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Ladies and gentlemen, we thank you for joining us to honor these remarkable people. Some of them are famous, and some were not, at least until today. Some of them had their service thrust upon them by circumstances; others chose the path. Whatever their stories, together they form a remarkable fabric of what is best about our country, what is best about its history, and what is most encouraging when we look to the future.

They remind us, once again, something that I need to remember in these days, that the greatest title any one of us can ever hold is that of citizen.

Thank you, and goodbye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Comdr. Pat DeQuattro, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol To Amend the 1949 Convention on the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission With Documentation

January 8, 2001

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 Protocol to Amend the 1949 Convention on the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, done at Guayaquil, June 11, 1999, and signed by the United States, subject to ratification, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on the same date. In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol. The Protocol will not require implementing legislation.

The Protocol amends the Convention for the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, done at Washington May 31, 1949, and entered into force March 3, 1950 (the "Convention"), to allow the European Union to become a member of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) created under the Convention. Presently, the Convention is only open to governments of states. The Protocol will, upon entry into force, allow regional economic integration organizations like the European Union to become a party to the Convention and a full member of the IATTC provided all parties to the Convention give their consent to such adherence. The Protocol also provides that the Member States of any regional economic integration organization that is allowed to adhere to the Protocol are barred from joining or continuing as a party to the Convention except with respect to the Member States' territories that are outside the territorial scope of the treaty establishing the regional economic integration organization.

Allowing the European Union to accede to the Convention is important to the United States because it would mean that the vessels operating under the jurisdiction of the European Union and its Member States would be bound by the conservation and management measures adopted by the IATTC for the fishery resources of the eastern Pacific Ocean.

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

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 8, 2001.

Remarks to the Democratic National Committee Staff

January 8, 2001

Well, first of all, I want to say to all of you, I'm sorry I kept you waiting, but I promised you I was going to work until the last day, and that's what I'm doing. [*Laughter*]

I spent a little time today working on the Middle East and a little time today rededicating the AFL–CIO building and rededicating myself to their issues and their cause and to not letting the progress they've made in the last 8 years be reversed and a number of other things.

I have my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, and Maria Echaveste and my Political Director, Minyon Moore, Lynn Cutler—a lot of people came over from the White House. They love you guys. They wanted to be here with me.