efforts. The Treaty would supersede the 1931 United States-United Kingdom extradition treaty currently applicable to the United States and Sri Lanka.

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,
June 27, 2000.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

June 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 27, 2000.

Remarks at a Reception for California State Senator Adam Schiff

June 27, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you, Adam. I want to say, first of all, I am delighted to be here with you and your entire family. I must say, when you introduced your wife, and made that crack—you know, I just came back from California, where I was working to raise funds for our Democrats. And I had a fundraiser in Los Angeles in a place called the "Garden of Eden." [*Laughter*] I don't recommend you do that until after the election—[*laughter*].

But anyway, I am delighted to be here. I want to thank Representatives Waxman and Pelosi and Lofgren and Farr for being here, and of course, Congressman Kennedy, who has done such a great job as head of the Democratic campaign committee and is working me to death. [*Laughter*] I told him that we were just five votes short of a majority, and I would do anything I could to see that he succeeded, and he has more than taken me up on my offer. [*Laughter*] He acts like he thinks I'm still as young as he is. [*Laughter*]

Let me say to all of you, there's several reasons I wanted to be here tonight. First of all, I admire this man, and I appreciate the fact that he is willing to run against an incumbent Congressman. It is not easy to beat an incumbent Congressman, especially when they have vast national networks to finance their campaign. And I also appreciate the fact that he's established a record as a State senator and a prosecutor that, I believe, highlights the differences.

There's Congressman Conyers, thank you for being here. Michigan has a great interest in the outcome of this election. [*Laughter*] John does—Adam's election is going to make him chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. [*Laughter*]

He mentioned Tom Umberg—Adam was also a Federal prosecutor, as well as a State senator. He's worked for commonsense gun legislation. He's worked for smaller class sizes in our schools. He's worked for a better environment and sustainable development. He's worked for a Patients' Bill of Rights. He supports our efforts to help seniors and disabled Americans get prescription drugs.

And the one thing that I want to say to you tonight is that there really are significant differences between the parties on the major issues. I've done everything I could for nearly 8 years now to try to turn our country around, to get things going in the right direction, not only to improve the economy but to help the social fabric and to change the nature of politics and to give our people a sense of self-confidence and a sense of greater unity. And the Members who are here have been indispensable to that effort.

The Senate finally passed hate crimes legislation a couple of days ago. Henry Waxman just won a great victory in the House against the tobacco interests, who tried to stop us from bringing litigation to recover for the taxpayers the damage caused from health-related illnesses due to smoking. And we congratulate you for your long and, originally, a lonely battle, but we thank you for that.

But basically—you know, I'm not running for anything. [*Laughter*] I do have more than a passing interest in a Senate race—[*laughter*]—in New York, and all the others, as well. And there's a fellow running for President I think ought to be elected. But what I want to see us to do is to sort of make the most of this unbelievable opportunity we have. And those of us who are not so young anymore know that it may be 50 years before America has a chance like this again. And that we dare not squander it.

So it's important to know that there are differences, honest differences. You don't have to run a real bad campaign in this election. You know, I've seen so many elections over the last 20 years that just made me sick, where both candidates looked like they were trying to convince people that their opponents were just one step above a car thief. [*Laughter*] And you don't have to do that now. You can just run on the differences. But there are real differences.

And one key to who's right is, only the Democrats want you to know what those differences are. You can just look at it—I've been telling you, and I'd just like to run through a few, just the issues I mentioned. We have a class size reduction initiative and a school construction initiative and a school

repair initiative. And the leadership of the other party is completely opposed to all of them.

In the area of law enforcement, we put 100,000 police on the street, and we passed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. The leadership of the other party was against them all—even tried to undo, in the House, the 100,000 police, and now opposes our efforts to put 50,000 more police on the street in the highest crime neighborhoods, as well as the commonsense gun safety measures: closing the gun show loophole, child trigger locks, banning large capacity ammunition clips. These are important issues. It makes a big difference who is in Congress.

The Patients' Bill of Rights: We support it, and they don't. And then they all go around saying they do, because they voted for one that had no teeth in it. They got permission from the people that didn't want a Patients' Bill of Rights to vote for one that had no teeth in hopes of confusing the voters about whether there was a real difference between the two parties.

And the biggest issue now that's commanding our attention is the question of whether our seniors and disabled Americans who are on Medicare should have access to affordable prescription drugs. Now just yesterday or today, there was a big article in the press—come on in, Representative Sherman, come on in—we're going to have a quorum in California here before you know it. [*Laughter*] There was an article in the press showing that in the last year the price of prescription drugs—and the overall inflation rate was 3 percent—the price of prescription drugs went up 17.4 percent.

Now, huge numbers of seniors and disabled Americans who need these drugs to maintain their quality of life, and sometimes to maintain their very lives, cannot afford this. If we were designing a Medicare program today, no one would even think about having one without a drug benefit. But in 1965, when it was established, it was basically a doctors-and-hospital program, because that's what happened—people got sick, they went to the doctor; if they were sick enough, they went to the hospital.

Today we know prescription drugs can dramatically reduce the cost of hospitalization, whether you have to go at all, or if you have to go, how long you have to stay; and can maintain the length and quality of life far beyond anything that was imagined 35 years ago. And we have the money to do this now. Not only that, this is a gift not just to the seniors and the disabled Americans but to their families, who will have to support them, or try to, if the rest of us don't through the Medicare program. So this is a big deal.

So what's our position? Our position is, we ought to have an affordable prescription drug program through Medicare that all seniors can afford to buy into but that is not mandatory for anybody. What's their position? Well, they hired a pollster to actually tell them what words and phrases to use to make you think they're for our position. I'm not making this up. I read it. [*Laughter*] I don't believe everything I read in the press, but since they didn't deny it, I assume it's true.

And now they've got a proposal, which is: Let everybody buy private insurance; we'll subsidize some people. And their proposal—even the insurance companies have said—with all the fights I've had with the insurance companies, I've got to take my hat to them; they've been honest on this—even the insurance companies have said this is not real. There are too many people that can't afford this insurance policy. What is the deal here?

And they're going to vote on it, I think tomorrow. And I just was told before I came in here they're not even going to allow the House to vote on our proposal. Why? Because it might pass in an election year—[*laughter*]—because there are just five seats in the majority. And they figure there might be six or seven of them that might figure out that the voters back home may not just buy the words and phrases; they might actually look at the vote.

Now, what should we do? Well, first of all, we ought to do what the Vice President recommended and set aside the Medicare taxes and not spend it for tax cuts or spending. Because that will take Medicare out to 2030, and that's good for the people on Medicare and good for their kids.

Then we ought to fund a real prescription drug benefit, the kind that we would have funded 35 years ago if medicine had been as advanced as it is today. And I offered that

to the Republican leaders yesterday and said that I would work with them on their tax relief package. But we should not be under any illusion here. There is a huge difference. Our plan benefits the people who need the drugs. Their plan benefits the people who make the drugs, who are afraid if we buy all these drugs in bulk, we might get a decent price for the seniors.

Now, I'm not against America's pharmaceutical companies. They do a great job in developing drugs. And I'm not even against our paying some sort of a premium to do that. But I am against any effort that's trying to keep our seniors from getting these prescription drugs. And if we were in the majority, this deal would have been done 4 months ago.

If we were in the majority, we wouldn't be debating here about whether we should close the gun show loophole. The people that are against it are saying it won't do any good. They used to tell me in '93 that the Brady bill wouldn't do any good, because all those people were buying their guns at gun shows. [*Laughter*]

If they were in the majority, we wouldn't be debating whether we were going to have smaller classes or whether we were going to modernize our schools or what we were going to do to make the most of this moment.

Now, they can make their case. I'm not saying anything bad about them. I'm sick and tired of all that. But there are differences. And don't you be fooled. And the whole country is looking at this, because here's this fellow who is a State senator, so he represents more people in California—a State senator represents more people than a Member of the House of Representatives. He's got a perfectly nice life, and he's putting his neck on the line to try to represent us. And we ought to help him. We ought to help him because of his background, because of his experience, because of his vision, but mostly because America needs to make a clear-headed choice here.

All I want—I've found that the American people nearly always get it right, if you give them enough time and enough information. Otherwise, we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. They nearly always get it right. Sometimes it takes us longer than we should. You mentioned Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln—Abraham Lincoln, when he was running the first time, had to promise not to free the slaves. Aren't we glad he didn't keep that campaign commitment? [*Laughter*] But finally, the people caught up to where they needed to be, and he just kept leading us on and leading us on.

Now, we know what the issues are, and we know where the people are. I'm convinced if the voters of his district know Adam Schiff—if they know where he stands, if they know the honest differences between him and his opponent—this race will be victorious. And I'm convinced that will happen in two dozen other places across America where we have seats in play.

So I want you to think about that. The problem with all these fundraisers is, you're always preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*] But when you leave here, you will, between now and election day, be talking to people all over America, including a lot of people in California.

And it's important that you not just come to these fundraisers; it's important that you take every single opportunity you have between now and November to tell people that. We have the chance of a lifetime. We have great opportunities. There are real and honest differences. We don't have to have a negative election. We can have a positive election that's an honest debate. But we can't get there by pretending that there aren't differences when there are. On every difference that makes a difference, Adam is on the right side, and we've got to send him to Congress.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:20 p.m. at the Frederick Douglass Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Schiff's wife, Eve; and Tom Umberg, committee member, California Delegation to the Democratic National Convention 2000. Adam Schiff is a candidate for California's 27th Congressional District.

Remarks at a "Salute to Bruce Vento"

June 27, 2000

Thank you very much. I've got my "Vento" button and my "Hillary" pin. [*Laughter*] And

Bruce says that "Vento" means "win" in Italian, and I think they're both winners, so I like this.

First of all, I want to thank Gerry Sikorski and Vin Weber for cochairing this event. I understand there is a slew of Members of Congress here today, so I won't attempt to call all their names, but I thank them for being here. And I know Bruce's sons are here. And I think Garrison Keillor is coming, and he'll be better than me—[*laughter*]—so that will be worth waiting for.

I also want to recognize our great Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, who is celebrating his birthday tonight with Bruce Vento. Thank you. I like to ride Bruce about his birthday because he's older than I am and looks younger, and I resent it. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all of you for coming here to pay tribute to Bruce tonight and to support the Bruce Vento Science Educator Scholarship Fund. I think it's quite an appropriate time to be doing this, just a day after we announced the sequencing of the human genome. On the way in, Bruce was saying, "You know, that was a really exciting announcement you had yesterday. Now we've got to find a few more science teachers to explain to people what it means." [*Laughter*] I thought that was pretty great.

He has been a scientist and an environmentalist since his boyhood in Minnesota. And I reminded him today that one of my most memorable times as President has been the time I spent with him in Minnesota and with a number of others of you here from the Minnesota congressional delegation, as well.

Since 1977, he's been an advocate for science and the environment in the Congress. Some of this will be said later, but I think it's worth—this is astonishing, and maybe even some of you don't know this—he has steered into law more than 300 bills to protect our natural resources. He has led in the preservation of hundreds of thousands of acres of wilderness from Minnesota's boundary waters to Alaska to American Samoa.

That would have been record enough, but the thing I like even more is that Bruce Vento cares about people, especially people without a voice, the homeless. He's also been a leader for health care and education. And if there is anybody who has ever listened to him perform at any of these hearings, he has never stopped being a teacher. Time and time again he's reached out to bridge the gap between researchers and lay people, to help the rest of us understand both the majesty and the frailty of the natural world we inhabit.

And tonight, as he fights a disease which has not yet yielded all its secrets to science, he's our teacher again. He has certainly shown us a lot about courage, and we're very grateful for it.

Bruce has become a real friend to me over these last 7½ years. He's been an honest and trusted adviser, and he's always said exactly what he thought. And as a consequence, I have also been his student, and I have learned a great deal.

Bruce, Hillary and I admire you. We love you, and we're grateful. You've made me think this being term limited is not all bad. But let me say to all of you, I think the best thing I could say about Bruce Vento is the now very famous thing Henry Adams said nearly a century ago: "A teacher affects humanity. You can never tell where his influence stops." Bruce, your influence will never stop.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Washington Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gerald E. Sikorski and John V. (Vin) Weber, salute cohosts; and Garrison Keillor, host of "Prairie Home Companion."

The President's News Conference

June 28, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. This has been a good week for the American people: first, the landmark breakthrough in human genomic research, which promises to eradicate once incurable diseases and revolutionize health care for a very long time to come; second, the release of the midsession review, which told us that the health of our economy continues its remarkable expansion.

Our budget surplus this year will be the largest in history, $211 billion. Over the next 10 years, after we lock away Medicare and

Social Security surpluses, the remaining surplus is expected to be almost $1.5 trillion. This progress exceeds even our own predictions just 4 months ago, another milestone in what is now the longest economic expansion in our history.

This is a tribute to the hard work of the American people and our commitment to fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and investments in our people and our future. Now is not the time to abandon the path that has brought us here. We must use this moment of prosperity to make important investments in our most pressing priorities.

Chief among them is the need to provide affordable, reliable prescription drug coverage to our seniors. There is no question that this is a critical need. Just yesterday a study released showed that prescription drugs shot up over 10 percent last year alone. That is too heavy a burden for our older seniors to pay and for our people with disabilities to pay.

There are some who say we can't provide affordable, accessible prescription drug coverage for all our seniors. I believe that's wrong. With millions of them without coverage, the absence of prescription drug coverage is a fatal flaw in our present health care system. Think about it. Because of breakthroughs like the human genome project, in our lifetime, there may be new life-saving drug treatments for many dreaded diseases. But they won't mean anything if our seniors and people with disabilities can't afford them. That's what this debate is really all about.

Today the House is set to vote on a prescription drug plan that amounts to an empty promise for too many of our seniors. It's a private insurance plan that many seniors and people with disabilities simply won't be able to afford. Insurers, themselves, say the Republican plan won't work. The bottom line is, their plan is designed to benefit the companies who make the prescription drugs, not the older Americans who need to take them. It puts special interest above the public interest.

Let me make it specific and clear. This plan would not guarantee affordable prescription drugs to single senior citizens with incomes above $12,600 a year or to senior couples with incomes above $16,600 a year. And we have all heard countless, countless stories of those with crushing medical burdens, that if they could get these prescription drugs, would have their lives lengthened and the quality of their lives improved.

An article in today's paper reveals that a group calling itself Citizens for Better Medicare is running—I give it points for chutzpa—Citizens for Better Medicare is running millions of dollars in ads to kill our prescription drug proposal. You'd think a group with this name would be in favor of affordable Medicare prescription drug coverage for all seniors and people with disabilities, but this is one of those mysterious interest groups whose financial backers are cloaked in secrecy.

Now, just last night the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to force groups like this to open their books and disclose their fundraising sources to the American people. I applaud the House for this vote and all those, Democrats and Republicans, who voted for it. With the vote on Medicare in the House, I call on Citizens for Better Medicare to respect the will of the Congress and reveal the sources of their support today. We should let the American people judge who is truly interested in better Medicare.

It is clear that this lobbying effort is part of a larger campaign to block real progress. In fact, the Republican leadership in Congress won't even allow our prescription plan to come up for a vote in the House—I suspect, because they're afraid it would pass.

I have offered a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is voluntary and affordable. My plan puts the interest of seniors first. Whether you're on a fixed income, live in a big city or a rural area, the plan is dependable, and it is affordable. This is particularly important for rural Americans. More than half of our oldest seniors in rural communities go the entire year without any prescription drug coverage at all.

Earlier this week, in an effort to break the logjam, I offered a compromise proposal to give seniors the relief they desperately need. I said we could pass a prescription drug benefit while providing real tax relief to married couples, something the majority in Congress

say they want to do. And we could do both now within the framework of fiscal responsibility.

As the Vice President has proposed, the first thing we should do is to take the Medicare tax receipts we get off budget so they are saved for Medicare alone and, meanwhile, used to pay down the debt. That will do more to protect and strengthen Medicare. It will help extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund to 2023. It will put us in a position to pay down the debt completely by 2012, a year ahead of schedule. It will enable us still to set aside $500 billion to reserve for America's future, to be used after a full debate and after this year's elections to meet the country's key priorities.

Now, with less than 35 days left in the legislative year, time is running out for Congress to meet its obligations to the American people. They have to make the tough choices to get something done or continue to be dragged down by the weight of special interests.

So again I ask Congress, let's not waste these precious weeks. It's time to get down to business, to pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights; to raise the minimum wage by one dollar over 2 years; to pass the commonsense gun legislation; to hold tobacco companies, not taxpayers, accountable for the health care costs of tobacco; to pass hate crimes legislation; to finish the jobs of giving American businesses and farmers access to a huge new market by passing permanent normal trade relations with China; to open new markets to American investors here at home; to bring prosperity to people in places who have been left behind; and most important of all, to continue to improve our schools, to demand more of them and invest more in them, including more teachers for smaller class sizes, after-school programs for all our kids who need them, and repairing or modernizing thousands of our schools that are today literally falling apart or so overcrowded they can't contain all the kids. We can still do a lot of this if we work together in the days ahead. That's what the American people want us to do, even in an election year.

There's been some encouraging developments in this Congress. We lifted the earnings limit on Social Security; we passed the Africa/Caribbean Basin trade bill. Apparently, the bill to aid Colombia is making good progress. And I think the China legislation will pass if we can get it up to a vote in a timely fashion. So the Congress can do a lot of things, and I hope they will, and I'm looking forward to work with them.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, after 7 months, the Elian Gonzalez case is coming to a conclusion, removing a thorn from U.S.-Cuban relations. And House Republican leaders have struck a deal to ease decades-old sanctions against Cuba. Would you accept that legislation? Is it time to normalize relations with Fidel Castro's government? What would that take?

The President. Let me deal with the questions separately. First, on the question of the legislation proposed by Mr. Nethercutt: If I believe that the legislation essentially allows for the sales of American food and medicine to Cuba or to other countries, but has some protection for us for extraordinary circumstances that foreign policy might require, like Senator Lugar's bill does in the Senate, then I would be inclined to sign the bill and to support it. I've always wanted to sell more food and medicine, not only to Cuba but to other countries as well.

I have some concerns about it, and I just have to analyze the bill as it passed and whatever legislation finally makes its way to my desk, because, as I understand it, they put some new restrictions on travel to Cuba, which might undermine our people-to-people contacts, which had been more and more extensive over the last several months and which, I believe, to be very important. And since no Federal programs can be used to help finance these food sales, as they can be to other countries, we need an analysis of whether there actually will be more sales under the legislation.

So I guess what I want to know—and I just haven't had time to get the analysis from our folks—is whether this will be a net plus in terms of our strategy, which is to reach out to the Cuban people without supporting the Cuban Government.

Now, the second question you ask is whether it's time to move toward normalization. Let me just do a little history here. In 1992, when I was running for President, the Congress passed the Cuban Democracy Act, and President Bush signed it, and I strongly supported the bill. The bill seemed to strengthen economic sanctions on Cuba but actually provided a specific, step-by-step way for us to move toward normalizing relations. And we were in the process of doing that. We did it in '93, '94, '95. We were moving toward sort of—we would do something; they would do something. It was working, I thought, quite well. And I thought the law was actually quite good. And then, the Cuban Air Force shot the planes down and killed American citizens illegally and deliberately. And so, since—after that, the Helms-Burton bill passed, and it codified the embargo.

So the real answer to your question is, I don't believe that we can change that law until there is a bipartisan majority which believes that there has been some effort on the part of the Cuban Government to reach out to us, as well.

