

ciate its bipartisan approach toward this bill. Nevertheless, I regret that the Congress has not sent me acceptable 1996 appropriations bills for agencies that received funding only through March 15. Governing by continuing resolution is not the appropriate way for the Congress to perform its work. Once again, I urge the Congress to work with me so that we can reach agreement on the remaining fiscal year 1996 appropriations bills.

I also urge the Congress to send me a straightforward, full-year extension of the debt limit. If the Congress does not raise the debt limit, we would not be able to meet all of our financial obligations on February 29 or March 1, and would risk not being able to make timely

payment of \$30 billion of Social Security benefits and other obligations. A default could raise interest rates and impose serious, long-term harm on the economy. The Congress must act without delay.

Finally, I urge congressional leaders to return to our negotiations to seek an agreement on a balanced budget. We should not give up on that goal.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,  
January 26, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 2880, approved January 26, was assigned Public Law No. 104-99.

## Statement on Senate Ratification of the START II Nuclear Arms Reduction Treaty With Russia

January 26, 1996

Today, Senate Democrats and Republicans, working together, have increased the security of the American people by ratifying the START II nuclear arms reduction treaty with Russia. I applaud this historic step. As I stated in my State of the Union Address this week, it will make every American, every Russian, and people all over the world more secure.

START II requires dramatic cuts in the nuclear arsenals of our two countries. Together with the START I treaty, which we put into force in December 1994, it will eliminate submarine, bomber, and land-based missile launchers that carried more than 14,000 warheads—two-thirds of the nuclear arsenal the United States and the former Soviet Union maintained at the height of the cold war. START II will also eliminate the most destabilizing type of nuclear weapon—the multiple warhead ICBM. Starting with President Nixon, six American Presidents from both parties have worked to control and reduce the number of nuclear weapons. President Bush negotiated START II and submitted it to the Senate in January 1993. I am proud that we have seized the opportunity presented by the end of the cold war to take this big step back from the nuclear precipice.

As President, my most basic duty is to protect the security of the American people. That's why

I have made reducing the nuclear threat one of my highest priorities.

As a result, for the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, there are no Russian missiles pointed at our people. We convinced Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to give up the nuclear weapons left on their land when the Soviet Union broke up. We persuaded North Korea to freeze its dangerous nuclear weapons program under international monitoring. We're working with countries around the world to safeguard and destroy nuclear weapons and materials—so that they don't fall into the hands of terrorists or criminals. We led global efforts to win the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which bans the spread of nuclear weapons to states that do not have them.

Now, as I urged in the State of the Union, we must do even more to give the American people real, lasting security. We can end the race to create new nuclear weapons by signing a truly comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty this year. We can outlaw forever poison gas if the Senate ratifies the Chemical Weapons Convention this year. We can take the fight to terrorists, who would acquire terrible weapons of mass destruction, if Congress finally passes legislation I proposed after Oklahoma City to give

American law enforcement an even stronger arsenal.

Working together, I believe we can and we will take all these important steps to increase the security of the American people.

## Remarks to the National Association of Hispanic Publications January 26, 1996

*The President.* Thank you very much. I feel a lot better than I did when I got here. [*Laughter*] Thank you so much. Thank you, Andres Tobar. Thank you, Louis Rossi. Thank you, Federico Pena.

Secretary Pena gave me a beautiful introduction, and it illustrates Clinton's first law of politics: Whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. [*Laughter*] I thank him for the outstanding job he has done at the Transportation Department and for being our friend and leader.

I want to congratulate you on your 10th annual convention, on the opening of your office here in Washington under Executive Director Marlene Romero. There are so many Hispanic-Americans I want to thank, but I want to say a special word of thanks to Raul Yzaguirre for his leadership and his guidance and his advice. I know that you have leaders of several Hispanic organizations here with you tonight, Commander Jake Alarid and the members of the G.I. Forum. I think the Chairman of the EEOC is here, Gil Casellas; he's done a terrific job.

I wanted to tell you that—I know Secretary Cisneros spoke yesterday, and he was to be here tonight, but his son is having a Cub Scout meeting, and Henry is the den leader. So we are trying to practice family values in our administration, and he's doing what he should be doing.

Let me also tell you before I get into the remarks that I was going to make tonight—you know, when I gave the State of the Union Address I said, and I believe, the major choice before America is not whether we're going to have big or smaller Government but whether we're going to work together to solve the problems and meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that we have as a people. The choice is whether we're going forward together or whether we think Americans can really do their best out there on their own. And I believe we

need to work together, and I asked the Congress to work with me.

I want you to know that just a few minutes ago the Congress passed a continuing resolution so that there's no question now of the Government shutting down, and we'll be able to go on. And now I hope very much we can go back to work and pass all the remaining budgets for this year and pass that 7-year balanced budget in a way that is fair to all Americans.

I also want you to know that the United States Senate has just voted overwhelmingly to ratify the START II treaty with Russia. And let me tell you what that means. That means that when the Russians follow suit—and I talked to President Yeltsin today and I told him that I thought the Senate would ratify it tonight. He said he would do his best to see that the Russian parliamentary body, the Duma, would do the same. When START II is ratified, between START I and START II we will have reduced nuclear weapons two-thirds below their cold-war high. Two-thirds of the nuclear weapons threatening the world will be gone. So I want to thank the United States Senate and the United States Congress for working together with us on this. And as I said, I very much hope that this is a sign of even more of that kind of work to come.

I wanted to say just one other thing, too, about the appointments issue. When I came here to Washington, I found that in strange corners I was criticized for trying to develop an administration that looked like America, that I had this idea that you could have diversity and excellence and we didn't have to sacrifice one for the other. You heard Secretary Pena say that we have appointed a record number of Hispanics—and I might add, and African-Americans and women—to the Federal bench. And just this week, I nominated a distinguished judge, Richard Paez from California, to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth