

Oct. 4 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1994

we will walk every mile with you and that we will not grow weary on the way.

I say to all of you here, *Nkosi Sikelel' i Afrika*. God bless Africa. And God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Statement on Unfunded Federal Mandates Reform Legislation

October 4, 1994

I want to state today my continued support for efforts by Congress to restore balance to the intergovernmental partnership between the Federal Government and State, local, and tribal governments. Since my days as Governor of Arkansas, I have spoken out on the need to address the burgeoning growth of Federal unfunded mandates. As President, I have taken action to resolve this problem within the executive branch by issuing Executive Order 12875, "Enhancing the Intergovernmental Partnership."

However, more needs to be done. Therefore, I want to reiterate my endorsement of and

strongly encourage the Congress to send to my desk before the session ends, the bipartisan "Federal Mandate Accountability and Reform Act of 1994." This legislation, drafted by Senator Glenn and Senator Kempthorne in close consultation with my administration, will curtail the imposition of Federal mandates on State, local, and tribal governments without adequate Federal funding and will promote informed and deliberate decisions by Congress on the appropriateness of Federal requirements in any particular instances.

Nomination for the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

October 4, 1994

The President today intends to nominate Alan Dixon, former U.S. Senator of Illinois, to be Chairman of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

"I am pleased to nominate Alan Dixon to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission. His record of dedicated public service, extensive background in defense mat-

ters, and tested leadership will contribute greatly to the valuable work of this Commission," the President said. "I look forward to his confirmation."

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Appointment for the President's Committee on Mental Retardation

October 4, 1994

The President today announced his intention to appoint the final eight members to the President's Committee on Mental Retardation. The appointees are Gisselle Acevedo Franco, Tom Smith, Robert Dinerstein, Cathy Ficker Terrill, Deborah Spitalnik, Lorenzo Aguilar-Melancon, Ruth Luckasson, and Virginia Williams.

"We have now assembled a strong and dynamic group of advocates, self advocates, family members and professionals who share our common vision of moving from exclusion to inclusion, from dependence to independence, from paternalism to empowerment," the President said. "I look forward to the leadership that these

dedicated appointees will provide to the committee.”

NOTE: Biographies of the appointees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks at a State Dinner for President Nelson Mandela of South Africa *October 4, 1994*

President Mandela, members of the South African delegation, distinguished guests, my fellow Americans. Mr. President, the American people welcome you to the White House on this, the occasion of your first state visit to the United States. You’ve been an inspiration to the American people. You have been a genuine inspiration to the American people and to freedom-loving people around the world, people who still marvel at the price you paid for your conviction, a conviction that our country embraces but still struggles to live up to, the conviction that all men and women are created equal and therefore ought to have a chance to live up to the fullest of their God-given potential and to have an equal say in the affairs of their land.

Your captivity symbolized the larger captivity of your nation, shackled to the chains of prejudice, bigotry, and hatred. And your release also freed your nation and all its people to reach their full potential, a quest too long and so cruelly denied.

But your story, thankfully, for all South Africans and for the rest of us as well, does not end with your freedom; it continues into what you have sought to do with your freedom. Because you’ve found within you the strength to reconcile, to unite, to make whole a country too long divided, you are giving real life to the magnificent words that begin the Freedom Charter you helped to draft nearly 40 years ago: “South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white.”

Now, instead of focusing on the past 342 years, when South Africa did not belong to all who lived in it, you are building a future of trust and tolerance. White South Africans might have fled in fear of retribution, but instead, they have had the courage to stay and to join you in building a new future for all the people of your land. I would say to a world too often torn apart by racial and ethnic and religious strife: Watch South Africa as it comes together, and follow South Africa’s example.

As an American, and as a child of the southern part of our country who grew up in a segregated environment and saw firsthand its horror and its debasement of all of us who lived in it, I must add that, as you well know, Mr. President, your presence here has special significance for Americans. We have been especially drawn to the problems and the promise of South Africa. We have struggled, and continue to struggle, with our own racial challenges. So we rejoice, especially, in what you have accomplished, and we hold it out. And as we hold it out as an example to others, so we also hold it out as an example to ourselves.

Mr. President, I know how proud you are to have your daughter, Zinzi, with you on this trip, and I am proud to have her as my dinner partner tonight. I know that during your years in captivity you were a prodigious letter writer and your daughter was one of your favorite correspondents, not least because of her own writing talent. In one letter, written from your cell at Robben Island Prison, you counseled her as follows: “While you have every reason to be angry with the fates for the setbacks you may have suffered from time to time, you must vow”—excuse me. Let me read it again; it’s so beautiful, it shouldn’t be marred by my voice. “While you have every reason to be angry with the fates for the setbacks you may have suffered from time to time, you must vow to turn those misfortunes into victory. There are few misfortunes in this world you cannot turn into personal triumph if you have the iron will and the necessary skill.”

President Mandela, you have shown us the iron will and the necessary skill. And I might add, you have done it with genuine compassion for others. We are honored by your presence here. We are honored by the promise that your leadership offers your country. We are committed to your success and proud of the partnership we have already established.