

So we all have a common interest. And at this holiday season I would hope that we could do away with the destructive and counterproductive labels. I would hope we'll all get a laugh when we think about this eminent panel of Socialists up here on the platform—[laughter]—and learn to laugh about that and in this holiday season remind ourselves that perhaps the greatest gift we can give to our country in common is a greater sense of community and security, a major portion of which is universal health care.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Betty Lowe, president, American Academy of Pediatrics; Dr. William Coleman, president, American Academy of Family Physicians; and Dr. James Todd, executive vice president, American Medical Association.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Admiral Bobby R. Inman To Be Secretary of Defense

December 16, 1993

Ladies and gentlemen, yesterday I announced that Secretary Aspin would be stepping down as Secretary of Defense next month after a year of devoted service. I want to stress again how deeply grateful I am on behalf of all Americans for his hard work and his many unique contributions to the Pentagon and to our national defense.

To ensure the greatest possible continuity, I wanted to announce a successor as soon as possible. So today, I am very pleased to announce my intent to nominate Admiral Bob Inman as the next Secretary of Defense.

Admiral Inman was one of our Nation's highest ranking and most respected military officers. He was a four-star admiral whose career in the Navy and in our intelligence community and in private business has won him praise from both Democrats and Republicans who admire his intellect, his integrity, and his leadership ability.

The Admiral's experience in serving our Nation is truly impressive. He personally briefed Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. He held senior positions under Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush. Former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger called Admiral Inman "a national asset." And I know he will be a national asset as Secretary of Defense.

He brings to this job the kind of character all Americans respect. The son of a gas station owner in a small east Texas town, he rose to distinction and success on the basis of his brains, his talent, and his hard work. He finished high school at 15, graduated from college at 19, joined the Naval Reserve at 20, and then

launched an impressive 31-year career in the Navy. He served on an aircraft carrier, two cruisers, and a destroyer as well as on onshore assignments as an analyst for naval intelligence. In 1976, at the age of 45, he became the youngest vice admiral in peacetime history. Bob Inman's stellar intelligence work caught the attention of many military and civilian leaders and prompted his elevation to several high posts in the intelligence community. He served as Vice Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Director of the National Security Agency, and Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Because of his outstanding service, he was awarded the National Security Medal by President Carter.

Over the past decade since Admiral Inman left Government, he served in a wide range of private sector positions, including CEO of two private sector electronics firms, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, and a teacher at his alma mater, the University of Texas. He's also served on 11 not-for-profit corporate boards. And in all these roles, Admiral Inman has established a reputation for penetrating analysis, strong leadership, and a rock-solid commitment to this Nation's security. Those qualities will serve our Nation well as the Admiral becomes our next Secretary of Defense.

This is a time of great change in our world. We must build on the work Les Aspin began with a bottom-up review to ensure that we have the right forces and strategy for this new era. We must ensure that, even as we reduce force

levels, our military remains ready to fight and win on a moment's notice. We must ensure that our men and women in uniform remain the best trained, the best equipped, the best prepared fighting force on Earth. And we must maintain and build strong bipartisan support in the Congress and in the country for the foreign policy and national defense interests of our Nation.

I am confident that Admiral Inman is the right leader to meet these demanding chal-

lenges. I am grateful that he's agreed to make the personal sacrifices necessary to return to full-time Government service and to accept this important assignment at this pivotal time in world events. I'm delighted that he will be joining our national security team, and I thank him for his service to the Nation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on Signing the Preventive Health Amendments of 1993

December 16, 1993

Since the beginning of my Administration, we have worked with the Congress on ways to strengthen the Nation's health care system. This partnership for the personal security of America's families moved forward when I signed into law H.R. 2202, the Preventive Health Amendments of 1993.

The primary purpose of this new law is to extend the early detection and disease prevention activities of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), especially by strengthening our efforts for the early detection of breast cancer. While it contains a number of excellent provisions, I am especially pleased to advance the Nation's agenda as it relates to women's health concerns.

Among the provisions of H.R. 2202 are new funds authorized for appropriations in the form of grants by the CDC to States for the detection and treatment of women's reproductive and breast cancers. This program addresses an important national need.

Over 2.5 million women in the United States have breast cancer, and about 182,000 additional cancers are expected to have been detected this year. Once every 12 minutes, a woman dies from breast cancer in the United States, often leaving behind a grieving husband, desolate children, and anguished friends. While mammography is by no means a cure, in many instances, it does detect cancer and leads to reductions in the death rates from the illness among women when appropriate follow-up treatment occurs. Though we don't know what causes breast cancer, how to prevent it or cure it, we

do know that broader access to mammograms will make an important medical, personal, and economic difference due to increased early detection.

The legislation expands our efforts not only in breast and cervical cancer prevention but also in areas such as injury control, violence prevention, tuberculosis prevention and research, and trauma care. It is an excellent example of how a bipartisan approach to improving the health care available to Americans can provide needed benefits to so many people.

Much more can and must be done. Health care reform is going to change fundamentally and for the better the manner in which we deal with women's health, especially breast cancer. We know we can reduce deaths from breast cancer by insuring that all women see their health care provider on a regular basis and have access to the tests they need, including mammography when appropriate. Under my Health Security Act, no woman who needs a mammogram will ever be denied one because she cannot pay for it.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 16, 1993.

NOTE: H.R. 2202, approved December 14, was assigned Public Law No. 103-183. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 17.