

Ms. Montgomery. So thumbs up on sanctions?

The President. So thumbs up on very strong responses, but my trade negotiator, Mickey Kantor, is in the middle of these negotiations—and he has done a great job. I think he is the best Trade Ambassador we have ever had, at least in the last 20 years. He has been very tough. He's opened more markets, taken more actions, succeeded in doing things that had never been done before. We're even selling rice in Japan, something we never thought we could do.

The last big trade hurdle we have is the auto markets and the auto parts markets in Japan. And I do not want to say anything in this inter-

view that complicates his life. I can just tell you, the United States is committed to taking strong action. We are taking a tough position. It doesn't matter what anybody says in my administration; I support the line that Ambassador Kantor has taken. It is my line. It is my conviction. We have done everything we could do, and it is not in the interest of the Japanese Government or people to be in the position they're in now.

NOTE: The interview began at 11:25 a.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on Proposed Legal Reform Legislation

May 4, 1995

The Senate is engaged in the laudable goal of seeking to reform our legal system. Yesterday they went much too far by adopting an amendment to cap punitive damages in all civil lawsuits. In its present form the Senate bill sharply limits the damages paid by many classes of offenders who deserve to pay much more to their victims for the harm they have inflicted upon them.

The bill now before the Senate might be called the "Drunk Drivers Protection Act of 1995," for what it does is insulate drunk drivers and other offenders from paying appropriate amounts of punitive damages justified by their deeds. I insist that we hold drunk drivers fully responsible. When they cause injury and death to innocent adults and children, we should throw the book at them, not give them a legal limit on damages to hide behind.

The Senate should reconsider its position. At the least, it should remove damage caps on lawsuits involving drunk drivers, murderers, rapists, and abusers of women and children, despoilers of our environment like the *Exxon Valdez*, and perpetrators of terrorist acts and hate crimes.

All of these receive undeserved protection from the present bill. The Senate should reserve its compassion for the people who deserve it. If this bill comes to my desk as it is now written I will veto it, and therefore I encourage the Senate not to vote to limit debate on the bill at this time.

The administration supports the enactment of limited, but meaningful, product liability reform at the Federal level. Any legislation must fairly balance the interests of consumers with those of manufacturers and sellers.

Message on the Observance of the 50th Anniversary of the Allies' Victory in Europe: V-E Day, 1995

May 4, 1995

As we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of V-E Day, a grateful nation remembers all of the brave Americans who served in World War II.

In the spring of 1945, after almost six years of fighting, the war in Europe came to a dramatic close. As word of German General Jodl's surrender in Reims spread around the globe,

celebrations broke out from New York and London to Paris and Moscow. Still, celebrations were tempered as President Truman reminded a worldwide radio audience that the war was not yet won. Many thousands more were yet to die fighting for the principles we hold so dear.

Half a century later, as Americans gather to mark the triumph over fascism and tyranny in Europe, we remember all those who fought to preserve our liberty. We honor our distinguished veterans—those who came home and those who

did not return. We also honor their families—those who contributed to the battlefield victory through their efforts and prayers on the home front. These valiant men and women toiled to support and defend the cause of freedom fifty years ago, and they succeeded in preserving its blessings for generations to come. On behalf of Americans everywhere, I salute these heroes. They have our eternal gratitude.

Best wishes to all for a memorable observance.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks to the American Jewish Committee

May 4, 1995

Thank you very much, Mr. Rifkind. Justice Ginsburg—this was one of my better moves, don't you think? [Laughter] Another one of my better moves, Secretary and Mrs. Riley and distinguished members of the diplomatic corps and my fellow Americans.

I can't speak long because I don't want to have a controversy with Senator Dole. I would never take his time knowingly. [Laughter] I sort of hate to do this to the American Jewish Committee, taking Alan Moses away. I can't think of any better person to serve as our Ambassador to Romania, but I hate to do it for you, and I really hate to do it for me. At least you've got a good successor, but I do not want to establish the principle in this town that 4 years is enough for anyone to serve as President. [Laughter] Alan, I thank you for your willingness to serve, and I am delighted to see you're here with your wife and also with your mother. It's wonderful to see her. Welcome, and thank you.

Let me briefly say in response to the introduction that I have worked hard, as all of you know, on a two-track policy in the Middle East. First, to try to make peace, not to impose peace but to try to help the parties in the Middle East to make peace. In my first meeting with Prime Minister Rabin, whom I look forward to seeing again in the next several days, I said, "If you are prepared to take risks for peace, it is the obligation of the United States to minimize those risks." That is what we have tried to do. We have worked together. We have worked with the parties in the Middle East who

are interested in peace. We are working even as we speak to make further progress.

Second thing we have sought to do is to contain those who would upset the balance of forces for peace in the Middle East. We have taken strong stands against Iraq, we have demanded that Libya give up the people that are accused of downing Pan Am 103, and we have taken strong stands against Iran. For 2 years I hoped against hope that Iran would be persuaded to stop trying to develop weapons of mass destruction and supporting terrorist groups. It became clear to me that that would not happen, and therefore I have imposed the embargo which was announced last Sunday, which I thank you for your support on. I hope that we will be able to persuade others that terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have no place in the modern world.

Let me close by asking you to think of this: The 21st century should and I believe will be the most exciting time in all of human history, the time that is most full of human potential. It can be a very great time for America if we face our problems at home first and if we make sure that all of our people can compete, which means more than anything else we must solve the education deficit in the United States and create a system of lifetime learning that all people can access.

But I believe that the great threats to security in the 21st century will be very different from those of the 20th century. The history of this century is littered with the blood of millions