I like the old law, I thought it was working well. The killing of those innocent people in those two airplanes changed all that. And now we're in a position where until there is a bipartisan majority of Congress persuaded that there has been a fundamental change, we can't do more than what I've been doing, which is to try to aggressively expand people-to-people contacts.

That brings us back to the Nethercutt bill. If I think, on balance, it allows the President—not just me, my successor as well—to pursue our foreign policy interest and will, on balance, further that policy, then I would support it. But I want to analyze it for the reasons that I said.

Go ahead, Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Middle East Peace Process

Q. There are reports that Israel and the Palestinians will be coming to Washington next week for talks. Do you think enough progress is being made to arrange a Middle East summit, or are you discouraged? And secondly, should Israel stop the sale of radar systems to China?

The President. Let me answer the second question first because that's a much clearer one. We're very concerned about that sale, and I've talked to Prime Minister Barak about it extensively. And as you know, there's a lot of concern in the Congress, so we're still working on that.

Now, in terms of their coming here for talks, there has been no date set. I do not believe that they can resolve the final, most difficult issues without having the leaders get together in some isolated setting and make the last tough decisions—or decide not to make them, as the case may be.

Of all the issues involved with regard to all the parties in the Middle East peace talks, the final status issues between the Israelis and the Palestinians are the most difficult. I do not, however, believe they're going to get any easier with the passage of time. I think that some foreign policy problems—the answer is to kick the can down the road and wait for them to get better and hope time takes care of them. Some have to be decided sooner or later, and sooner is better than later. My own instinct is that the cluster of problems here would be better off being resolved sooner rather than later.

I've had Mr. Ross out in the Middle East, and then Secretary Albright went, and she's going to give me a report. And when she does, then I'll make a judgment about whether the time is right to ask them to come here. But I have not made that decision yet.

Go ahead, Paul [Paul Singer, United Press International].

Death Penalty

Q. A death penalty question, sir. Do you believe that Governor Bush made the wrong decision by allowing Mr. Graham to go to his death last week? And secondly, do you believe it's time for the American people to stop and reassess where we stand on implementation of the death penalty in this country?

The President. Well, on the Texas case, I didn't read the file. All I know about it is what I've read about it in the press. But let me say generally what I think. I think that those of us who support the death penalty have an extra heavy responsibility to assure both that the result is accurate and that the

process was fair and constitutional. And that means, to me, at least in modern terms, the broadest possible use of DNA evidence and the strongest possible effort to guarantee adequate assistance of counsel. That's a big issue. And I think those were two of the reasons that motivated Governor Ryan in Illinois to do what he did, and have driven a lot of other things in this debate. So that's where I think it is.

Now, I don't know that the American people have changed their position that it's still an appropriate penalty under certain severe circumstances, and I haven't. But I am concerned also, at the Federal level, with the—I don't believe that adequate assistance of counsel is an issue in the Federal cases. And as far as I know, there are no cases in which the question of DNA is an issue. There may be. I don't know if there are some.

The issues at the Federal level relate more to the disturbing racial composition of those who have been convicted and the apparent fact that almost all the convictions are coming out of just a handful of States, which raises the question of whether, even though there is a uniform law across the country, what your prosecution is may turn solely on where you committed the crime. I've got a review underway of both those issues at this time.

Yes, Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News].

1996 Campaign Finance Investigation

Q. Mr. President, as you know, for the third time, a Justice Department investigation has recommended that the Vice President's activities in fundraising during the last campaign cycle be looked into. Previously, on two occasions, the Attorney General has declined to do this. Would it be better for the Attorney General, for your administration, and for the Vice President's candidacy if he invited such an investigation?

The President. Well, first let me say, my understanding is—I know this is true in the previous cases, and I think it's true here—is that there are some people in the Justice Department that think there should be and some who think there shouldn't be. And the Attorney General, who has shown no reluctance to ask for a special counsel when she thought one was called for, didn't think one was called for in this case, and she reaffirmed that yesterday.

I think the fact that the Vice President released the transcript of his interview was a very good thing, because some Republican Senators had made some assertions about it that just weren't so—they weren't true. And now that the whole thing has been put out in the public, it seems to me that the best thing to do is for the American people to make their own judgments about it. But I don't see any reason that the Attorney General shouldn't make a decision in this case, as she has in every other one.

Claire [Claire Shipment, NBC].

Vice President Al Gore

Q. Another question about your Vice President. A year ago when people looked at his poll numbers compared to the Texas Governor's, his supporters would say, "Oh, the election is a long way off." Six months ago people were saying the election's a long way off with those same poll numbers, and today, his supporters are still saying that. And I wonder, do you think it's time to suggest that this might be a trend, that there is a reason why the Vice President is trailing the Texas Governor in the polls? And secondly, you have said that the Vice President will not be held accountable, that the American people will not hold him accountable, for the scandals of this administration. Do you still believe that's the case or is this, in fact, part of it?

The President. Well, first of all, I said—no, let me say exactly what I said—I said that the people would not hold him responsible for anything I did that they didn't agree with or that was wrong, and that's clearly true. That's still true. There is no evidence of that in the surveys.

Secondly, let me remind you that a lot of these other so-called scandals were bogus. Mike Espy was acquitted. The Cisneros thing was a tempest in a teapot, totally overdone, and you all know that the Whitewater thing was bogus from day one. It had nothing to do with the official conduct of the administration, anyway.

Now, so the word "scandal" has been thrown around here like a clanging teapot for 7 years. And I keep waiting for somebody

to say—I noticed there was one columnist in the Washington Post that had the uncommon decency to say, "Will no one ever stand up here and say that a whole bunch of this stuff was just garbage and that we had totally innocent people prosecuted because they wouldn't lie? We had totally innocent people's lives wrecked because they wouldn't go along with this alleged scandal machine." So let's be careful; let's be specific.

Now, I've already told you, my view is that the Vice President, on the only thing as far as I know that he's been in any way implicated in is this campaign finance thing. He put out the whole transcript of his interview, made himself available for questions, and, I thought, made a very compelling case and certainly demonstrated that a lot of the accusations against him with regard to that are not so.

There was also a very interesting article—I think in the National Law Journal—which basically went through all of the things and concluded that there was no basis for a lot of these criticisms of him, under these circumstances. And I think another magazine here—maybe the New Republic, the Washington Monthly—one of those other magazines had an analysis of it. So I think that we should be very careful in throwing that around.

Now, let me come back to the polls. First of all, I must say, I haven't seen any or done any lately, so I don't know. But I'm perplexed that I can't remember a time when we had two major polls coming out within a couple of days of each other that had 13 points difference. One said there was a 13-point difference in the race; the other one said it was tied—and they came out, they were done within 2 or 3 days of each other. I don't think either one of those pollsters rigged the results, so my instinct is that people are still trying to figure out what they think about this race.

And all I can tell you is, I know three things, and I've said this over and over again. I know three things. One is, no person in the history of the Republic has ever had the positive impact on this country as Vice President that Al Gore has had. That is a historical fact. We've had a lot of Presidents who were Vice Presidents who were great Presidents. Jefferson, Teddy Roosevelt, Harry Truman were great Presidents, but not because of their service as Vice President. Nobody has ever done as much for America as Vice President as Al Gore has. Therefore, in my lifetime, he's the best qualified person to serve.

The second thing is, I believe that he's right on the issues. I think his economic policy is right. I think it's far more likely to keep the prosperity of this country going. I think it's far more likely to include people that would otherwise be left out.

And the third thing is, I think it's important that somebody be elected that understands the future. We just announced this genome project yesterday. What are we going to do to make sure there's no genetic discrimination? A lot of people will want genetic discrimination in employment, in promotion, in extension of health insurance. What are we going to do to make sure it doesn't exist? What are we going to do to make sure, in the computer revolution, that there's no violation of people's privacy rights with their health and financial records? A lot of people will want to get that private health and financial information.

So I think that what will happen is, we'll come to the conventions; we'll have these debates; and somehow—I've been amazed by an amazing volatility since the end—you know, at the end of the primary campaign, most of the polls had him up a point or two. So there's a been a lot of volatility in these polls, and my best judgment is that people are still trying to figure out what they're going to do. And sooner or later they will. I don't think they have—and I think they know those three things about Al Gore, and it's still more likely than not that he will win.

Yes.

Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, you've spoken to the congressional constraints that are attached to your ability to deal with Cuba, and yet, a hallmark of your foreign policy, sir, has been a commitment to engagement, the idea that American trade and investment, ideas and practices can be powerful engines of change—China, Russia, Vietnam, now even North Korea. Do you think, sir, that it's in the American interest not to have those tools

available in dealing with Cuba? Do you think there's any prospect at all that the current policy will actually work? And after 40 years and now nine Presidents, do you think the time has come to reassess?

The President. I think the next—I like—I'll go back. I like the system that exists under the Cuban Democracy Act. I think Congress has a role to play here, but I like the Cuban Democracy Act. I think it's not wise to take away from the President all the tools of diplomacy with regard to one country that he might have, or she might have, some day with another country. So I like that.

But I will say again, there was a reason for that. All these other countries you mentioned, none of them—none of them—by order of the leader of the country, killed, murdered two airplanes' worth of people. I think there were four people involved. These people were killed illegally. It violated the Chicago convention. Even if you believe that those planes were in Cuban airspace, which we believe they were not, they could not legally be shot down. Now, let's not—that changed everything. The deliberate decision to murder those people changed everything. And it made me wonder whether Mr. Castro was hoping we never would normalize relations, so then he could use us as an excuse for the failures of his regime. But we are where we are here.

What have I done? I was aggressively moving to implement the Cuban Democracy Act before that happened. Since then, we have done everything we could—and I noticed there was one article about it last week which pointed out how Secretary Albright had dramatically increased the people-to-people contacts and the travel to Cuba. We are doing what we can.

Obviously, I think that anything we can do to engage the Cuban people, to get them involved in the process of change, to get them to look outside the world, to get them to look beyond the present system they have, is a positive thing to do. And that's why I answered in response to that very first question, to evaluate the legislation in the House on the food and medicine sales, I've got to really have an analysis of it to say, will the restrictions and personal contact, which the legislation imposes—which I think are a mistake—be outweighed by the increased sales of food and medicine, in terms of the ultimate benefit to the Cuban people. And I will look at it and see.

Yes, George [George Condon, Copley News Service].

Supreme Court Decision on Partial Birth Abortion

Q. Mr. President, does the closeness of today's abortion vote in the Supreme Court suggest to you that abortion rights are at risk in the next court? Or does it suggest that the fact that partial birth abortion can survive even a conservative court say that they aren't as threatened as some believe?

The President. Well, first, I think the court decision is clearly the only decision it could reach consistent with *Roe* v. *Wade.* So I think what you know there is that that's the vote for *Roe* v. *Wade.* You can't have a rule like the rule of *Roe* and then ignore it. So that's why—if you remember, on this late-term abortion issue a couple of years ago, I pleaded with the Congress to adopt a broad limitation on late-term abortions consistent with *Roe* v. *Wade,* but to make an exception for the life and health of the mother, as the Supreme Court decision required. They declined to do that, and so we've had a political impasse here, and then you've seen what's happened in all these States.

So the decision is, I think, consistent with *Roe* v. *Wade.* And as you pointed out, it was narrowly upheld. I think that's about what the vote for *Roe* is. And I think that in the next 4 years, there will be somewhere between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court, and depending on who those appointees are, I think the rule will either be maintained or overturned. And I think that it's very much in the balance, depending on what appointments are made in the next 4 years. That's what I believe.

Yes, go ahead, Larry [Larry McQuillan, USA Today].

Gasoline Prices and Energy Policy

Q. Mr. President, Governor Bush has been critical of you and the energy policy of the administration, saying that you've failed to adequately convince OPEC to increase oil production. He also claims that, if he became

President, he'd be able to use personal diplomacy to persuade allies, like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, to, I believe he said, turn on the spigot. Do you find that kind of claim realistic? And do you have any reaction to his criticism of you?

The President. Well, first of all, I have spent an enormous amount of time on this in the last several months, and there have been two decisions by OPEC to increase production—not as much as we would like.

If you look at the allocation of the production increases against the real capacity of those countries, most countries don't have the capacity to produce much more than their latest allocation, except for the Saudis. And it's clear that they were trying to maintain some sort of harmony within the OPEC family.

Let's go back. I think that these big increases in gasoline prices in America are the result, as I said, I think, several weeks ago, first and foremost, of the unfortunate decision of OPEC several months ago to cut back production at the very time the world economy was growing. They left production out there when the world economy sunk, which is one reason we had very inexpensive gas prices for a good period of time. And these two developments grated up against each other. So that's the first thing.

Then the second thing is, we had here, as you know, in America—so we had a tight supply situation. Then we had some broken pipelines, which interrupted supplies, which caused a temporary spike. And then in the Midwest we did have, apparently, some, but I think quite a modest, impact on prices because of the intersection of the clean air rules with trying to mix the fuels in a different way, particularly ethanol.

And I think what we have to do now is to keep doing what we can to get production up, to let this FTC investigation proceed. I think the gas prices have dropped 8 cents a gallon in the Midwest and, in the blended fuels area, 12½ cents a gallon just since the investigation was announced. But the main thing I would say to you is, we need a long-term energy strategy to maximize conservation and maximize the development of alternative sources of energy and also maximize domestic sources of energy.

Now, let me just mention two or three things—I've mentioned this before. The House, by the way, has reauthorized the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and I compliment them on that. That's a good thing. We also need a home heating oil reserve for the Northeast. We need to do that. That's very important. We ought to pass my proposal to provide tax credits to people who manufacture or buy energy-efficient homes, cars, and consumer products. That ought to be done. We ought to pass my appropriations to help develop alternative sources of energy and energy conservation technologies.

Since I've been President, or since '95, anyway, the Congress has approved approximately 12 percent of my requests, and the House voted to zero our participation in the Partnership for New Generation Vehicles. This kind of research is just as important as the human genome research in terms of the role of the Government in this. A lot of this basic research needs to be done by the Government. We can be driving cars that get 80 miles to the gallon through fuel cells, through electric cars, through natural gas fuel, a lot of other options, within a matter of 3 or 4 years if we'll just get after it and treat this like it's important. So I think that's very important.

Let me just mention one other thing. I think it's very important to pass a comprehensive electricity restructuring proposal, because they also, the electricity companies also—electric companies—use traditional fuels, and if we can reduce their reliance on it, obviously it will lower the price for other purposes. I think there's $20 billion a year in savings to the American people through electricity restructuring, which is also quite important.

Yesterday the Vice President issued a number of other proposals, including what he said he felt should be done with some of the surplus, which dealt with energy efficiency in factories and power plants. And all the analyses there show that there are massive, massive savings there, again, which would not only cut their bills but by freeing up supply would lower the overall price of the fuel that we need.

So that's the system we need. We need to—it's all out there. It's not like we don't

know that these technologies are there. It's not like we don't know we have options for conservation.

Some of you were with me, I think it was 3 years ago now, when I went out to San Bernardino, California, to a stop on the rail line outside Los Angeles, to a lower income housing project where they promised 40 percent lower utility bills, using elemental solar reflectors that looked like just little shingles on roofs, better windows, better insulation. And I can tell you, after 3 years, the average utility bills are 65 percent lower than they would be for that kind of floorspace for those families in other places in California.

So it's out there. All we have to do is to make up our mind that we're going to accelerate this. That's what I think we should be doing.

Q. Mr. President, does that mean that Governor Bush is oversimplifying things when he points to places like——

The President. Yes, I think that it's a—we all rate our powers of persuasion differently, you know, and our powers of persuasion sometimes work when people's interests are involved and sometimes don't. But it's not just a question of how much oil is being pumped. And obviously, I have done what I could in the way I felt was most effective to increase production. I will continue to do that. But I think it's a simple answer to a complex problem and—although I saw that story that one of you put out about his 1992 letter in which he was arguing for high energy prices. So I'm glad that he's changed his position anyway. It's amazing how a few years will do that to you. So I like that.

Yes, John [John Harris, Washington Post].

Presidential Decisionmaking

Q. Mr. President, supporters of Vice President Gore have been fairly blunt in raising questions about whether Governor Bush has the knowledge and depth to be President. On the other hand, many scholars have noted that Ronald Reagan managed to be effective by concentrating on a few big ideas and leaving the details to others. In your experience here, how important is command of facts and plain old brainpower to being President? Are there other qualities that are more important? [*Laughter*]

The President. That's a dead-bang loser, isn't it? [*Laughter*] No matter what I say, I'm in a big hole.

Well, first of all, I don't think it's so much a question of intelligence, generically. I think it's more a question of curiosity and willingness to learn what you think is important, and learn—I guess—I think that no President can say, "Well, it should be enough for the voters if I get the best advisers in my party, and they come up with a position and I take it."

So what the voters will have to analyze here is, how important is the fact that Al Gore spent 20 years working on arms control issues, for example, and dealing with all these things. How much of an effort—see, I ran as a Governor, although I had been a Governor a lot longer—but how important is what you know, what you've learned in the job you've got?

And I think this is a question that's more readily addressed, really, to the candidates than to me. I'm a different person. Everybody's different here. So I always felt that I needed to know as much as I could, not so I could make decisions without experts and without advisers but so I'd be in the best position to evaluate the advice I was getting.

But it's very important for a President not to try to micromanage the Presidency. So what you try to do is to find a balance between—because it's a deciding job; it's a deciding job. And a lot of our Presidents, I think, have had some problems, not because they knew too much but almost because they worked so hard that they were so tired, they maybe couldn't make really good decisions when they were tired.

But I think what you know counts, because I think the more you know, the better position you're in, not only to draw your own conclusions but to take advice. And so, I think what—the best is a balance, obviously. It's like everything else in life; the best is a balance. The best is a President that's had broad experience and that knows a lot and that is curious—I think curiosity is profoundly important—but also a President who understands what the big, important things are and then can listen to the right people. You've got to have a blend of both if you

want to make the best decisions. That's my view.

Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio].

Supreme Court Decision on Gays in the Boy Scouts

Q. Mr. President, what do you think of the Justice's ruling this morning that allows the Boy Scouts to bar gays as leaders? And if you disagree with it, can you justify your role as honorary president of the Boy Scouts, which discriminates against gays and atheists?

The President. Well, first of all, the Court's ruling, I noticed with interest—I haven't read it yet, but I did get a pretty good report on it—I noted with interest that they seem to go out of their way to draw the ruling quite narrowly and to limit it strictly to the question of whether the Boy Scouts could pick the people who were going to be Scout leaders.

I, generally—I have to tell you, I'm generally against discrimination against gays, and I think that the country has moved a long way. And I'm proud of the things that we've been able to do, and I'm disappointed we haven't been able to do more in some areas, but I think we're moving in the right direction. And I think that's all I should say. The Boy Scouts still are—they're a great group. They do a lot of good. And I would hope that this is just one step along the way of a movement toward greater inclusion for our society, because I think that's the direction we ought to be going in.

Go ahead, Jim [Jim Angle, Fox News].

Elian Gonzalez

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. As you know, the Supreme Court declined to intervene today either to stop Elian Gonzalez from leaving the country or to overrule other courts, all of which have deferred to your administration. As you look back on this——

The President. That's pretty rare, isn't it? [*Laughter*]

Q. As you look back on this, sir, do you have any sense, any regrets, at all about the way your administration handled this matter? And in light of what you've said about Cuba here today, sir, do you have any second thoughts about Elian returning to Cuba?

The President. Well, if he and his father had decided they wanted to stay here, it would be fine with me. But I think that the most important thing is that his father was adjudged by a people who made an honest effort to determine that he was a good father, a loving father, committed to the son's welfare.

And we upheld here what I think is a quite important principle, as well as what is clearly the law of the United States. Do I wish it had unfolded in a less dramatic, less traumatic way for all concerned? Of course I do. I have replayed this in my mind many times. I don't know that we had many different options than we pursued, given how the thing developed. But I think the fundamental principle is the right one, and I'm glad we did.

I was just in Germany, having a discussion with Chancellor Schroeder about some family reunification issues where we have serious differences with the Germans, who are our great allies, on this. And as I looked and reviewed some of these cases that I've tried to bring to the attention of the German officials, it made me even more convinced that we had upheld the proper principle here.

Yes, John [John King, Cable News Network].

National Missile Defense

Q. Mr. President, we hear increasingly from senior officials here and at the Pentagon that when it comes to national missile defense, you're inclined, essentially, to split the difference, authorize the contracting but leave the decision about whether to break from the ABM Treaty to the next President. Is that a fair reflection of your thinking?

The President. The most important thing I can say to you about that today is that I have not made a final decision, and that most of this speculation that is coming in the press is coming from people who have not talked to me about it.

Let me try to at least set up the thing, because I'm working hard on it now. Remember when we put out—when Congress passed a law about this a couple years ago, you remember, and we had to sort of come up with some timetables, I said two things that I want to repeat today.

First of all, insofar as there might be technology available which would protect us and other people around the world from missile attacks with warheads of weapons of mass destruction, obviously, anybody would have a moral obligation to explore that technology and its potential. I believe that.

Secondly, whether I would make a decision to go forward with deployment would depend upon four things: one, the nature of the threat; two, the feasibility of the technology; three, the cost and, therefore, the relative cost of doing this as compared with something else to protect the national security; and four, the overall impact on our national security, which includes our nuclear allies and our European alliance, our relationships with Russia, our relationships with China, what the boomerang effect might be about whatever China might do in South Asia, with the Indians and then the Pakistanis, and so on.

So what I have tried to do since then is to say as little as possible, except to explore what would have to be done in our relationships with the Europeans, our allies, and with the Russians, in the first instance, to keep our options open—could we get an agreed upon modification to the ABM Treaty.

Even the Russians—keep in mind, don't minimize—everybody talked about how we didn't reach an agreement, Mr. Putin and I, when I was in Russia. And that's absolutely true; we didn't. But we did get a document out of there which I think is quite important, because the Russians acknowledged that there are new and different security threats on the horizon; that is, that it's quite possible that in the next few years, countries not part of the arms control regimes of the last three decades could develop both long-range missile delivery capability and weapons of mass destruction which they could put on warheads, and that none of this would be covered by, essentially, the mutual deterrence structure of the ABM Treaty and all the things we've done since then.

So they recognize, too, that we, in the new century, in the coming decades, are going to have to make adjustments. Now, what they don't say is, they don't want America unilaterally building a missile defense that they think someday can undermine their deterrent capacity. That's kind of where they are now, and we're still talking about all that.

But John, the truly accurate thing is that I have not yet formulated a position which I am prepared to go to the American people with, but I will do so some time over the next several weeks based on those four criteria and what I think is the right thing to do.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, last Monday the IRA allowed inspectors to come in and see caches of their weapons. Would you like to see the other terrorist organizations on the Protestant sides allow inspectors to look at their weapons? And are there any words that you could say to the people of Northern Ireland who are facing the marching season, other than Colonel Crowley's oft "peace is good" position—any personal—[*laughter*]—any words from the heart that you could ask as they approach this very tense time?

The President. You know, one of the hardest things I've had to learn in life is that not every cliche is wrong. [*Laughter*] Peace is good. Well first, I think it would be a good thing for all the paramilitary groups that have secret arms caches obviously to follow the lead of those who are doing what's been done. I think this is a great deal. I think this is a very, very hopeful development.

And it ought to inform the marching season—that is, if people are going to do their marches, ought to do it mindful of the context in which they're doing it and the diminished tension and the enhanced hope for long-term peace and the institutions working again, and all of that.

This is America. We can't say—anybody can march; anybody can talk; anybody can say whatever they want to say. But everybody ought to—what I would hope is that there will be a new sense of responsibility and a new sense of possibility in Northern Ireland because of these developments.

You know, there's been lots of work done now over the last several years on this. We've come a long way since the first talk of then Prime Minister Major and then Prime Minister Reynolds, and I think that the work, particularly the things that have been done, the commitments that have been made, and the

actions that have been taken in the last few months, they ought to be cherished by the people of Northern Ireland, and we ought to have a marching season that unfolds, I would hope to the maximum extent possible, in recognition of all we have seen.

Yes, ma'am.

Vice President Al Gore

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to know how you feel Al Gore is doing at being his own man. The reason I ask that question is so many of his policies seem to be extensions of your policies, and even last week in the handling of the renewed call for a special prosecutor, the press was full of reports of how his response was very "Clintonesque." So how do you think he's doing at establishing a sense of his own identity?

The President. Oh, I think he's done that very well. Let me remind you, when I asked him to become Vice President, there were some people who criticized me, who said what a dumb thing I did because we were the same age, we came from—although he never lets me say that; he's a year younger than I am, and looks much younger now because he has no gray hair—but anyway, that we came from the same part of the country, and we basically came from the same wing of the Democratic Party. But I thought I was getting good balance because he knew things I didn't know about arms control, energy, environment, the way Washington worked.

So it shouldn't surprise you that having worked here for 8 years, as we all have, that a lot of the new things he proposes would grow naturally out of what has been done, rather than being a departure from it. But I must say, I read quite carefully those proposals he made yesterday, and while he did incorporate a lot of what I have proposed on energy efficiency, he went way beyond anything I'd ever proposed, too. I was kind of sorry I'd never thought of one or two of the things that were in there.

So I think he's doing fine on that. I think that—if you just go back to the times when this has happened before to good effect and—if you go back to when President Nixon ran in 1960 or when Hubert Humphrey ran in '68 or when President Bush ran in '88, it's a gradual process. But then one day, it reaches, in the words of that now-famous book that everybody is reading, it reaches a tipping point and people kind of get it, and they say, "Oh, there it is. There this person is." And I think that's happening with him. And I think after the conventions, it will be crystal clear. And the main players on the stage of American political life will be the two candidates for President.

Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

Gasoline Prices

Q. Mr. President, the proposals that Vice President Gore laid out yesterday on energy and the proposals that you discussed today are all long-range solutions to the Nation's dependence on oil. In terms of the problems that drivers in the Midwest are experiencing right now, during the summer driving season, with high gas prices, what would be so bad about suspending gas taxes temporarily just to give those drivers a break?

The President. First of all—well, the Federal gas tax is not that big. Most of the gas taxes come from—are at the State level. But if it were done—and Congress debated this before—if it were done, they would just have to decide what they were willing to pay in terms of either the deferral or the cancellation of Federal highway projects. And that's—it's a tradeoff, and they would have to make that judgment.

It would—even there, it would take some time, and there was some question, as I remember, when it was raised before, whether all those price savings would be passed along to the consumers. So I think if the Congress was going to do that, they would want to have some assurance that that would be done.

But let me say, this is not such a long-term deal. First of all, the most important thing is to let the industry know we're running a serious investigation here—and I would remind you, gas prices have dropped 8 cents in the Midwest, a gallon, since we announced it, at the pump—more, much more, at the wholesale level—and the blended gas has dropped more than 8 cents a gallon. So let's not minimize that.

The second thing we need to do is to make absolutely sure that everything that can possibly be done to make sure the pipelines are

flowing properly and the refineries are working—that's done. You know, we had a small problem, you may remember, where I used the Strategic Petroleum Reserve recently because of a breakdown in supply available to a refinery in the South. So if I can find any other kind of backlogs like that where there is something I can do to get the flow going, I will do that as well.

But the most important thing I can tell you is, I think that this, as we get more production on line, this present price crisis will begin to abate. But we will have fundamentally higher prices, now that the rest of the world's economy has recovered, and now that virtually all of the OPEC members but Saudi Arabia are operating virtually at full capacity—until we make up our minds that we're going to drive higher mileage vehicles and do other things that use less oil.

And we are not talking about a long, long, long-term thing. You're talking about—a lot of these cars could be on the road and available for sale within 2 years—a lot of them. And it's just a question of whether we think it's a national priority, because—we've treated the human genome like a priority every year because we all want to live forever. And that's good. I'm not minimizing that. I'm not being flippant about that. We do. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. But we only get interested in this when the price of gasoline goes through the roof.

And this was inevitable. We were actually quite—I expected it was going to hit sooner, but the Asian financial crisis dropped it down. Now, they went up more than they should have and more than any of us anticipated, including me. And I think part of that is perhaps not justifiable, and that's what we're seeing—why we're seeing some price adjustments in the Middle West today.

But the only real answer for this is for us to develop alternative sources to oil and more efficient ways of using the energy we have. And we can do it in a hurry if we just put our minds to it.

Q. If I could just follow up on that. The Federal gas tax is 18 cents, which is not insignificant. Half of that was instituted originally for deficit reduction. Now that we don't have deficits and, in fact, we have record surpluses, what would be wrong with temporarily rolling back, say, 9 cents, or maybe even just the 4.3 cents that you instituted as part of your 1993 budget deal?

The President. Inherently, there's nothing wrong with it. But you would want to know two things: first of all, the Congress should be satisfied that whatever the financial consequences are to the highway construction and repair program are consequences they're willing to pay, and they think their constituents are willing to pay, number one. And secondly, they'd need some assurances that actually the people would benefit from it at the pump.

Deborah, go ahead [Deborah Mathis, Gannett News Service].

Post-Presidential Plans

Q. Sir, you know we're obligated to ask you about your post-Presidential plans just in case you've made a decision since the last time we asked you. [*Laughter*] I recall that many years ago, you were asked about, when you were still Governor of Arkansas, you were asked about your future political plans. And interestingly, you didn't mention the Presidency, but you did say that you had always wanted to be in the United States Senate. Is that on the table for you? Have you made any other decision that we need to know about?

The President. No. But let me remind you what the context—you go back and read that interview. I think you'll see what I said was, when I was a young man, I always wanted to be a Senator, and I never thought about being a Governor. But when I became a Governor, I found that I liked being an executive better than I liked being a legislator. And I still feel that way. I think—maybe I'll run for the school board some day. That's about the only thing I can imagine doing. I don't have any other plans. I just want to be a good citizen.

Go ahead, in the back.

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. Last question.

Congressional Action on the Budget

Q. Republicans in Congress are seeking to pass the spending bills early this year, in an effort to get out of Washington and go

campaign in the fall. And yet, there are significant differences between what they want to spend and what you have proposed. I'm wondering, what do you see as the major points of disagreement at this time, and do you think that we're in for the same type of prolonged budget stalemate that had been featured in the past?

The President. That's entirely up to them whether we're in for the budget stalemate. But if you just—look at the education budget. I mean, how many times do we have to go down this road? You know, it's still not supportive of the 100,000 teachers and the smaller classes; it's still not supportive of the dramatic expansion in after-school programs, which is critical to school performance; still has nothing in there for school construction; still is inadequate in terms of my plan that people ought to either identify these failing schools and either turn them around or shut them down—and lots of other problems with the school program.

If you look at the crime proposals—this is unbelievable. When they wouldn't adopt the commonsense gun safety legislation, all I heard was this constant barrage about how, if only the administration would enforce the gun laws on the books, everything would be wonderful; we wouldn't have any problems in America.

So what I said, "Look, why don't we do both? We have increased gun prosecutions under my administration, but we can do more. So please, give me some more money for people to investigate gun crimes, for people to prosecute gun crimes, to develop safe gun technology"—this whole—it was nothing but a straight enforcement measure; exactly what they said they wanted, and no money for it.

Still no support for the 50,000 new police officers in the higher crime areas. And still the constant threat of these environmental riders, and underfunding of the land's legacy initiative, and a number of other things.

So we still have some serious differences. Now, we've been doing this every year since 1995; we just sort of slightly change the script every year. And I'm more than happy to do it again, because, frankly, in the end, we normally wind up with an agreement that's pretty good for the American people.

But the timing in which we do it—it depends more on them than me. I'm not going to give up my commitment to education as our most important domestic priority and what we're doing to build the future of our children. And I think—we've got the crime rate down now to a 25-year low; we can't stop the policy that works. And here I gave them a big proposal that is exactly what they say they want and believe in, and they don't want to fund that.

So we'll just have to see what happens. I'm kind of hopeful about it, though. It's just late June, here. This drama has several more acts before it's over.

Go ahead. We'll take one more. Go ahead, sir.

National Missile Defense/Korean Summit

Q. Mr. President, if I could return you to missile defense for a moment. The missile defense plan was based in large part on the threat from North Korea. You've now seen a first warming of relations between North and South. South Korea is not enthused about the missile defense plan. I'm wondering whether you now view it as urgent as you did—the threat as urgent as you did a few months ago. I'm also wondering whether you would be willing to meet with Kim Chong-il of North Korea?

The President. Well, first let me say, I got a report both from President Kim on the phone and from his representatives in person about the summit of the Koreas. And I thought it was a very, very important development and a great tribute to President Kim's vision and courage and persistence. And I also think it justified the American policy, which is that we would never allow ourselves to be put in the middle between the two Koreas, that we wanted them to meet and work together.

So we, I think, contributed to it; the Chinese and others did as well. I think this is good for everybody, and I'm encouraged by it. I'm also encouraged by the moratorium that the North Koreans have on testing. But they still have a missile program, and so it's still something that the United States has to be mindful of and to prepare to deal with and to keep up with. And of course, I hope

it will go away as a problem. I hope it for the people of North Korea, too.

All these countries that have a lot of people in great need that are spending vast sums of money on defense, it's one of the great tragedies of the world today. So, would I like it to go away? Of course I would. Do I think it's gone away because of this meeting? I don't. Do I think it might? It might, and I hope it will, but we don't know that yet.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 192d news conference began at 1:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; Gary Graham, convicted felon executed in Texas on June 22; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Gov. George H. Ryan of Illinois; President Fidel Castro of Cuba; former Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy; former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry G. Cisneros; Juan Miguel Gonzalez, father of Elian Gonzales; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; Assistant Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs P.J. Crowley; former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; former Prime Minister Albert Reynolds of Ireland; General Secretary Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea. A portion of this new conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Ceremony Honoring Presidential Scholars

June 28, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. I'm sorry it's a little rainy, but it's a nice place to hide from the rain.

We're delighted to be joined today by Representatives Jack Kingston, Carlos Romero-Barcelo, John Isakson, and Ken Bentsen. And I want to thank Deputy Education Secretary Frank Holleman for being here, as well as Chairman Tom Britton and all the members of the Commission on Presidential Scholars, and the members of the Presidential Scholars Foundation who are with us here today.

I have had the privilege of meeting with the Presidential scholars every year since I've been in office. I always enjoy meeting you and your parents, your teachers, your loved ones. I want to congratulate each of you for working hard, for believing in yourselves, for achieving something very special, and for being in a position to play such a large role in our country's future.

I am especially glad that all you young people are here this week, because this is a week which has had a very large impact on the future that you will live. Just 2 days ago some of our Nation's leading scientists came to the White House to announce they had completed mapping the entire human genome, the very book of life. It's one of the most important scientific discoveries of all time. It will launch a new era of discovery that will revolutionize the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of most, if not all, human diseases, from Alzheimer's to Parkinson's to diabetes to cancer.

Then, we also announced this week that according to the latest budget projections, our budget surplus this year will be the largest in the entire history of the United States, $211 billion. When I leave office, we will have paid down the national debt by nearly $400 billion—[*applause*]— thank you; locked away the taxes the American people pay for Social Security and, I hope, for Medicare, for debt reduction over the next decade, and still leave the American people a projected surplus to be invested in the future of about $1.5 trillion.

If Congress works with me, we can map a course to place our Nation in a position we haven't been in since 1835, an America entirely debt-free. We can do that by 2012. And it will change your future forever.

One thing that I've worked hard to achieve over the last 7½ years—and we've had a surprising amount of bipartisan consensus on this—is to extend the ability to go to college to more young Americans. We've established the HOPE scholarship; the $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, which effectively makes community college free to most Americans; a lifetime learning tax credit, which has been very, very important for the last 2 years of college, for graduate school, for adult education. We've allowed families to save in education IRA's. We changed the nature of the student loan program to lower

the cost and to provide more repayment options in a way that has saved our students $8 billion over the last 7 years. And now I'm asking Congress to allow families to deduct the costs of up to $10,000 of college tuition at a 28 percent rate, which could be worth $2,800 to virtually every family in America sending a young person to college.

So this, I think, may be one of the most important things we've done in the last 7 years. College-going is higher than ever before. Two-thirds of our high school graduates are immediately going on to college. It's something for which we can all be very, very grateful.

Thirty-five years ago this month, President Johnson welcomed the second class of Presidential scholars here to the White House. And believe it or not, he talked about this very moment. Here's what he said: "In the year 2000, most of you scholars will be no older than I am today. Intricate and subtle problems will confront you along the way. It is your responsibility to bring to the solution of these problems a set of values drawn from the long wisdom of the democratic process."

Now, when he said that, President Johnson didn't know we would map the human genome. He didn't know we'd be talking about a $1.5 trillion surplus. Before we started running these surpluses, the last time we had a surplus was in 1969, and it was just a few million dollars, and they hardly knew what to do with it.

So he didn't know about the genome; he didn't know about the surplus. But he did know something Americans have always known: If we stay focused on the future and if we stay true to our values, there is no stopping the power and potential of the spirit of our people.

Now, 35 years from now, you Presidential scholars will be about my age. In this audience, we have students who may one day help us find a cure for AIDS, who may design cars that get hundreds of miles to the gallon, who help us unlock the mysteries of our deepest ocean depths and the dark reaches of outer space.

I think it very likely that your children will be born with a life expectancy of somewhere around 100 years. And I think it possible that you will be able to unite with others across the world, across all the lines—the racial, the ethnic, the religious lines—that divide us,not only because of the way technology and the Internet are bringing us together but because of one of the great lessons we have actually learned from the study of the human genome. Scientists have found already, in mapping the genes of people, that in genetic terms, all human beings, regardless of race, are more than 99.9 percent the same. Even more surprising, the genetic differences within people of the same race are greater than the differences of the genetic profile from group to group of people of different races.

Therefore, what we have learned, perhaps most important, from this stunning breakthrough of modern science, is something that ancient faiths have already taught us: The most important fact of life on this Earth is our common humanity. I hope that understanding continues to guide all of you as you go out into the best days our country and, I hope, our world have ever known. I am very proud of you for your achievements. I congratulate you and your families. I wish you well.

I only hope that you will always remember this day and the fact that you came to the Nation's Capital and to the people's house at a time of great progress and prosperity. But that progress and prosperity imposes upon you, because of your gifts, a special responsibility to make the most of it.

Congratulations.

Now we're going to bring the Presidential scholars up.

Thank you.

[*At this point, the Presidential scholars were introduced.*]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes our program, but if they don't make you feel better about the future of America, nothing will. Let's give them another hand. [*Applause*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Partial Birth Abortion

June 28, 2000

I am pleased with the Supreme Court's decision today in *Stenberg* v. *Carhart* striking down a Nebraska statute that banned so-called partial birth abortions. The Court's decision is consistent with my past vetoes of similar legislation. I will continue to veto any legislation restricting late-term abortions that lacks a health exception or otherwise unduly burdens a woman's right to choose. A woman's right to choose must include the right to choose a medical procedure that will not endanger her life or health. Today's decision recognizes this principle and marks an important victory for a woman's freedom of choice.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Restriction of Protests Outside Health Care Facilities

June 28, 2000

I am pleased that the Supreme Court today, in *Hill* v. *Colorado,* upheld a Colorado statute balancing a person's right to protest certain medical procedures against another person's right to obtain medical treatment free from harassment, fear, and intimidation. The Colorado law was enacted in response to a real need to ensure safe access to medical treatment in light of increasing obstruction, harassment, and violence in front of health care facilities. To preserve a woman's right to choose, we must protect access to reproductive health services. That is why I championed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), a Federal statute that protects women and doctors from violence at reproductive health clinics.

NOTE: The statement referred to Public Law No. 103–259, approved May 26, 1994.

Statement on House Action on Private Insurance Prescription Coverage Legislation

June 28, 2000

Tonight, in a partisan vote, the Republican leadership succeeded in passing a flawed, unworkable private insurance prescription benefit that provides more political cover than insurance coverage for our Nation's seniors. If this unworkable private prescription drug benefit passes the Congress, I will veto it. The legislation was designed to benefit the companies who make prescription drugs, not the older Americans and people with disabilities who need to take them. It puts special interests above the public interests. I urge the Congress to work across party lines and develop a bipartisan bill that ensures an affordable, available, and meaningful Medicare prescription drug benefit option for all seniors.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Brian Schweitzer

June 28, 2000

Thank you. I'll tell you what, I'm glad he clarified that. [*Laughter*] He got into that next husband deal—I thought there were going to be three surprised people here—[*laughter*]—me, Hillary, and what's-her-name. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, let me say, first of all, I want to thank all of you for coming, and thank Beth again for her incredible generosity. She and Ron have been so wonderful to open their homes to people who share our causes. Unlike maybe most of the people in this room, I've actually been to Montana several times. In 1985 we had one of our best family vacations ever, there. And I think it may be the most beautiful place on the Earth. It is certainly one of the most magnificent. And it deserves to have a magnificent, big, strong Senator, and we're about to get one here.

I loved the place. I felt immediately at home. It's so much like the place I grew up and the people I grew up with. But I have to tell you, this thing that Brian did with the prescription drugs and taking the people to Canada and then to Mexico, it really painted a picture of what we're up against.

And what I'd like to say is something you all know, but this is a very important election. And maybe I can say it with greater authority since I'm not on the ballot. There are profound differences between the two parties, starting with our candidates for President, our candidates for the Senate, our candidates for the House.

And the most important thing that most voters need to know about who is probably right, is that only the Democrats want you to know what the real differences are. There was a great article in the newspaper the other day. You can't believe everything you read in the press, I know, but since our Republican friends didn't deny this, we can assume it's true. They have actually hired pollsters. They're so afraid of this prescription drug issue, they have hired pollsters to tell them what words and phrases they should use to convince you that they're for giving affordable prescription drugs to our seniors, even though they're not.

That's what was so bizarre about this. They didn't hire pollsters to convince them how to talk about something they're for; they hired pollsters to try to tell them how to talk about something they're not for. I never saw anything like it in my life.

Now, just last week, or a couple of days ago, anyway, the United States Senate voted on this issue. And on a party line vote, they voted against the position that he and I hold. If we change Senate seats in Montana, that will be a switch of two. They'll lose one, and we'll gain one. And I could give you example after example after example.

But let me say, all over America and rural parts of the country, over half of our elderly senior citizens don't have any kind of medical coverage for medicine. If we were creating a Medicare program today, of course we'd have a prescription drug coverage. If I asked you to go in that room with a pencil and piece of paper and design a medical program to ensure all the seniors in America what would it cover, every one of you would put prescription drugs down on it.

The only reason there is no prescription drug coverage in Medicare is, in 1965 health care was about doctors and hospitals. There had not been the pharmacological revolution we had seen. Prescription drugs were not used basically to keep people out of the hospital—which saves money over the long run, I might add—and to lengthen and enhance the quality of life. And the only reason it hasn't happened since then is every year but one, until this administration, the Government was in debt, and we couldn't afford to take on new programs.

Well, now we're looking at a $1.5 trillion surplus over the next 10 years, after we save all of your Social Security and Medicare taxes to pay the debt down and stabilize Social Security and Medicare. And for roughly 12½ percent of that—15 percent, something like that—we can provide prescription drugs at an affordable rate on a voluntary basis to all the seniors in this country. And we ought to do it.

And you know, this has been a great week for America. We announced a $211 billion surplus in the budget this year, the biggest one we ever had. I will now have had the privilege of paying off about $400 billion of the national debt when I leave office. And even more profoundly important, we announced the sequencing of the human genome. But this is just the beginning, mapping these 3 billion genes, looking at all the different patterns. It's just the beginning.

And what will happen is, we will discover the genetic flaws that give people Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, every different kind of cancer, the things that make some people more prone to heart disease and others more prone to strokes. And the more we discover, the more important medicine is going to be, and the more we're going to be able to lengthen life and increase the quality of life.

Anybody that lives to be 65 in America today has got a life expectancy of 82. That's stunning. I predict to you that children born within a decade will be born with a life expectancy of 85 to 90. This is stunning. Within 20 years, children will be born with a life expectancy of 100. Your body is built to last

about 120 years. All of us that don't, like me—[*laughter*]—do things like, too much stress, or we don't eat right, or whatever—this is going to change everything.

And it is, I think, a stern test of our judgment and our character what we do with this prosperity we've got. And I think one of the things that we have to do is take care of the aging of America, the baby boom generation is getting older. And we can't do it unless we do the prescription drug program.

You know my first love is education. I've worked hard on it. There is plenty of money left to do education. Should we give some of the money back to the people in a tax cut? Absolutely, there is plenty of money left to do that. But we have no higher priority, in my judgment, than making sure that we have done right by the seniors in this country and that we have paved the way with the prescription drug program. This man symbolizes that. There are a thousand other issues that we'll be voting on.

But you just remember this. When you talk to people about the elections, say, "Well, you know, I went to this party for this fellow, Schweitzer. He's from Montana, and he's doing these crazy things for these people to prove to them we're getting the shaft on prescription drugs for seniors. But what it says is, he wants to do something with our prosperity. He wants to do something for people who need help, not just for those of us who can afford to come to an event like this. And he wants to do something to make America a better, stronger, more united place."

If he wins, it will go like a rifle shot across America. And if we don't succeed in getting this done between now and November, because they think their phrases that the pollster gives them will substitute for deeds, you can be sure if he gets elected, it will happen, and it will be a much better country.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Beth and Ron Dozoretz. Mr. Schweitzer is a candidate for U.S Senate from Montana.

Remarks at a New Democrat Network Dinner

June 28, 2000

Thank you very much. I have here in my hand a Mont Blanc pen left on this platform, I presume by Simon,—[*laughter*]—who could not afford one of these when he worked for me. [*Laughter*] I am really proud of you—[*laughter*]—and I thank you, you've been great. This is really wonderful.

Now, I don't know how well the rest of you know Senator Lieberman. I think I know Senator Lieberman reasonably well—30 years worth of reasonably well. And normally he's so laid-back and so buttoned-down and so controlled. And that's the image of the whole New Democrat crowd. But when he gets in front of a New Democrat group, he becomes positively ebullient. [*Laughter*] I mean, you could mistake him for Chris Dodd up here, the way he was talking. [*Laughter*] It was amazing.

Listen, this deal he did tonight is a big deal. Getting the disclosure of these secret committees is a big deal for America, and we thank you. This is great. And this could really influence the outcome of some of the elections this year, and more importantly, it could ratify a principle that we all, in both parties, say we believe in, which is full disclosure. So now we're going to be given our chance, and it's a great thing.

Let me—I thank all the rest of you for coming. I want to say, Joe, of all the nice things you said about me, you know, when we started in '93, we carried the economic plan by a vote—just a vote. As Al Gore says, whenever he voted, we won—in both Houses. And I want to pay special tribute to those of you who were there then and who were part of the whole idea base of the New Democratic movement. And I want to say a special word of appreciation to my friend and neighbor of many years Dave McCurdy, who was a big part of that. I thank you so much. Thank you.

We have all these people running for office today. I guess I want to say a few words about all of them. And I'll come back to that. But let me begin by saying that I hope this group will stay together after this election. And I

hope that it will become a constant vehicle to merge politics and policy in the best way.

In Washington, we have too many people who do policy but don't do politics. And then we have people who do politics but don't do policy. And really it only works if you do both. There's nothing wrong with politics. I've always sort of enjoyed it. [*Laughter*] And I think I've embarrassed a lot of people because I'm not ashamed of it. I love politics. I love the system. If it weren't a pretty good system, we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. It's really nothing more than saying you like people. You're interested in what they have to say, and you think everybody counts. But we need a place where people can be brought together with their ideas and their legitimate political aspirations.

And I said this when the DLC had its sort of every-decade meeting to figure out the charter for the organization up in Hyde Park the other day. But let me just remind you what the New Democrats have wrought in the last 7 years.

In addition to the dramatic turnaround in the fiscal picture of the country that Senator Lieberman mentioned, we had the family and medical leave law; welfare reform; 100,000 police; the Brady bill; doubling the earned-income tax credit; going from one to 1,700 charter schools in this country; all the trade initiatives, including now over 280 separate trade agreements; the empowerment zone program and the reinventing Government program, both of which were strongly pushed by the New Democrats, which the Vice President led; and of course, my personal favorite, national service, where now 150,000 young people have followed Alan Khazei and City Year's lead to go out across this country.

And they built a great, broad bipartisan support. Former Senator of Indiana, Republican Senator Dan Coats had a great article in the Hill newspaper yesterday talking about how he changed his mind about AmeriCorps, that we were never interested in supplanting the civic sector of our society but wanted to strengthen it and support it. And that's exactly what the national service has done. So you can be proud of that.

In this year alone, we've had the Africa/Caribbean Basin bill. We are about, I believe, to pass the China trade bill. We have the bill to help Colombia, which I strongly believe is a New Democratic measure. We took the earnings limit off Social Security. And we still have a chance, in addition to passing this campaign finance measure, to expand the earned-income tax credit again; to pass the new markets legislation, which has broad bipartisan support; to do more to close the digital divide and reduce hate crimes in our country; to pass Senator Landrieu's great initiative to permanently set aside massive funds to protect precious lands along our coasts and throughout the country forever. And we've got this possibility for paying the country out of debt, for the first time since 1835. That's pretty good. That's pretty good.

But what I want to say to you is our continued progress depends upon ideas, continuous movement, and good politics. And that means, among other things, that the people who are here tonight who are up for reelection have to be helped. And you're helping them here, but I don't want you to stop here. I'll just mention a few.

First of all, Governor Nelson from Nebraska back there. Most people say we couldn't hold Bob Kerrey's Senate seat, but he's going to hold it. And I served with him for many years as Governor. I have enormous respect for him. He will be a genuine New Democrat in the Senate. He needs your help to win.

I think in some ways, the ultimate test of whether you can combine fiscal conservatism, social liberalism, and astonishing personal courage, will be whether Chuck Robb will be reelected in Virginia. And I think you can help him.

Debbie Stabenow is going to give us a seat in Michigan. But she's in a hard race, and she needs your help. Cal Dooley has to fight in every election he ever runs in. [*Laughter*] And he spent a lot of time with this New Democratic Network. I just want to say one thing about Cal.

He spends a lot of time that he doesn't have to spend, working on getting us all together for trade, working on getting us all together for the New Democratic Network. Whenever they need any of us to get together, and all the rest of us will come when we're asked, Cal's there doing the asking. He

comes from a tough district. They've been very supportive of him, and very understanding, but he needs and deserves your help. Because all the times he's been out here working to get us together—and half the time to do things we should have done on our own without his having to ask us—he could have been home getting votes. So I want you to help him. He needs it. Thank you.

I want to thank all the rest who are here. I want to mention one or two others. But I thank Adam Smith and my Congressman, Vic Snyder, who's here, and Bob Etheridge, my longtime friend from our education days, and Loretta Sanchez, who made Orange County safe for Democrats—[*laughter*]—and Jim Davis and John Larson and Ron Kind and Jim Moran and my good friend Harold Ford. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Rush Holt. Now, Rush Holt is the first guy to represent his district in a century or more. And he's the only scientist we have—serious, serious scientist in the Congress. We also had a great science teacher, Bruce Vento, from Minnesota, but he's retiring this year.

You know, I just announced the human genome, and we're all talking about how we have to preserve privacy of medical records, and we've got a thousand decisions to make. This Congress is going to be—Joe told that joke about me organizing a DLC chapter on Mars—[*laughter*]—but let me just tell you, we're all laughing about this, but I believe some of the most serious decisions Congress will have to make in the next decade will relate to science and technology.

Now, we can get all the money we need from Democrats or Republicans for the National Institutes of Health, because we all want to live forever. And I say that not in a bad—that's good;, that's not bad. I don't say that in a critical way. When I'm gone from here, I'll probably be writing you all letters, asking you to put more into it as I get older. [*Laughter*]

But there are a whole range of other issues. Should we try to find out if there was life on Mars, or should we be determining what's in the black holes in outer space, or should we be shifting another few hundred million dollars to explore the deepest depths of the ocean, because we now know there are forms of life there that we had not even discovered yet that might have all kinds of answers? Should we do them all? If so, what do we have to take money away from?

I'm telling you, this is a big deal. Rush Holt is really important to the Congress. He's a serious scientist who actually knows stuff that the rest of us just give speeches about. [*Laughter*] And he had the guts to run in a district where nobody else would run because they thought there wasn't any way a Democrat could get elected. So he also is a test of whether our ideas can sway people who otherwise were not reachable by us. And I want you to help him. He deserves to be reelected, and I want him to be reelected. Thank you.

And finally, of course, I want you to help the Vice President, because I want you to make Bill Daley look like a genius. [*Laughter*] He is, but I want him to look like one.

You know, I just want to say a word about this. First of all, there are a lot of people who, if they had a job like Secretary of Commerce, would try to find some way to say no if they were being asked to run and do another political campaign. He could say, "Well, I've already been in the Cabinet once. What else can I do?" And he didn't say no. And that means a lot to me.

Because I can tell you, all the stuff we talked about, and a lot of other issues that you know well, including what kinds of people get appointed to major positions from the Supreme Court to the Cabinet to many other things, are hinging on the outcome of the Presidential race. And how well a lot of our friends out here run in their reelection campaign will turn in some measure on this Presidential race. And Bill Daley said yes, and I'm proud of him. And it's going to be a better campaign and a winning campaign in no small measure because he did.

I just want to remind you, very briefly, of some things. I know you know this. And I had a chance to talk about this in my press conference a little today. I worked real hard for the last 7½ years, with the help of a lot of good people in this room, in Congress, and those in my administration who'd been introduced, like Secretary Caldera, to kind of turn our country around, get it going in

the right direction, give the American people a lot of self-confidence that we could move forward and we could move forward together. And now we really do have this unbelievable chance to kind of write the future of our dreams for our kids.

But I get the feeling that there are people kind of approaching this election in a less serious vein, who basically act as if—and a lot of you have done this, a lot of you in the high-tech sector have done this—but a lot people act like this economy's rocking along so good; you couldn't mess it up if you tried. You could take dynamite to the New York Stock Exchange, and it wouldn't mess it up; you could do whatever you wanted; you couldn't mess it up—and that maybe people ought to just take their tax cut and run and just kind of enter an area of good feelings and just see what happens. And I just don't believe that.

I think any of us who are at least 30 years old—I've said this 1,000 times; I'm going to say it one more time—anybody in this room at least 30 years old can remember at least one time in your life when you made a mistake, not because things were going so badly for you but because things were going so well, you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. And that is how we're going to be measured this time. Are we going to concentrate? Are we going to bear down? Are we going to really, really cherish the extraordinary opportunity we have here?

And I think that there are four simple arguments for Al Gore's election. First of all, his service as Vice President, from breaking the tie on the budget in '93 to breaking the tie on the commonsense gun safety legislation in 2000 to running the Rego program to the empowerment zones, to the technology partnership for the new generation vehicles to managing big chunks of our relationships with Russia, South Africa, Egypt, and many other places.

We have had a lot of Vice Presidents who made great Presidents. Thomas Jefferson did. Theodore Roosevelt did, and Harry Truman did. But we've never had anybody serve in that job who was as great in that job as Al Gore. Never, not one person in the history of the Republic has ever done that. And that counts for something. It really matters that he's had this experience, that he knows these things.

The second argument is, now that I'm going out into private life, it's just purely selfish, but I'd kind of like to see this expansion continue for a little while. [*Laughter*] And I know that he will follow economic policies more likely to keep the expansion going, because we'll keep paying down the debt; we'll keep interest rates down; we'll keep investing in our future; he'll keep expanding trade, keep doing the things that have to be done.

If you take all the non-Social Security surplus and give it away—all of it right now, projected for the next decade—in a tax cut and in the partial privatization transition costs of any privatization plan and in the spending in other defense and other spending plans proposed by the Republicans, it's all gone. All the surplus is gone.

Now, if I ask all of you, what's your projected income over the next 10 years, and you tell me, and I say, "Do you have a high level of confidence?" You say, "Yes," and I say, "Good, come here and sign the contract to spend it all tomorrow," you would think I had lost my mind, wouldn't you? There's not a person in this room that would sign a contract tomorrow obligating you to spend your entire projected income over the next 10 years. We do not need to risk going back to the old days of deficits and high interest rates and weak economic performance because of that. That's the second reason that we ought to be for Gore.

And the third reason is that he understands the future. And that's important. I'll just give you just two examples. With this incredible human genome announcement this week—it was stunning. You know, I've been reading about this stuff for a year just so I would understand it when I made the announcement yesterday. [*Laughter*] Now, you're laughing, but it is the most fascinating thing I have ever studied in my life. It's unbelievable. But we have serious questions here. Do you believe that as we give up more and more of our genetic information so we can find out how to stay healthier, we should be denied jobs on the basis of it—or promotions, or access to health insurance? That's a big question, isn't it? Don't you want somebody

who understands how to help you work through all that?

I had a guy tell me the other day that Al Gore was talking to him about the Internet 12 or 15 years ago and saying that someday it would all be on all the—the Library of Congress would all be on computers, and we could all get it, and that's what it is—along with the Encyclopedia Britannica. Pretty soon, all of our health and financial information is going to be on somebody's computer. I think you ought to have to give permission before somebody else gets it. Wouldn't you like to have somebody who both understands that, and wants to keep the high-tech economy going and growing and keep this a fertile ground for new companies to start, being President?

Everybody now admits we're having global warming. When we started talking about it 5 years ago, we had a House subcommittee that thought it was a subversive plot to wreck the American economy. My only defense was, if I was trying to wreck the American economy, I had done a poor job of it.

You know, the first lunch I ever had with Al Gore, the very first one after we took office in the White House, he brought in his little chart showing me how there was more greenhouse gases being put in the atmosphere in the last 30 years than in the previous 500. But you know what? Eight years later it's the conventional wisdom. People made fun of him 8 years ago. It's the conventional wisdom now. He was right.

Don't you think we ought to have somebody that understands this going into a future that—somebody that can shape our children's future? If we don't do something about this, it's going to flood the sugar cane fields in Florida—I mean in Louisiana. It's going to flood the Everglades in Florida. It's going to change the whole pattern of agricultural production in the Midwest. I think it's important. I want somebody plotting the country's future that really understands this stuff.

And the final thing I'd say is, we're Democrats because, whether we're more conservative or more liberal on this or that spending issue or this or that crime issue, we're inclusive. We want poor people along for the ride. We want middle class people to have a chance to catch up with everybody else. We want everybody's kids to have an education. And we're not for demeaning people because of their race, their religion, their sexual orientation, or anything else. And I want somebody as President that I absolutely trust to take us all along for the ride.

So we actually made America a better place, and you guys have just gotten started. All the good stuff is still out there to be done, but you've got to win now to do it then.

Thank you, and bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Westin Fairfax Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Simon Rosenberg, founder and president, New Democrat Network; Dave McCurdy, president, Electronic Industries Alliance; Alan Khazei, cofounder, City Year; and former Gov. E. Benjamin Nelson of Nebraska, a candidate for U.S. Senate. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a World War II Memorial Reception

June 29, 2000

The President. Good morning, and welcome to the White House. I want to acknowledge especially Secretary Cohen, Secretary West, General Shelton. Chairman Gilman and Senator Lautenberg were here, and they had to go back to work. But I know we appreciate their being here, and their going back to work. [*Laughter*] I want to welcome all of the distinguished veterans who are here, especially, and thank General Herrling, particularly. And I'll introduce Senator Dole and Mr. Smith in a moment.

I am very enthusiastic about this project, and I want to thank all of you who have already helped, including the school children who are here and all of you who will help.

One of the great pleasures of being President on warm nights and on the weekends is being able to sit out on the balcony that was built during President Truman's tenure here, and you can look out on The Mall and see the whole history of America, from the Revolutionary War, commemorated in the Washington Monument, to the Civil War and

Abraham Lincoln. Now there are monuments to World War I, Korea, and Vietnam. We just celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Korean war. They teach us a lot about our national history and our national character.

You also can see on The Mall the scientific genius of America in the Air and Space Museum, our Nation's heritage in the American Natural History Museum. You can see art in the National Gallery and the Hirshhorn. And I can see the Capitol, even on the days where I think they don't hear me down there. [*Laughter*]

And yet, the event that speaks most to the courage and character of America is World War II. It defined the 20th century. And until it has a place on our National Mall, the story of America that is told there will be woefully incomplete. This, therefore, in a real sense, is the last campaign of World War II.

Roger Durbin, who began it more than a decade ago, understands—understood that it's not just about the child that walks The Mall today whose grandfather served in the war. It is, in a larger sense, about the child who walks The Mall in a hundred years, tugging on his or her grandfather's sleeve, asking questions about the monument. That is the special quality of those monuments. It's how we learn from our past. And so there must be a monument so that a hundred years from now those questions will be asked.

Roger Durbin knew that, and I want to thank his granddaughter, Melissa Growden, for being here with us today.

Four and a half years ago we came together on The Mall to sprinkle soil from America's overseas cemetery, to begin a drive to get this memorial built. I believe today, as I did then, that the site we dedicated is still perfect for the memorial. The distance traveled since is, in itself, a story of national resolve. And there are many people who deserve our gratitude, but I want to recognize just a few this morning.

First, I want to thank General Fred Woerner and Major General John Herrling for the terrific job they're doing at the American Battlefields Monuments Commission. It oversees 24 American military cemeteries and 27 memorials in 15 nations around the world. And I know they are anxious to add the World War II memorial to that list.

When this drive began, we were certain that one person we could count on was Fred Smith, the chairman of Fed-Ex and cochair of this memorial drive. This isn't the first time he's answered our country's call. He served two tours in Vietnam, and his father and three uncles all served in World War II. And I have known him for many, many years now, because we're from the same neck of the woods. Fred, I wasn't surprised you agreed to do this, but I was and remain very grateful. And on behalf of all the American people, we thank you for your service to the country.

Last week I had the privilege of presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Senator Dan Inouye and 21 other Asian-Americans who served with distinction in World War II. It was an amazing moment. I'm pleased that one of those—Senator Inouye's fellow Medal of Honor recipient Nick Oresko could join us today, as well as the president of the National Medal of Honor Society, Colonel Barney Barnum.

I also want to welcome all the veterans of World War II who are here. And I want to acknowledge the veterans from Congress—as I said, Senator Lautenberg and Congressman Gilman had to go back to work—Congressman Hall, Congressman Hyde, Congressman Regula, Congressman Sisisky, all veterans. And then the former Republican leader of the House, Congressman Bob Michel, is still here today, and I want to welcome him and thank him. And Senator Harry Byrd, it's nice to see you, sir.

And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, who first recognized the vision of her constituent, Roger Durbin, and introduced the legislation to establish the memorial. I think they're voting on Capitol Hill, and she's not able to come. And Senator Sasser, we're glad you're here today, too, and we thank you.

I'd like to thank two people who aren't here, who have been a great deal of help, Tom Brokaw and Tom Hanks, who worked to bring attention to this cause. And their ability to do so, as you know, grows out of one's book and the other's movie, both of

which were, I think, very important to increasing the understanding of Americans about the character and courage of those who fought in World War II.

More than 1,900 World War II veterans and their colleagues at Wal-Mart have undertaken a special effort, and I thank them. I understand they're represented here today by veteran Jean DeVault. I want to recognize the men and women, thousands of them, who formed community action councils across the country, represented here today by Viola Lyon and Linda Johnson, from the Quad Cities; Christine Dialectos, from Reading, Pennsylvania; and Deb Ellis, from Littleton, Colorado.

And finally, I want to say a special thanks to 11-year-old Zane Fayos from Fayetteville, New York. Last April, he was 10 then, Zane saw Tom Hanks in an ad for the memorial and decided to get involved. He wrote a letter that said he was very interested in World War II, that he was reading books about Normandy and D-day, that his mother said he could go see "Saving Private Ryan" when he finished his books, and that he had managed to save $195 in 10 short years, and he wanted to donate the entire amount to building the memorial. If he is representative of the young people of America, I'd say we're in pretty good hands. I'd like to ask him to stand today. Zane, stand up. [*Applause*] Bless you, young man. Thank you.

Now, Zane gave everything he had for the memorial. And I know this violates some law the Counsel's office gave me, but we still need a little more money. [*Laughter*] So somebody else is going to have to give, not everything they have but a little more, until we get right over the top. And I'm going to help, and any of you in this room who can give us a little more, I'll be grateful to, as well.

I'd like to now introduce someone who has given everything he had for our country, Senator Bob Dole. All of you know that his service in World War II was enough for three lifetimes, and then he gave us the next 50 years, as well.

In 1997 he agreed to lead this campaign, and that was a great blessing for the cause and for the country. Whenever I see Senator Dole and we share a joke or a story or a common cause or sometimes a common disagreement, I understand why his generation of Americans has been called the greatest generation.

Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Dole.

[*At this point, former Senator Bob Dole, national chairman, and Frederick W. Smith, cochairman, World War II Memorial Campaign, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, ladies and gentlemen, this concludes this formal meeting. I've been listening to Senator Dole and to Fred. I just want to say two or three things.

On the way in, they were playing "Hail to the Chief," and I leaned over to Bob Dole, and I said, "You know, when we get out of here, I'd like to make commercials with you. I'll be your straight man." [*Laughter*] It's the only commercial venture I've discussed the whole time I've been President. [*Laughter*]

We tried to divide it up so that one of the three of us would mention everybody, but I do want to say again how grateful I am to all of you for being here, especially my friend of nearly 30 years Jess and Betty Jo Hay. And thank you, Ed. And I thank the Wal-Mart people and all the companies—the Hank Greenberg Company—all of them that have given.

Senator Dole said one thing. I don't believe I've ever told this story in public, but I'm going to do this. I want you to know why this is so important to me. Senator Dole said one thing that I think is really true. He said, "What would the world be like today if we had not fought and prevailed in World War II?" And there are lots of obvious big, geopolitical things you could say. But Senator Dole and Senator Inouye served in Italy, so I want to leave you with this story.

When we were getting ready to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the D-day invasion and then the end of the war—and there was a ceremony in Italy, too—I got hundreds of letters. So one day I get this letter from this guy in New Jersey, with an Italian surname. And he says, "Dear Mr. President," he said, "During World War II, I was an 8-year-old boy living with my mother. And we were starving to death, practically, and we didn't know what was going to happen to us. And the American soldiers came." And, he said,

"I was fascinated by automobiles, so I used to sneak down to the motor pool, where I met an American who taught me all about engines." And he said, "He also gave me chocolate. Then I would take him home, and my mother would make him pasta." And he said, "I decided that I wanted to go to America," and he said, "as soon as I was old enough, I came to America, and I opened my own garage. I met a wonderful woman. I had a great family. I raised two children. They both have college educations, all because I met an American soldier in a motor pool. I never knew what happened to the soldier until I read in our local paper a story about your father's experience in World War II, and there was a picture of your father, and I knew that was the man who had helped me. I think he would be very proud of me today."

The consequences of what was done by the World War II generation are being felt today, in ways big and small. A country is known by what it remembers. This is a noble endeavor. A hundred million dollars sounds like a lot of money. It's peanuts. I meant to ask Secretary Cohen before I came up here, but if we had to fight World War II today, it would cost several trillion dollars—$100 million is nothing. We ought to come up with the rest of the money, a little more if we need it, and do it right. And never forget.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. John P. Herrling, USA (Ret.), secretary, and Gen. Fred F. Woerner, USA (Ret.), chairman, American Battle Monuments Commission; Melissa A. Growden and Jess Hay, members, World War II Memorial Advisory Board; Mr. Hay's wife, Betty Jo; former Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr.; former Senator James R. Sasser, U.S. Ambassador to China; NBC News anchorman and author Tom Brokaw; and actor Tom Hanks. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former Senator Dole and Mr. Smith.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Norman Y. Mineta To Be Secretary of Commerce and an Exchange With Reporters

June 29, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. I'm pleased to bring you here to announce my nomination of Norm Mineta to be the 33d Secretary of Commerce, to carry on the successful work of Bill Daley, Mickey Kantor, and Ron Brown.

I want to welcome Norm and his wife, Danealia, here. And I want to thank Secretary Daley for returning from his new duties to be with us and for the truly magnificent job that he has done.

I also want to thank our Deputy Secretary of Commerce, Rob Mallett, for being here today and for also being part of that same tradition of excellence—his leadership in improving the way the Department is run and especially his efforts to open Government contracting to women and to minority-owned businesses. We couldn't do it without you, Bob, and we thank you for your service.

Norm Mineta is a worthy addition to the Cabinet. He was, of course, a Member of Congress for 21 years, representing Silicon Valley, serving as chair of the House Committee for Public Works and Transportation. He was a leader on trade and technology and helping his colleagues understand and promote the emerging digital economy.

We worked closely together on trade issues but on others as well, such as family and medical leave, where his support was absolutely pivotal. And he has ably chaired my Advisory Commission on Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Now, Norm thought he'd left politics for good in 1995 when he left Congress to work for Lockheed Martin. But politics and public service have a way of calling the best back. Norm is one of the best, a strong leader for the Department of Commerce, a highly skilled negotiator in Washington and throughout the world. He will play a crucial role in keeping our economic strategy on

track, opening trade around the world, investing in our people, promoting high technology, bridging the digital divide.

He brings an indepth understanding of American business and a strong sense of the needs of our high-tech economy. But he also has a deep concern for people—for the people in places who are not yet fully participating in this economy.

You see, Norm Mineta's family story tells a lot about the promise of the American dream and the power of one person's devotion to opportunity and to justice. As a young boy during World War II, he and his family were forced from their home and held hundreds of miles away in a desolate internment camp for Japanese-Americans. When he got home, young Norm vowed to work to make sure that kind injustice could never happen to anyone else.

He grew up, went to college, served with the Army in Korea and Japan. Then he began a career of public service in the San Jose government, becoming the first Asian-Pacific American mayor of a major American city. He was elected to Congress in 1974 and became the first Asian-Pacific American to chair a major congressional committee. But he never stopped fighting for justice. His efforts led to the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided an apology and compensation for every survivor of the wartime internment camps.

I am proud to add to Norm's string of firsts by naming him the first Asian-Pacific American ever to hold a post in the President's Cabinet, proud to have a man of his qualities as a member of our economic team, as we work to make the most of this moment of unprecedented opportunity.

Recently I received a remarkable book called, "Asian American Dreams." It's author writes that Asian-Pacific Americans are "a people in constant motion, a great work in progress, each stage more faceted and complex than before. As we overcome adversity and take on new challenges, our special dynamism is our gift to America."

Well, that pretty well describes Norm Mineta's life and why I decided to name him Secretary of Commerce. I am very grateful to him, and to his wife, for giving up the joys and the remunerations of private life to come back into public service. And I hope he will be swiftly heard and confirmed by the United States Senate.

Norm.

[*At this point, Secretary of Commerce-designate Mineta made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you.

William M. Daley

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Daley is leaving your Cabinet, but he's going to another important job, and I wonder if you have any advice for him as he moves to take over the Gore campaign, and also, if you think you're going to be offering advice regularly to him over the next couple of months.

The President. My advice is not to discuss such advice in public but just to listen and do what he thinks is right.

Labor

Q. Mr. President, the industrial labor movement is none too pleased by Mr. Daley's movement over to the Gore campaign. I'm wondering if you think choosing someone from the corporate world will further antagonize the labor movement and cause difficulty for the Clinton/Gore administration generally, and for Vice President Gore and the campaign.

The President. No. I think, for one thing, anybody that looks at Bill Daley's lifetime record or his family's lifetime record would have a hard time finding someone who has been in the mainstream of Democratic politics who's been any more pro-labor.

You know, we all have a difference on these trade issues. The Vice President does, and I do, and Secretary Daley does. But on virtually every other issue, I think you can make a very compelling case that this has clearly been the most pro-labor administration since President Johnson, and maybe going back before that.

So, I don't think so. And I think he and John Sweeney will get along well. They're just two good Irish boys that are trying to do right by their country.

Q. Mr. President, while it's laudatory——

Q. [*Inaudible*]—in the corporate world, sir, do you think that will have any effect on labor movement's general direction?

The President. No. Certainly not. I mean, he's got a great record, particularly when he was chairman of the committee. I think labor supported what he did there, and I think they will receive him very well.

House Vote on Private Insurance Prescription Coverage

Let me just say this. I have to make one other announcement before you all go, because this is the only chance we have to talk about this. I want to talk about last night's vote on prescription drug coverage in the House.

As you know, the Republican bill passed by three votes. They would allow no vote on the Democratic bill. And I just want the American people to know that the bill that they passed is an empty promise to most of our seniors. The bill passed along partisan lines, and it offers a flawed, unworkable private insurance prescription benefit that the insurance companies themselves—to their everlasting credit—the insurance companies themselves have said, this will not work; these policies will not be affordable; most seniors who need help will not be able to take advantage of this bill.

Now, they have said it over and over. This provides more political coverage for the Republicans who voted for it than insurance coverage for the seniors who need to buy medicine.

Now, let me just say this. In a report that was made available only late yesterday—too late to be of use in the debate, I might add—Congress's own budget office concluded that more than half the Medicare beneficiaries who don't have drug coverage today would not be covered by the Republican private insurance plan. It also shows that their premiums would be 50 percent higher than those under our plan, and the coverage would be 20 percent lower.

So, for seniors with incomes over $12,600 a year, or couples with incomes over $16,600 a year, this plan doesn't do the job. And it certainly doesn't do the job for Americans with disabilities, who would also be covered by a real Medicare prescription drug plan. That's why the leading aging and disability groups across the country have supported our plan, and that's why the drug manufacturers and their allies have supported the Republican plan. And it's important that the American people understand the difference between the two proposals.

Again I say, we have a substantial budget surplus projected. If we can protect the Medicare tax receipts, I'm prepared to work with Congress on a real prescription drug benefit and on marriage tax relief and other tax relief that will cost about the same amount of money that the Republicans say they want. But we're going to have to work across party lines on a bipartisan bill. We don't need the kind of one-party vote we had last night, especially without allowing us to even bring up our substitute and see how many Republican votes we could get for a real bill.

So I haven't given up, and we're still working.

Thank you all very much.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, do you expect Secretary Albright to recommend a summit in the near-term, or are you just going to take a couple more weeks before that's a possibility?

The President. I just don't know because I haven't talked to her. I want her to come back and visit. Obviously, I've been spending a major amount of time thinking about this, working on it, talking to all the parties. But I really wanted her to go there and get a sense of it, come back, and then we'll decide where to go from here.

But I actually don't know the answer to your question. This is not one of those deals where I'm just not ready to announce it; I just don't know. And I'm going to do whatever I can in the time I have left to help them make peace. So whatever I do or don't do will be based on my calculation that it will maximize the possibilities of ultimate success. But I don't know yet.

Q. Do you expect any kind of decision today or tomorrow?

The President. No.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:11 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to author Helen Zia and her book, "Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People"; and John J. Sweeney, president, AFL–CIO. The transcript released by the

Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-designate Mineta.

Statement on Congressional Action on Reporting and Disclosure Requirements for Political Action Committees

June 29, 2000

The Vice-President and I applaud the House and Senate for the broad, bipartisan approval of legislation to establish reporting and disclosure requirements for section 527 organizations, the so-called stealth PAC's. I commend the sponsors from both sides of the aisle and from both Chambers of Congress—including, Senators McCain, Lieberman, and Feingold and Representatives Doggett, Moore, Castle, and Houghton—for their leadership in addressing backdoor spending by these outside organizations.

Passage of this bill proves that public interest can triumph over special interests, and I look forward to signing it as a first step toward meaningful campaign finance reform. There is still time this year to enact more comprehensive reform, and I renew my call to Congress for immediate action on the Shays-Meehan bill in the House and the McCain-Feingold bill in the Senate to restore the public's faith in the integrity of our election system.

Statement on Senate Action To Protect Medicare Surpluses

June 29, 2000

I am pleased that the Senate followed the leadership of Vice President Gore by agreeing to lock away Medicare surpluses for debt reduction to help prepare for Medicare's future challenges. Before we make any other major budget decisions this year, we should agree that Medicare funds should not be used to finance tax cuts or other spending. Walling off Medicare will further strengthen our fiscal discipline by locking in $400 billion of additional debt reduction and help keep our economy strong. The Conrad-Lautenberg amendment passed by the Senate today would truly protect Medicare and enhance our fiscal discipline. This amendment takes Medicare fully off budget, as the Vice President proposed, and as we have done with Social Security. I look forward to working with Congress on a Medicare off-budget lockbox bill that I can sign this summer.

Earlier this week, I made an offer for bipartisan cooperation on America's priorities. I called for establishing a foundation of fiscal discipline—the Conrad-Lautenberg amendment would accomplish that. I urge Congress to pass a plan that gives real, voluntary Medicare prescription drug coverage that is available and affordable for all seniors. Only if Congress does this, would I then be willing to sign broader marriage penalty relief legislation.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Supplemental Appropriations Request

June 29, 2000

I am pleased that the House passed with overwhelming support my emergency funding request for a range of essential and time-sensitive needs. It has been 4 months since I first sent this request to Capitol Hill, and the needs are all the greater today.

With this funding, we will be able to support the courageous antidrug efforts of Colombia which can, in turn, help curb the flow of drugs in our Nation; we will help build homes for those still deprived of permanent housing by Hurricane Floyd; we will have funds available for low income Americans to pay for home cooling in the event of a dangerous summer heat wave; and we will provide support for our troops and efforts to build stability in Kosovo.

I am also pleased that Congress has, at our urging, dropped several deeply problematic anti-environmental riders along with the tobacco rider which would block Federal Government litigation against tobacco companies to recover costs to taxpayers of smoking related illnesses.

While it contains certain flaws, in total this bill will make our Nation safer and more secure by meeting essential and long-overdue needs at home and abroad.

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 2000

June 29, 2000

I am pleased and proud to join my fellow Americans across the nation and around the world in celebrating Independence Day.

When our Founders set their hands to the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and gave life to the United States of America, they took an enormous leap of faith. They placed a great trust not only in their fellow citizens, but also in all Americans who would follow in their footsteps. That trust has been passed from generation to generation, and it has been honored by millions of men and women whose hard work, sacrifice, generous spirit, and love of country have seen us safely through more than two centuries of great challenge and change.

As we come together once again to celebrate the birth of our great nation, we reflect on the remarkable achievements that have placed us in a position of unparalleled world leadership. For the peace and prosperity we enjoy today, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the great patriots who have come before us. As 21st century Americans, we are not only the beneficiaries of their courage and vision—we are also the stewards of their sacrifice.

It is up to us to preserve the freedom that so many brave Americans risked their lives to secure. It is up to us to realize our country's highest ideals of justice, equality, and human dignity. It is up to us to reject the forces of hatred that would seek to divide us and instead embrace our common humanity and the values, history, and heritage we share as Americans. Our nation's journey to form a more perfect union is far from over; but, strengthened by our Founders' vision and inspired by our children's dreams, we are sure to reach our destination.

On this Independence Day, as we celebrate the past, present, and future of America, Hillary joins me in sending best wishes to all for a wonderful Fourth of July.

Bill Clinton

Proclamation 7325—To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences and for Other Purposes

June 29, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Pursuant to sections 501, 503(a)(1)(A), and 503(c)(1) of title V of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2461, 2463(a)(1)(A), and 2463(c)(1)), the President may designate or withdraw designation of specified articles provided for in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) as eligible for preferential tariff treatment under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) when imported from designated beneficiary developing countries.

2. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)), beneficiary developing countries, except those designated as least-developed beneficiary developing countries pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(D) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(D)), are subject to competitive need limitations on the preferential treatment afforded under the GSP to eligible articles.

3. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(C) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(C)), a country that is no longer treated as a beneficiary developing country with respect to an eligible article may be redesignated as a beneficiary developing country with respect to such article if imports of such article from such country did not exceed the competitive need limitations in section 503(c)(2)(A) (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)) during the preceding calendar year.

4. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(F) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(F)), the President may disregard the competitive need limitation provided in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C.

2463(c)(2)(A)(i)(II)) with respect to any eligible article if the appraised value of the total imports of such article into the United States during the preceding calendar year does not exceed an amount set forth in section 503(c)(2)(F)(ii) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(F)(ii)).

5. Pursuant to section 503(d) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)), the President may waive the application of the competitive need limitations in section 503(c)(2)(A) with respect to any eligible article from any beneficiary developing country if certain conditions are met.

6. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(E) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(E)), section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) shall not apply with respect to any eligible article if a like or directly competitive article was not produced in the United States on January 1, 1995.

7. Pursuant to sections 501 and 503(a)(1)(A) of the 1974 Act, and after receiving advice from the International Trade Commission in accordance with section 503(e), I have determined to designate certain articles, previously designated under section 503(a)(1)(B), as eligible articles when imported from any beneficiary developing country.

8. Pursuant to section 503(c)(1) of the 1974 Act, I have determined to limit the application of duty-free treatment accorded to certain articles from certain beneficiary developing countries.

9. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that certain beneficiary countries should no longer receive preferential tariff treatment under the GSP with respect to certain eligible articles imported in quantities that exceed the applicable competitive need limitation.

10. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(C) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that certain countries should be redesignated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to certain eligible articles that previously had been imported in quantities exceeding the competitive need limitations of section 503(c)(2)(A).

11. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(F) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that the competitive need limitation provided in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) should be waived with respect to certain eligible articles from certain beneficiary developing countries.

12. Pursuant to section 503(d) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that the competitive need limitations of section 503(c)(2)(A) should be waived with respect to certain eligible articles from certain beneficiary developing countries. I have received the advice of the International Trade Commission on whether any industries in the United States are likely to be adversely affected by such waivers, and I have determined, based on that advice and on the considerations described in sections 501 and 502(c), that such waivers are in the national economic interest of the United States.

13. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(E) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(E)), I have determined that the limitation provided for in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) shall not apply with respect to HTS subheading 3817.10.50 because no like or directly competitive article was produced in the United States on January 1, 1995.

14. Section 604 of the 1974 Act, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2483), authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of the relevant provisions of that Act, and of other acts affecting import treatment, and actions thereunder, including the removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including but not limited to title V and section 604 of the 1974 Act, do proclaim that:

(1) In order to provide that one or more countries that have not been treated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to one or more eligible articles should be designated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to such article or articles for purposes of the GSP, and that one or more countries should no longer be treated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to one or more eligible articles for purposes of the GSP, general note 4(d) to the HTS is modified as provided in section A of Annex I to this proclamation.

(2)(a) In order to designate certain articles as eligible articles for purposes of the GSP when imported from any beneficiary developing country, the Rates of Duty 1–Special subcolumn for certain HTS subheadings is modified as provided in section B(1) of Annex I to this proclamation.

(b) In order to provide preferential tariff treatment under the GSP to a beneficiary developing country that has been excluded from the benefits of the GSP for certain eligible articles, the Rates of Duty 1–Special subcolumn for each of the HTS subheadings enumerated in section B(2) of Annex I to this proclamation is modified as provided in such section.

(c) In order to provide that one or more countries should not be treated as a beneficiary developing country with respect to certain eligible articles for purposes of the GSP, the Rates of Duty 1–Special subcolumn for each of the HTS subheadings enumerated in section B(3) of Annex I to this proclamation is modified as provided in such section.

(3) A waiver of the application of section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act shall apply to the eligible articles in the HTS subheadings and to the beneficiary developing countries set forth in Annex II to this proclamation.

(4) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive Orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

(5)(a) The modifications made by Annex I to this proclamation shall be effective with respect to articles entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after July 1, 2000.

(b) The action taken in Annex II to this proclamation shall be effective on the date of publication of this proclamation in the *Federal Register*.

(c) The action taken in paragraph 13 of this proclamation shall be effective on the date of publication of this proclamation in the *Federal Register*.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:55 a.m., June 30, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation and attached annexes were published in the *Federal Register* on July 3.

Memorandum on U.S. Contribution to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization

June 29, 2000

Presidential Determination No. 2000–25

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: U.S. Contribution to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO): Certification and Waiver

Pursuant to section 576(c) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, as enacted in Public Law 106–113, (the "Act"), I hereby certify that:

(1) the effort to can and safely store all spent fuel from North Korea's graphite-moderated nuclear reactors has been successfully concluded;

(2) North Korea is complying with its obligations under the agreement regarding access to suspect underground construction; and

(3) the United States has made and is continuing to make significant progress on eliminating the North Korean ballistic missile threat, including further missile tests and its ballistic missile exports.

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 576(d) of the Act, I hereby determine that it is vital to the national security interests of the United States to furnish up to $20 million in funds made available under the heading "Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs" of that Act, for assistance for KEDO and therefore I hereby waive the requirement in section

576(c)(3) to certify that: North Korea has terminated its nuclear weapons program, including all efforts to acquire, develop, test, produce, or deploy such weapons.

You are hereby authorized and directed to report this certification and wavier to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register.*

William J. Clinton

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bankruptcy Reform Legislation

June 29, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I write again because I am deeply concerned about recent developments concerning bankruptcy reform legislation pending before Congress. I understand the House and Senate Republican Leadership has reached a conclusion on a package they will soon move through the Congress. We have not seen the final language, but, if the reported description is accurate, I will veto the bill.

OMB Director Lew sent a letter to the informal conferees, on May 12, 2000, that laid out the principles against which I will judge any final bankruptcy bill that comes to my desk. I would like to sign a balanced consumer bankruptcy bill that would encourage responsibility and reduce abuses of the bankruptcy system on the part of debtors and creditors alike. The majority of debtors turn to the bankruptcy system, not to escape bills they can afford to repay, but because they face real hardship—uninsured medical expenses, unemployment, or divorce. We can target the abuses without placing unnecessary barriers before those in need of a fresh start who turn to bankruptcy as a last resort. I remain concerned about the balance in the bill that the informal conferees have produced.

In addition, in my letter of June 9, 2000, I highlighted five issues that could help to determine whether the final bill meets my standards of balance and fairness. On three of these issues, the Republican resolution is seriously flawed.

First, I cannot support a bankruptcy bill that fails to require accountability and responsibility from those who use violence, vandalism, intimidation, and harassment to deny others access to legal health services. Some have strategically abused the bankruptcy system to avoid the penalties that Congress and the States have imposed for such illegal acts. The language that I understand the Republicans will include on this subject is inadequate. It would require a finding that there was a "willful and malicious threat of serious bodily injury" before certain debts would be made nondischargeable. Often, no such finding is made when holding parties liable for their actions in denying others access to legal health services under Federal or State law. The final legislation must include an effective approach to this problem, such as the one contained in the amendment by Senator Schumer, which passed the Senate by a vote of 80–17.

I am also concerned that the changes proposed to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act would deny an effective remedy to victims of abusive check collection practices. We have yet to hear a compelling rationale for why check collectors should not be subject to the same requirements as those who collect other debts. Moreover, no committee in either body of Congress has considered this issue, raised for the first time in Conference. At a minimum, the proposal should be subject to full Congressional consideration, so that public scrutiny can be applied to the implications of the proposed changes.

The proposed limitation on State homestead exemptions will address, for the first time, those who move their residence shortly before bankruptcy to take advantage of large State exemptions to shield assets from their creditors. But the proposal does not address a more fundamental concern: unlimited homestead exemptions that allow wealthy debtors in some States to continue to live in lavish homes. In light of how other provisions designed to stem abuse will affect moderate-income debtors, it is unfair to leave this loophole for the wealthy in place.

I remain concerned that the negotiations have produced a bill that has lost some of the balance that the Senate bill had tried to achieve, albeit imperfectly from my perspective. As a result of all these concerns, I will

veto the bill that we understand the Republicans plan to forward to my desk. But I continue to urge Congress to reconsider and send me a fair bill that meets the test of balance.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on an Extraordinary Payment to the Russian Aviation and Space Agency

June 29, 2000

Dear _____*:*

The NASA Administrator has informed me of his intent to proceed with an extraordinary payment of $14 million to the Russian Aviation and Space Agency for the purchase of the pressure dome for the Interim Control Module and the Androgynous Peripheral Docking Adapter and related hardware for the United States Propulsion Module for the International Space Station. This payment is subject to the provisions of section 6(g) of the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–178) (the "Act").

I hereby notify the Congress that, upon the expiration of the 5-day period specified in section 6(g)(1)(A) of the Act, the payment described above will be made. I have also concluded that the conditions described in section 6(g)(1)(B) and (C) of the Act have been satisfied. Specifically, no report has been made under section 2 of the Act; I have no credible information of any activity that would require such a report; and, the United States will receive goods of value to the United States commensurate with the value of the extraordinary payment.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., chairman, House Committee on Science; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John McCain, chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; and selected Representatives and Senators.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.

June 29, 2000

Thank you. If I had any sense, I wouldn't say a word after that. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Margo. I want to thank you and Briggs for opening your beautiful home. I had a great time. They took me in through the ground floor, where there are all the golf clubs and golf pictures. [*Laughter*] I almost didn't make it up here to you, folks. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank you all for helping Sanford Bishop. I have a lot of friends here. In case any of you think I was scandalizing Ada Hollingsworth, we've been friends for more than 20 years, so it's okay. [*Laughter*] And Calvin Smyre was with me in 1991, when only my mother thought I could be elected President. [*Laughter*] Jesse Brown and Secretary West and Ron Dellums and I—I miss him in the Congress, and so many of the rest of you here. I thank you for being here for him.

Sanford, I thank you for everything you said, and especially for that poem. People used to tell me in the tough times in the last 8 years that the good Lord never gives you more to carry than you can carry. And I thought, "Well, he's certainly tested the envelope with me." [*Laughter*] There was a time or two you could have fooled me. [*Laughter*]

People ask me all the time, "Well, what did you do? How did you do all that?" And I don't have much of an answer, except I got up every day and realized that all those people that were kind of after me, didn't hire me in the first place, that people like you hired me, and I just figured if I worked on my job and treated the rest as the cost of doing business in the 1990's, that everything would work out all right. And it sort of did.

I want to say to you that, you know, I do a fair number of these; I always try to help our Members, our Representatives and our Senators. It's very important to me. But it was especially important to me to be here tonight because I think that Sanford Bishop represents what, to me, is the best in our party and in our country and, to me, the best hope of our becoming a majority party again.

Look at all the people who are here tonight. He's got people from the agricultural community, people from the industrial community. He's got the friends he grew up with, which to me is always the acid test. [*Laughter*] I'm the only guy you ever met who got elected because of his friends. Nobody ever got elected just because he has friends, before. But I believe that—you know, because they'll like you if you're running a service station. [*Laughter*] And that's pretty important.

I want you to know that this guy has served well, and he has had to take a lot of tough votes. For some of our Members, everything I wanted to do—they've been in totally safe seats. They've had people that thought sort of just like we did, and they never had to cast a tough vote. There is no telling how many tough votes this man has had to cast to get our economy turned around, to get the crime rate down, to do things that were right.

So he could have read that poem about himself. And I wanted to be here for that reason. Because if we can't command the support of people like the ones he represents in Georgia, we can't really be a majority party. So I admire him, I like him, and I'm grateful.

Now, I just want you to know three things about this election—tell you everything you need to know. Number one, it is real important. It's just as important as the elections of '92 and '96 were. And in 1992, as Sanford said, this country was in deep trouble. One of the biggest problems the Vice President has got today in this election is, everybody has forgotten what it was like before we showed up. They sort of pocket that, take it for granted. This country was in trouble.

But to be fair, we knew what we had to do. We knew we had to change the economic policy. We knew we had to change the social policy. We knew if we were going to get the crime rate down and reduce welfare, reduce poverty, lift children up, grow the economy, help people who were left out and left behind work themselves into the middle class, we had to change things. And so we did. And then in '96, we knew that if we wanted it to work, we had to ratify that, we had to build that bridge to the 21st century, in the slogan of our campaign.

This election is just as important. Why? Because how a country chooses to deal with its moments of prosperity and promise is just as stern a test of our judgment, even our character, as how we deal with adversity.

There are a lot of young people here tonight, and I'm really glad, a lot of young people working for Sanford and working this event. And I'm grateful for that, and I like that. We even have a young woman from Russia here tonight. There you are. You're welcome here. We're glad to have you here.

But I want to say something here to the people that aren't so young. [*Laughter*] No, wait a minute. Calm down. There is not a person in this audience tonight over 30 who cannot remember at least one time in your life when you made a humdinger of a mistake, either a personal mistake or a business mistake, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well, you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate.

And that's what we've got to deal with in this election and the congressional races and the Senate races and the Presidential race. So the first thing is, this is really important. In my lifetime, our country has never had at the same time so much economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence with the absence of gripping, paralyzing crisis at home or threat abroad.

Now, what are we going to do with it? That's what this election is about. What do we propose to do with a truly magic moment? And it is a very stern test of our judgment, as well as our character and our values.

The second thing I want to say to you is: There are real differences between the two parties. And you don't have to be hateful to say that. I tell everybody, you know, we can

really have a positive election this year because we can talk about the honest differences in our different vision of what we ought to do with this moment. And that's great. We've had enough elections over the last 20 years when the candidates tried to convince the voters that their opponents were just one notch above a car thief. [*Laughter*] And you know what I'm talking about. We don't have to do this. We can assume that everybody is honorable and that they mean exactly what they say. But there are real differences.

The third thing I want you to remember—and this is the kicker; this ought to tell you who you ought to vote for—only the Democrats want you to know what those differences are. [*Laughter*] Now, what does that tell you? It's interesting, the Republicans, who sort of pioneered this sort of mean, vicious campaign—what they did to McCain in the primary was embarrassing even to those of us who thought we'd seen it all. [*Laughter*] And now they all take the position that if you talk about how they voted or where they stand, you're running a negative campaign. If you give the voters information that's relevant to the decisions that are going to be made about their future, that's somehow going negative, and that's bad. I don't agree with that. Going negative is when you attack your opponent personally, when you say there is something wrong with their character, their value system, they're bad people.

But why have an election if you're not going to have a debate? But you just remember those three things: It's an important election; there are real differences; only the Democrats want you to know what they are.

Now, lest you think I'm kidding, there was a story in the press a few days ago saying that the Republicans in the House, where Sanford served, had hired a pollster to tell them what words or phrases to use so they could convince the people that they're for a drug benefit for all the disabled and senior citizens on Medicare, even though they're not.

Now, this is not what you normally hire a pollster for. At least, I don't. Normally, you hire a pollster to figure out how you're doing in an election, whether what you believe in is flying, and not to change your positions but to change your campaign, emphasize other issues some. But this is—it's astonishing—hire a pollster to give you the words and phrases so that the people will think you're for something you're not, that is, to blur the differences. And I see this all over.

But there are differences. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights that is real and enforceable, and they're not, by and large. I'm talking about the leadership and the vast majority. And we're for a comprehensive Medicare drug benefit for senior citizens, and they're not. And we're for a tax cut, but one that helps people educate their kids or pay for child care or pay long-term care for family members that you've got to take care of, but that's affordable so we don't spend all this projected surplus, and we can keep paying the debt down and preserve Medicare and Social Security for the next generation, when all us baby boomers retire. And they don't agree with that. They really believe that you can take all this non-Social Security surplus right now and commit to spend it all on tax cuts or their Social Security plan, their missile defense plan, the other spending things—just spend it all.

Now, if I were to ask you tonight, what is your projected income over the next 10 years, you would all have a different answer. And then I said, "Okay, how much confidence do you have that this is your projected income?" And you say, "Oh, I'm more than 50 percent sure." I'd say, "Great. Now, I want you to sign on the dotted line—here's a piece of paper—that you're going to spend every nickel of it right now, and you can't get out of it for the next 10 years." That's their plan.

And I'm just telling you, we didn't get to where we are today without being careful. Interest rates are low. If you keep interest rates a point lower for the next decade than they would otherwise be—do you know what that's worth to you? Two hundred and fifty billion dollars in lower home mortgages alone—in lower home mortgages alone.

So we don't have the more popular side of this argument. They're saying, "Hey, we'll give it all back to you right now. We know what our income is going to be for the next 10 years, and we're going to sign it away." And we say, "Excuse me, but we were in

debt"—we had quadrupled our national debt in the 12 years before our side showed up, and now we're going to pay off $400 billion of our debt before I leave office, and I'd like to get this country out of debt so these kids will always have low interest rates and be able to afford a college loan, a car loan, a home mortgage, and we'll be able to keep growing this economy. It's a huge difference. It's huge.

And I could go through issue after issue—the hate crimes legislation, the environmental position, in the Presidential race, the appointments—two to four people to the Supreme Court. Did you see all these decisions that came out this week? Five to four, six to three. There are going to be two to four appointments in the Supreme Court. Either one of them will change the balance of the Supreme Court—either one. The question is, how do you want it to go?

So here you've got this guy who is, I think, a really stand-up person. There are so many times in the last 8 years when it would have been easy for him to take a dive and call me on the phone and say, "Now listen, man, you're my buddy, but I've got a problem" — [*laughter*]—"and my district is not like the whole rest of America, you know; it's rural. And I've got all these farmers, and they think I'm a little too, you know, maybe close to you anyway. I don't know." [*Laughter*] I mean, just time after time, when we really needed somebody to stand up, he stood up. So I'm glad you're here helping him. But I want you to leave here committed to help shape this political environment.

This election is going to be fine. The American people normally get it right, if they have enough information and enough time to digest it. Otherwise, we wouldn't be here. We're the oldest big democracy in the whole history of the planet. And other people think it's a pretty good idea because over the last 8 or 9 years, we've had more people living under democratic governments than nondemocratic governments for the first time in all of human history, around the world.

Russia, where she is from, they just had their first transition from one democratically elected President to another in a thousand years. This works if people have enough information and enough time to digest it. So I have absolute confidence in the outcome of this election if the people have enough information and enough opportunity to digest it. But you've got to help that.

The only problem here is, good times are full of danger as well as opportunity. So you sort of slide along here and think, well, there is not really much difference; these two guys seem pretty nice; our side had it for 8 years, maybe we should give their side a chance—you know, just sort of, blah, blah, blah, I've heard all this stuff. [*Laughter*]

And I'm telling you, you just remember, if people ask you about the election, you say, "It is really important, and I want you to take it seriously." If you meet a Republican, an independent, anybody, you tell them that. In a lifetime you may get one chance—one chance—to set a course in times as good as this. Even the kids here may never see another time like this. And then the second thing you tell them is, there are real differences, and you should listen to both sides. And then the third thing you tell them is, however—a key to who you'll agree with is—only the Democrats really want you to know what the differences are. And the final thing is, a guy like Sanford Bishop, he can always make all the difference.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:17 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Fernal and Margo Briggs; Ada Hollingsworth, owner, A&A Travel Services; former Georgia State Representative Calvin Smyre; former Representative Ron Dellums; former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jesse Brown; and Senator John McCain. Representative Bishop is a candidate for reelection in Georgia's 2d Congressional District.

Executive Order 13161—Establishment of the Presidential Medal of Valor for Public Safety Officers

June 29, 2000

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is ordered:

Section 1. The Presidential Medal of Valor for Public Safety Officers (Medal) is

established for the purpose of recognizing those public safety officers adjudged to have shown extraordinary valor above and beyond the call of duty in the exercise of their official duties. As used in this section, the term "public safety officer" means a person serving a public agency with or without compensation:

(1) as a law enforcement officer, including police, correctional, probation, or parole officers;

(2) as a firefighter or emergency responder; and

(3) who is employed by the Government of the United States, any State of the United States, any officially recognized elective body within a State of the United States, or any Federally recognized tribal organization.

Sec. 2. Eligible recipients generally will be recommended to the President by the Attorney General by April 1 of each year. Pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 136–137, the President designates May 15 of each year as "Peace Officers Memorial Day" and the week in which it falls as "Police Week." Presentation of the Medal shall occur at an appropriate time during the commemoration of Police Week, as far as is practicable.

Sec. 3. The President may select for the Medal up to ten persons annually from among those persons recommended to the President by the Attorney General. In submitting recommendations to the President, the Attorney General may consult with experts representing all segments of the public safety sector, including representatives from law enforcement, firefighters, and emergency services.

Sec. 4. Those chosen for recognition shall receive a medal and a certificate, the designs of which shall be submitted by the Attorney General for the President's approval no later than December 1, 2000. The medal and certificate shall be prepared by the Department of Justice.

Sec. 5. The Medal may be given posthumously.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 29, 2000.

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NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 30, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 5.

Remarks to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

June 30, 2000

Thank you. Well, you know, I was still a little sleepy when I got here today. [*Laughter*] I'm pumped. Thank you very much. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Mr. President McEntee, congratulations on your reelection. Your job has some advantages over mine—no term limits, no opponents. Not bad.

I'm delighted to be here with all your officers—Will Lucy, it's good to see you again, and all the AFSCME officers. I do want to say a special word of appreciation to the vice presidents from Pennsylvania who are hosting you—Edward Keller, Henry Nicholas, Dave Fillman. And I want to acknowledge in the audience a good friend of AFSCME's down in Washington whom I brought home to Pennsylvania with me today, Congressman Joe Hoeffel. Give him a big hand. [*Applause*] Joe, thank you for coming with me.

Let me just say at the outset, I know everything I'm going to say today will not be news to you. It's almost like preaching to the saved. But the most important thing that I can say today is a simple thank you. I am so grateful for the support you've given me and for the work we've done together. Thank you.

It is fitting that one of America's greatest labor unions is meeting here in Philadelphia in the millennial year. This city is rich in labor history. In 1774 the very first Continental Congress met in Carpenter's Hall, which was built by the very first trade guild in America. In 1792 the shoemakers here in Philadelphia formed the first local craft union for collective bargaining over 200 years ago. And just as you are in a city with deep labor roots, you are looking at a President who feels he has deep roots in AFSCME.

When I was eligible as Governor, I was a dues-paying member of AFSCME. All the people who worked for me back then said it was the only check they ever saw me write. [*Laughter*] I'm grateful for the work you do every day, watching over our children and our parents, taking care of the sick and people with disabilities, helping the poor and moving millions of people from welfare to work, supporting our schools, improving our environment, making sure not just your members but all Americans have a better life.

And I am very grateful, as I said, that AFSCME has stood by me since early in 1992, when only my mama thought I could be elected President of the United States. In sunshine and rain, you have never backed down; you have never walked away from the good fight we have waged for the American people and their future.

And what a long way we've come in these 8 years. Gerry was talking about it before I came in. But it's worth remembering. In fact, one of the biggest challenges we have in this election is that things have been so good so long, a lot of people don't remember what it was like the last time they had the ball, and they carried it.

Together, we've worked hard to give this country the longest economic expansion in history: 22 million-plus new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years.

And a lot of things that you care about—the highest homeownership in history; 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood illnesses for the first time in history; more land protected forever in the continental United States than any administration since Franklin Roosevelt; cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food—21 million people—21 million people have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law, the first law I signed and a law that was vetoed the last time they had the White House. Five hundred thousand felons, fugitives, and stalkers did not get handguns because of the Brady bill. We have a 35 percent drop in crime rates and in the gun crime. Not a single hunter has missed a day in the deer woods in spite of all their dire predictions. And the Brady law was another law that was vetoed the last time they had the White House.

Five million families have taken advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit for the first 2 years of college. And when I leave office, we will have paid down almost $400 billion on the national debt.

So the question is, what are we going to do with this? Now, I want to give a lot of whoop-de-doo lines, but I want you all to kind of listen to me now, because you've got a lot of friends, every one of you, who are not in AFSCME, who don't belong to any labor organization—the people you spend time with your kids with, the people you go to church with or synagogue with, maybe people you go bowling with, people you do other things with. And I want you to know what I think you ought to be telling them, because it isn't enough for you to show up and vote. It isn't enough even for you to get all your brothers and sisters in AFSCME to show up and vote. It isn't enough even to get all of the husbands and wives of all the AFSCME members to show up and vote. You've got to walk out of here determined to talk to every person you know and every person you run into between now and November and tell them why they ought to vote, for whom they ought to vote, and the reasons they ought to vote for them.

So this is what I think you ought to say. There are three things every American needs to know about this election. Number one, it is a big election; it is real important. Number two, there are real differences between the parties that you can see in the candidates for President, the candidates for the Senate, the candidates for Congress, and obviously, the local races. Number three—and this is a dead giveaway in terms of who people ought to vote for—only the Democrats want you to know what those real differences are.

Now, just be patient with me while I go through this. This is a big election. One of the things that bothers me—I had a friend from Chicago in to see me this week, and he is a business person, and he's been very successful the last 8 years. He's 41 years old, quite a bit younger than me—I hate it, but he is—[*laughter*]—and he said to me, he

said, "You know, the thing that bothers me is that I talk to all these people that I spend time with who don't have anything to do with the Democratic Party, don't have anything to do with the Republican Party. They're people I know in my work life. And they don't think there's much of a difference between Vice President Gore and Governor Bush. They don't think there's much of a difference. And they think this economy is rocking along so well, you couldn't mess it up with a case of dynamite."

Now, that's what a lot of people think. So the first thing you've got to tell people is, "Hey, this is a big election." You remember what it was like 8 years ago and what kind of a mess the country was in. But I want to tell you something. We've got some young people here, but there's not a person listening to me today who is over 30 years old, who cannot remember at least one time in your life, either in your work life or your personal life, when you made a big mistake not because things were going so badly in your life but because things were rocking along so well, you thought there was no penalty for the failure to concentrate.

Now, every one of us has experienced that, right? Every one of us. So the first thing we've got to do is get America's head right about this. This is a big deal. How a country handles its moment of prosperity and opportunity is just as stern a test of our vision, our judgment, and our character as how we handle adversity. And in my lifetime, there has never been a moment like this where the economy was so strong, our social conditions were improving, the Nation had a lot of self-confidence, there was no internal crisis or external threat to divert us, where we really have a chance to build a future of our dreams for our kids. And we will never be forgiven if we blow this. You've got to convince people this is a big election. They've got to think about it, and they've got to show up and stand up and be counted.

Now, the second thing I want to tell you is what you already know. There are big and honest differences. This doesn't have to be a negative campaign, but we've got to define what negative is. Negative is what we've seen too many times over the last 20 years where one candidate tries to convince the voters that his opponent or her opponent is just one notch above a car thief. Now, that's negative. Pointing out the honest differences between you and your opponent in terms of record and position and statements is not negative. That's informational. There's a judgment here. There are consequences to the choice. That's not negative. We can have an honest debate. We can assume our opponents are honorable people and say we just have honest disagreements, but they're there.

It tickles me, you know, the Republicans have given us the awfulest mugging over the last 20 years, time and time again, and their primary was the roughest primary I ever saw. The things that the Bush campaign did to Senator McCain made my hair stand up on the back of my neck. And now they're all acting like we're being mean and negative if we point out what their positions are. "If you tell the American people where we stand and what we've done and what we want to do, how dare you do that. The only way you can be positive is if you let us keep that a secret from the American people until the election." No, thank you. This election is about the differences and the choices before the American people.

You watch what I tell you. The Republicans are coming here to Philadelphia—smart choice by them. Good politics. And you listen to them. And I mean, butter won't melt in their mouth at this—you watch them. You'll have the awfulest time trying to figure out what the differences are. They're going to love everybody and help everybody and do everything, and it's just going to be wonderful.

But there are differences here. We're for a prescription drug benefit for Medicare that all of our seniors can afford, and they're not. We're for a real, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. We're for expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program, that some of you helped administer, so that the parents of those kids can have health insurance, and they're not. We're for letting people between the ages of 55 and 65 who lose their health insurance buy into Medicare, and they're not.

We're for letting families like you, whether you're in the 15 percent or in the 28 percent bracket, have a 28 percent deduction for the

cost of college tuition, up to $10,000 a year, and they're not for that. We're for it. We're for expanding the earned-income tax credit, for lower-income working people that have three or more kids, and they're not. We're for equal pay for equal work for working women, and they're not. We're for raising the minimum wage a buck over 2 years, and they're not. How can we not raise the minimum wage?

We're for building or modernizing 6,000 schools and repairing another 5,000 a year over the next 5 years. We're for that, and they're not. We're for keeping on until we have 100,000 teachers to lower class sizes in the first three grades, and they're not.

On the issues that matter most, including the protection of labor rights, we are different—honestly different. You don't have to believe they're bad people, but we ought not to hide what the differences are.

Now, you take this prescription drug issue. We think there ought to be coverage through Medicare that's available and affordable to all seniors and people with disabilities. That's what I proposed. That's what you've endorsed. We also think that in the balanced budget law, that cuts in Medicare reimbursement rates to hospitals, nursing homes, home health care agencies, were excessive, and we ought to put some more money back in there to help ensure quality care.

Now, what's their position? This is important. Now, you're going to have to talk to people who don't follow this like you do. Probably a good thing not everybody is as interested in politics as we are; otherwise, we would just be beating each other up all day. We would probably never get anything done. But what is their position?

Two nights ago the Republican House passed a plan designed to benefit the companies that make the prescription drugs, not the people that need to take them. Theirs is a private insurance plan that most seniors can't afford. Listen to this. Their own—the House Republicans' own Congressional Budget Office—not me, their people—say that more than 50 percent of the Medicare beneficiaries who need drug coverage won't be able to get coverage under their plan. They say the premiums will be 50 percent higher under their plan than ours, and the coverage will be 20 percent less.

So what did they do? They voted for it so they could say they voted for something, and the drug companies are happy. And then they hired a pollster—listen to this; this is amazing—they hired a pollster to tell them what words and phrases to use in Philadelphia and from now until November to convince you and the American people that they're for something they're not.

So your job is to say, "No, thank you. There's a real difference here. We want the voters of this country to know what the difference is."

Now, you take this Patients' Bill of Rights. The Republicans say they're for it. I was tickled—you know, I've got a passing interest in this Senate race in New York. So the other day, the Democratic candidate said that she was for a real Patients' Bill of Rights, and her opponent wasn't. So you know what her opponent did? He goes on television and says, "She's being negative. I voted for"—listen to this; they are so clever; you've got to watch them. They call me slick? [*Laughter*] Listen to this. Listen to this. So what did he say? You all listen to this. You're going to need a shovel to deal with this between now and November. Now, listen to this. What did he say? He said, "How dare her say such a mean thing. I am for a Patients' Bill of Rights." "A" Patients' Bill of Rights? [*Laughter*] This tie here, it's got a little red on it. That don't mean I'm wearing a red tie. [*Laughter*] What is this?

So what happens? The Republicans last night in the Senate, on a party-line vote, passed "a" Patients' Bill of Rights. It's not strong. It's not real. It is not enforceable. Now, I want to give the Republicans credit. There were a number of good, brave Republicans who voted for a real Patients' Bill of Rights in the House, and I appreciate what they did. [*Applause*] And the leader—yes, we ought to clap for them. I appreciate what they did, a number of them did. They broke with the leadership, and they voted for a real Patients' Bill of Rights. And because they helped, and all our crowd did, we got a majority in the House.

The leader of those Republicans, Representative Norwood—here's what he says

about this Patients' Bill of Rights the Republican party supports. The Republican leader for the real Patients' Bill of Rights called their bill a, quote, "monstrosity."

Now, we want a real bill. They want to deflect the issue. They want to be able to put up these ads and say, "I voted for 'a' Patients' Bill of Rights." So, you see, you've got to help people see through all this. That's your job. It's my job, but it's your job, too.

And the same thing, you know, on minimum wage. They say, "Well, I'll be for a minimum wage if you make it a little less and drag it over 3 years and put it on some regressive plan that will take care of our constituents." And let me just say this—this equal pay thing—I loved it when you all stood up. They're not even making a pretense of that; they just don't want to talk about it. They'll say, if you ask them they'll say, "Well I'm for equal pay. Everybody in the wide world's for equal pay. But when you pass a bill, you just make it complicated."

That's what they said about family and medical leave, "I hope people will give it, but we couldn't possibly require it. Because if we did, it would be just terrible for the economy; it would be bad for small business." Well, we had an exemption for the smallest businesses, and if it was bad for the economy, if that's what the family and medical leave law was designed to do, then I did a poor job of it, because we've got 22 million people taking advantage of family leave, and over 22 million new jobs.

So you've got to tell people, this is where they stand on these issues—on the school construction issue, on more teachers, on quality training for all of our teachers, on smaller classes and fewer trailers.

Now, we just got some good news on this school construction issue. Again, we've got a handful of Republicans in the House that are willing to buck the trend, but don't forget, partly it's because we're only five seats away from a majority. But we got the 218th and 219th cosponsors of the Johnson-Rangel bill. And this is really good news. That means that we could pass it in the House if we could bring it to a vote. We know where the Republican leadership stands in the House, and in the Senate they're equally, if not more, vociferously opposed. So I think our kids deserve better than this.

And let me tell you something. I'm giving you this speech, but anytime they want to meet me halfway and pass this stuff, that's good for America. I'd just as soon take school construction off the election-year list. I'd a lot rather have our kids out of the house trailers and out of the unsafe schools and in school rooms that can be wired to the Internet and out of schools that are still being heated by coal, than have a political issue in an election year. And so would you.

And there's a lot of labor issues, too. They won't be talking about where they stand and what they're going to do for the 600,000 workers that are injured every year because of poor ergonomics. That's a new economy problem, and we ought to deal with it. We ought to continue to protect your health and your work site environment.

Now, look at this—where do they stand on hate crimes? We passed the hate crimes bill in the Senate this week, and again I want to compliment the handful of Republicans that voted with us. If they hadn't done it, we wouldn't have passed it. But the leadership is still against it. I think it's important that we pass hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation. I think it's long since time that we did that.

Let me just say one other thing about the gun legislation, because I know there are a lot of AFSCME members that are hunters and probably a lot of AFSCME members that are NRA members. I once had one of those jackets you wear in the deer woods so they won't shoot you instead of the deer that had "Lifetime Membership" on it. The NRA liked me once upon a time when we were doing training programs for kids and solving border disputes between property owners and hunters.

But you know, there is no excuse for us not trying to keep handguns out of the hands of criminals and children. We ought to do that. So we say, "What's wrong with requiring child trigger locks on guns?" And they say, "Well, if they want to do that voluntarily, it's okay with us. We don't object to it." Don't object to it—what's the matter with requiring it? They talk about gun control. I don't think

it's gun control to say if you've got a background check log that applies when you buy a gun in a gun store, it ought to apply when you buy a gun at a flea market in a city or at a gun show.

If you've got a law that bans the sale of assault weapons that are meant only to kill people, I don't think there's anything wrong with saying you ought to also ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips which you can put on a weapon that's not an assault weapon and turn it into an assault weapon. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. What is wrong with that?

And the only way they ever make this an issue is to scare people, mostly male hunters, that we're for gun control. Now you know, when you leave here today, if you drove here and you go home and you're in a new car, you're in a car with seatbelts, and you may live in a State with a seatbelt law. If you've got a little baby, you may live in a State with a child restraint law, and you're certainly going to drive on a road with a speed limit. But you never hear anybody talking about car control. Car control is if I come get your car and put it in my garage. Otherwise, it's highway safety. And this is the same deal here. What are you talking about?

Now, what they're going to say is, they're for tougher enforcement of the present gun safety laws, and if we would just enforce our laws, we wouldn't have any problems. Well, first of all, we've increased enforcement over what was done in the previous administration, and I just gave them the biggest increase enforcement budget in history, and guess what? The House voted against it. So they're going to say they're for it, but they voted against it. You need to know these things, and the people need to know these things.

All right, so three points. One, it's a big election. Two, there are real differences. Three, only our side wants you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about how you should vote?

Now, I want to thank you for the support the New Yorkers here have given to my wife. I thank you for that. And I want to thank you—[*applause*]. Thank you. And I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for the support you have given to Al Gore. And I want you to—now, here's what I think you ought to say to non-AFSCME members who ask you why they ought to vote for him.

And I believe after 8 years, I know him better than anybody outside his family, and here's what I want you to say. I want you to make four points: Number one, this country has had a lot of Vice Presidents who were great Presidents. Thomas Jefferson was a great President who was Vice President. So was Theodore Roosevelt. So was—this is a test. [*Laughter*] Now, I want you to remember this. See, a lot of people don't know. That's a big problem. People don't know about the Vice President. So was Harry Truman. Right? And Lyndon Johnson gave us Medicare and Federal aid to education and all those civil rights laws. So we've got a lot of people who were Vice Presidents who did great things as President.

But in the whole history of America—and I study the history of our country closely—there has never been, ever, a person who, as Vice President, had remotely the positive impact on the welfare of the people of the United States that Al Gore has. He's the best qualified person in my lifetime to run for President.

Now, he broke the tie on the economic plan of 1993, without which we wouldn't all be sitting here cheering today, because that's what got the deficit down, the interest rates down, and the economy going. And as he says, whenever he votes, we win.

He has led our efforts to run the empowerment zone program which has brought thousands of jobs to poor people in poor places that are left behind. He has led our efforts to hook all of our schools up to the Internet and to make sure that the poorest schools got a discount rate so they could afford to log on to the Internet. That wouldn't be a law today if it weren't for Al Gore, and that's a big deal.

He has led our efforts in the environmental area to prove we could grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time, and we've proved you could do that, and that's a big deal. He has managed so much of the responsibilities where I've gotten a lot of the credit. He's had—for the

first Vice President ever, he's had big responsibilities for our relationships with South Africa, with Russia, with Egypt, with many other countries. And on every tough decision I ever had to make, he was always there. And the American people need to know this.

There has never been in the history of the country a Vice President who has had as much responsibility, done as much with it, and had as much of a positive impact on the people as Vice President. And they need to know that.

Now, here's the second reason that I think you ought to be for him and what you ought to say to people. And I admit, this is self-interested, since I'm about to become a private citizen, but I would kind of like to see this economic expansion go on a little while. Now, you need to tell people there is a huge difference in their economic theory. The Vice President wants a tax cut, but he wants it focused on the needs of working families, for child care, long-term care, college education, increasing the tax credit that we give to the lowest income folks who have got a lot of kids. He wants it focused on these things. And he wants us to save enough money to invest in education, in health, in the environment and the future of the country, and to keep paying the debt down in a way that saves Medicare and saves Social Security.

Now, let me just tell you something. You need to tell people this, because the other guys have got a better-sounding argument the first time you hear it. They say, "Hey, you've got this huge surplus, and we'll give you a tax cut 3 times the size of theirs, maybe 4 times the size of theirs." But here is the fact: If you add up the cost of their tax cut, the cost of their plan to partially privatize the Social Security system—which has other problems, but just the cost of them—you let younger people start keeping 10 percent of their payroll, all the rest of the people retiring on Social Security, who is going to make up the money? The taxpayers are. They're going to put money into the Social Security system.

So you add up the tax cut, the cost of privatizing the Social Security system, the cost of missile defense, and the cost of their other promises, and it adds up to more than the on-budget surplus projected for the next 10 years. And he says, "Well, the economy is doing great. We're going to have all this money." Look at what they say.

Now, I ought to be saying that since we produced these surpluses, but let me ask you something. Somebody says to you, "I want the bigger tax cut," you ought to say two things to them. First of all, if you keep paying down the debt, interest rates will be lower, and one percent lower interest rate—listen to this—one percent lower interest rates over the next 10 years saves the American people $250 billion on home mortgages alone—on home mortgages alone.

But here's the next point. If I ask you—you don't have to answer, but you answer this question in your mind. What is your projected income over the next 10 years? You're answering the question in your mind. How confident are you that that is going to be your actual income over the next 10 years? And let's suppose you say, "I'm more than 50 percent confident."

Now, if I put a little desk out here and I said I want every one of you who has projected your income over the next 10 years and you're more than 50 percent confident where it is, come right up here now and sign a contract on how you're going to spend it, and you will be obligated—you will have to spend it regardless—you would think I had lost my mind, wouldn't you? I wouldn't have many takers. I would be sitting up here at this desk, all by myself, waiting for somebody to come up here and sign a contract to sign away your income for the next 10 years.

That's what the Republican tax plan is asking you to do. You need to say, "No, thank you. I like this economic expansion. I want interest rates down. I want Americans to have jobs. I want this economy to keep growing."

Okay, so the Vice President's been the best Vice President in history; he'll keep the prosperity going.

The third reason: The world is changing fast; we should have a President who understands the future and can take us there. What does that mean? I'll give you a couple of examples.

We just announced the whole mapping of the human gene structure, the human genome. Man, I had to read up for a year just so I'd understand the announcement I was making. [*Laughter*]. But you know what it means? Practically, it means that mothers will take little babies home from the hospital, and they'll have a map of what their bodies are going to work like. And they'll know if they're likely to get certain diseases, and they'll know if they raise them in a certain way, give them a certain diet, give them a certain medication, they can reduce the likelihood of that, and their kids will live longer, better lives. It means we may be able to cure Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and all kinds of cancers and diabetes. This is a big deal.

But if somebody's got a picture of your gene structure in a computer somewhere, should they be able to use it to deny you a job or a promotion or a raise or to deny you health insurance? I don't think so. Don't you think we ought to have somebody in the Oval Office that really understands this stuff and all the complications of it? I do. I really think so.

This Internet's a great deal, man. You know, when I became President, there were only 50 sites on the whole World Wide Web, and today, there are over 10 million. The Internet alone is going to give us the capacity to bring economic opportunity to rural areas in America that have been left behind. It's great. But all your health records and all your financial records are on somebody's computer somewhere. Don't you think you ought to be able to say, yes, before somebody gets into them?

And wouldn't you like to have somebody who's President who actually helped to draft the initial legislation in Congress to spread the benefits of the Internet to the world, who understands this stuff? I think somebody ought to be President who understands this stuff.

I'll give you another example. Everybody now concedes that the planet is warming, that the polar ice cap is melting too fast, that the water levels are rising. We're having more radical variations in weather events. Nine of the hottest 10 years in the history—since we've been measuring for 600 years—have occurred in the last 11 years. Nine of the hottest years in history in the last 11 years. Now, everybody just about accepts it, Even the oil companies, that put a lot of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, they say it's real; we've got to do something about it. The first lunch Al Gore and I had after we took office, in Washington, DC, in the White House, he took out his little chart and showed me how we were putting more stuff into the atmosphere in the last 30 years than we have in the previous 500, and that was going to do things that would change our children's future forever. It could flood the sugarcane fields of Louisiana, the Everglades in Florida. It could change agriculture in the Midwest. It could change our life forever.

Now, we're trying to solve this in a way that keeps the economy going. But it's a huge deal. Don't you think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands the importance of this and knows how to deal with it, and still grow the economy?

Now, so he's the best Vice President; he'll keep the economy going; he understands the future. The fourth reason is, he'll take us all along for the ride. And that's a big deal to me.

The next President gets somewhere between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court. They decided 20 cases this year by one vote—20. And the next President's going to change the balance on the Supreme Court one way or the other. I want somebody appointing those judges that believes in individual liberties, personal rights, and wants to take us all along for the ride.

I want somebody that believes all working families ought to have health insurance and the ability to send their kids to college and the ability to send their kids to schools where they have preschool and after-school programs and real commitment to standards, that really understands this stuff, that will take us all along for the ride. And I want somebody who wants us all to go, without regard to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation—thinks we all ought to go along for the ride.

This country is growing more diverse every day, and it will be a God-send in a global economy. Just look around here. Look at the picture of this—I wish we could see a picture of this group 40 years ago. I bet it looked

different. America looked different. This is a big deal, folks. It is the biggest deal of all.

Now, we have an unusual situation this year where both the Presidential candidates speak Spanish. I'm probably the last President of the United States in the 21st century who won't speak Spanish, and I may learn when I get out of office and have time to do it. But there's a difference here. I'll just give you one example.

There's a guy named Enrique Moreno who lives in El Paso, Texas. Anybody know who he is? He grew up in the barrio there, very modest childhood, worked hard, went to Harvard, graduated summa cum laude, did great in law school. Texas judges said he's one of the three best lawyers in west Texas. So I nominated him to the Court of Appeals. The two Republican Senators from Texas wouldn't even give him a hearing. They said he wasn't qualified.

What they really meant is, he won't vote the way we want him to vote. That's what they really meant. As you know, the Governor of Texas is the Republican nominee. If he had asked them to give him a hearing, they would have done it. He didn't say a word. There was no Spanish-speaking plea for Enrique Moreno, because he's not part of their America. But he is part of our America. I think we all ought to go along for the ride.

So remember, I am so grateful to you. I will never be able to thank you enough. You were always there. You'll always be proud of the fights, even the one we lost on health care. We're looking smarter every day. I had a Congressman tell me the other day, he said, "You know, Mr. President, when I voted for your health care program, they said, 'Now, if you vote for Bill Clinton's health care program, you'll have more and more people insured by the Federal Government.'" He said, "I voted for your health care program, and sure enough, more people are insured by the Federal Government. Why? Because private insurance keeps dropping them, and we have to pick them up."

But in spite of our best efforts, there's still an unconscionable number of people without health insurance. We were right to fight for that.

But what I want you to understand is we've come too far to turn back now. We've changed this country too much to reverse course. And I'm grateful to you, and you've been wonderful to me today. But the test is going to be, now that we've got this great big old country turned around and moving in the right direction, what are we going to do with it?

You go out there and tell everybody, big election, big differences; we want you to know what the differences are. You go out there and tell everybody, Al Gore is the best and most important Vice President we ever had. He'll keep the prosperity going. He understands the future, and he can lead us there, and he'll take us all along for the ride.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:13 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gerald McEntee, president, and William Lucy, secretary-treasurer, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Edward Keller, executive director, Pennsylvania AFSCME Council 13; Henry Nicholas, president, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees Local 1199; Dave Fillman, director, Southeast Pennsylvania Public Employees District Council 88; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks on Signing the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act in Philadelphia

June 30, 2000

I would like to begin by acknowledging the presence here of Congressman Joe Hoeffel from Pennsylvania. He represents the district adjoining Philadelphia, and I thank you, Joe. And Martha Aikens, the superintendent of the Independence National Historic Park, where we are—thank you, Martha.

To all the other Park Service employees—that's one of the few Federal jobs that I haven't held that I'd like to hold. [*Laughter*] And I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to Dave Barram, the Administrator of the General Services Administration that manages our Federal buildings and has also played a critical role in putting so much of the Federal Government on-line. Thank

you, Dave. He took a modest pay cut to leave Silicon Valley to work for me several years ago, and I'm very grateful.

Two hundred and thirteen years ago, about 100 feet from where we are now, in a summer as hot as this one, the Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution of the United States. In the very first article of that document, they wrote that Government shall make no laws, quote, "impairing the obligation of contracts." James Madison called the contract clause, and I quote again, "a constitutional bulwark in favor of personal security and private rights." He and his fellow framers understood that the right of individuals to enter into commercial contracts was fundamental not just for economic growth but for the preservation of liberty itself.

Just a few moments ago I had the privilege of signing into law legislation that carries the spirit of the Founders' wisdom into the information age. The Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act will open up new frontiers of economic opportunity while protecting the rights of American consumers. The new law will give fresh momentum to what is already the longest economic expansion in our history, an expansion driven largely by the phenomenal growth in information technologies, particularly the Internet.

Firms across America are moving their supply and sales channels on-line, improving customer service, and reducing costs. The resulting productivity gains are rippling throughout our economy, helping wages to rise, businesses to start, jobs to be created without causing inflation. And individuals are not just buying and selling on-line; they're gaining information that is empowering them as consumers and as citizens.

Perhaps no invention since the railroad has had such potential to expand our opportunities and broaden our horizons—I would argue, more profound potential. But that potential is now being held back by old laws that were written, ironically, to protect the sanctity of contracts. Laws that require pen and ink signatures on paper contracts for them to be enforceable.

In order to unleash the full potential of the digital economy, Vice President Gore and I unveiled, 3 years ago, our Framework for Global Electronic Commerce. In that document, we set out the principles we believe should shape the rules governing electronic conflicts. We said that the rules should be simple and nonregulatory, that they should not favor one technology over another, and they should give individuals and organizations maximum freedom to form electronic contracts as they see fit.

I'm grateful that Congress has kept those principles in mind as it drafted the Electronic Signatures Act. Under this landmark legislation—which I want to point out, passed by overwhelming majorities of both parties in both Houses, and I compliment both the Republicans and the Democrats for their support of this—on-line contracts will now have the same legal force as equivalent paper contracts. Companies will have the legal certainty they need to invest and expand in electronic commerce. They will be able not only to purchase products and services but to contract to do so. And they could potentially save billions of dollars by sending and retaining monthly statements and other records in electronic form.

Eventually, vast warehouses of paper will be replaced by servers about the size of VCR's. Customers will soon enjoy a whole new universe of on-line services. With the swipe of a smart card and the click of a mouse, they will be able to finalize mortgages, sign insurance contracts, or open brokerage accounts.

Just as importantly, the law affords consumers who contract on-line the very same kind of protections and records, such as financial disclosures, they currently receive when they sign paper contracts. Consumers will be able to choose whether to do business and receive records on paper or on-line. They will have the power to decide if they want to receive notice and disclosures electronically. It will be the company's responsibility to ensure that the data it sends to a consumer can be read on that consumer's computer—no more E-mail attachments with gibberish inside.

Finally, Government agencies will have the authority to enforce the laws, protect the public interest, and carry out their missions in the electronic world.

For 8 years now, I have worked to set forth a new vision of Government and politics that marries our most enduring values to the demands of the new information age. In many ways, the Electronic Signatures Act exemplifies that vision. It shows what we in Washington can accomplish when we put progress above partisanship, when we reach across party lines to work for the American people and our common future.

I want to congratulate the many organizations and again, the lawmakers in both parties, and the members of our administration who worked so hard to get this bill passed, and offer a special thanks to Vice President Gore who long ago had the vision to understand the potential of this technology, and who has led our administration's efforts to harness that potential to benefit all Americans.

Now, let's see if this works.

[*At this point, the President electronically signed the bill.*]

Now, we have to wait a while while the act comes up and the magic has worked. It's amazing to think that Americans will soon be using cards like this one for everything from hiring a lawyer to closing a mortgage. Just imagine if this had existed 224 years ago, the Founding Fathers wouldn't have had to come all the way to Philadelphia on July 4th for the Declaration of Independence. They could have E-mailed their "John Hancocks" in.

[*The President verified the electronic signature.*]

Well, it works, and it will work for you. And all of you young people will someday look back on this day that you were here and marvel that we thought it was any big deal. [*Laughter*] And that will be the ultimate test of success. I wish you well, I hope we've done a good job of preparing your future.

Happy Fourth of July weekend. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. at Congress Hall in the Independence National Historical Park. S. 761, approved June 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–229.

Statement on the Nomination of Roger Gregory to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

June 30, 2000

Today I am very pleased to announce the nomination of Roger Gregory to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Roger Gregory is a highly qualified candidate who will, if confirmed, serve the fourth circuit and our Nation with distinction.

His life story is also a testament to the power and promise of the American dream. Roger Gregory is from Richmond, Virginia, and is the first in his family to finish high school. He went on to college and law school, returning as a young adjunct professor to a school where his mother had worked as a maid. Today Roger Gregory is a highly respected Richmond litigator. He has tried hundreds of cases in the Virginia courts.

I am honored to nominate Roger Gregory because he is highly qualified and a strong candidate. But I am also proud to nominate a man who, if confirmed, will be the first African-American ever to serve on the fourth circuit. The fourth circuit has the largest African-American population of any circuit in this country, yet it has never had an African-American appellate judge. It is long past time to right that wrong. Justice may be blind, but we all know that diversity in the courts, as in all aspects of society, sharpens our vision and makes us a stronger nation. Roger Gregory's confirmation would be an historic step for the people of Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and for American justice.

The fourth circuit needs Roger Gregory. Its caseload has increased by over 15 percent in just 5 years yet more than a quarter of its bench stands empty. The seat for which I have nominated Roger Gregory has been declared a judicial emergency by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. It has been vacant almost a decade, longer than any seat in the Nation. That is an embarrassment for any American who cares about our justice system. We cannot be tough on crime if our courts cannot conduct judicial

reviews promptly and efficiently. And we cannot be tough on crime if the message we send Americans is that we do not care about our courts.

By all rights, Roger Gregory should be given a Senate vote in the next few months. But the Senate's failure to fulfill its obligations with respect to my nominees gives me cause for profound concern. Thirty-nine of my judicial nominees are pending before the Senate. These nominees have been kept waiting, on average, 273 days. And the fourth circuit has fared particularly poorly—my other fourth circuit nominee, Judge James Wynn, an African-American judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals, has already been kept waiting for 330 days. I urge the Senate to give Roger Gregory and Judge Wynn the Senate votes that they so richly deserve.

We cannot afford to allow political considerations to empty our courts and put justice on hold. I have worked very hard to avoid contentious ideological fights over nominees. I have worked hard to put forward good, qualified candidates who reflect the diversity of our Nation. The judges I have nominated during my tenure as President are the most diverse group in history. They have also garnered, as a group, the highest American Bar Association ratings of any President's nominees in nearly 40 years. They have shattered the myth that diversity and quality do not go hand in hand. But despite the high qualifications of my nominees, there is a mounting vacancy crisis in our courts. Too often, we are creating situations in which justice delayed means justice denied. And ultimately, if we fail to make our courts reflect America, we risk an America where there may be less respect for the decisions of our courts.

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.

June 24

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, from Los Angeles, CA.

June 25

In the afternoon, the President participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Korean War Memorial.

June 26

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Chappaqua, NY.

June 27

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

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on May 17 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in North Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and ground saturation beginning on June 12 and continuing.

June 28

The President announced his intention to nominate Kenneth Y. Tomlinson to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

June 29

The President announced his intention to nominate Everett L. Mosely to be Inspector General of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Marjory E. Searing to be Assistant Secretary and Director General of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service of the Department of Commerce.

The President announced the nomination of Donald Mancuso as Inspector General of the Department of Defense.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kitty Dukakis, Michael C. Gelman, Stephen D. Susman, and Burton P. Resnick to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Charles Richard Barnes, Colleen M. Kelley, Janice R. Lachance, Edward B.

Montgomery, and Kevin L. Thurm as members of the National Partnership Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint William M. Wardlaw as a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

June 30

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, and later he traveled to Englewood, NJ, where he attended a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee luncheon.

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

The President announced his intention to nominate Arthenia L. Joyner to be a member of the Federal Aviation Management Advisory Council.

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 June 28

Donald Mancuso,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of Defense, vice Eleanor Hill.

Kenneth Y. Tomlinson,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2006, vice Henry J. Cauthen, term expired.

Submitted June 30

Roger L. Gregory,
of North Carolina, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit (new position).

Everett L. Mosely,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Agency for International Development, vice Jeffrey Rush, Jr.

Marjory E. Searing,
of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service, vice Awilda R. Marquez, resigned.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released June 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Treasury Secretary Larry Summers, Chief of Staff John Podesta, National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling, and Office of Management and Budget Director Jack Lew on the midsession review of the budget

Transcript of a press briefing by Dr. Neal Lane, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, Dr. Craig Venter, president and chief scientific officer, Celera Genomics Corp., and Dr. Ari Patrinos, Associate Director for Biological and Environmental Research, Department of Energy, on the completion of the first survey of the Human Genome Project

Released June 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released June 28

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Gregory L. Shulte as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Southeast European Affairs at the National Security Council

Released June 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Announcement of nomination for Secretary of Commerce

Released June 30

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Fourth Circuit

Acts Approved by the President

Approved June 27

H.R. 4387 / Public Law 106–226
To provide that the School Governance Charter Amendment Act of 2000 shall take effect upon the date such Act is ratified by the voters of the District of Columbia

Approved June 28

H.J. Res. 101 / Public Law 106–227
Recognizing the 225th birthday of the United States Army

Approved June 29

S. 1967 / Public Law 106–228
To make technical corrections to the status of certain land held in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, to take certain land into trust for that Band, and for other purposes

Approved June 30

S. 761 / Public Law 106–229
Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act