

later if we can do it. But I don't believe for a minute that it's an easy task, and I don't believe that an agreement at any price is worth doing it in the next 4 or 5 days. And I don't believe the Republicans do. I wouldn't ask them to do that either. You know, we have strong convictions. And you saw in 1995 and until the end in 1996, when we made a remarkable amount of progress there just right before the Congress adjourned for the election, that we have different and deeply held views, and they're honestly different.

But I do believe that if we could do it sooner rather than later and it would be good for the country and consistent with our principles and theirs, an honorable compromise—which I think is there—I think sooner rather than later is better. But I certainly won't give up if it doesn't

happen. I'm going to keep on working until we get it done. I expect it to happen this year. I'm very optimistic. And I am hopeful that it can happen sooner rather than later. And I am committed personally to doing everything I can to put it together.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 141st news conference began at 3:40 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kenneth Starr, independent counsel; former Senator Bob Dole; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; and James Riady and Webster Hubbell of the Lippo Group. A reporter referred to Martin Lee, head of the Hong Kong Democratic Party.

Letter to the Oklahoma City Memorial Foundation

April 14, 1997

Dear Friends:

Our nation will never forget that tragic day, almost two years ago, when we first learned of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and we will always remember the courage shown by the citizens of your strong and united city during that dark time. All Americans continue to support your recovery efforts, and our prayers are with you.

With the destruction of the Murrah Federal Building, we learned once again that America is a family, and that such a brutal attack on any American is an attack on us all. In uniting around the citizens of Oklahoma City, our nation proved once again that no force of hatred or terrorism can ever defeat the American spirit.

I want to express my support for your efforts to establish a memorial on the site of the bombing. This memorial will be a fitting tribute not

only to those who died, but also to those whose lives were changed forever on April 19, 1995. I know that, by honoring our fellow Americans in this way, we can help to further the healing and restore hope for a brighter, more secure future.

Hillary and I will always remember the time we spent with the families and survivors. Please know that we are keeping them, and all the people of Oklahoma City, in our thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 19. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Memorandum on Expanding Access to Internet-based Educational Resources for Children, Teachers, and Parents

April 18, 1997

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Expanding Access to Internet-based Educational Resources for Children, Teachers, and Parents

My number one priority for the next 4 years is to make sure that all Americans have the best education in the world.

One of the goals of my Call to Action for American Education is to bring the power of the Information Age into all of our schools. This will require connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000; making sure that every child has access to modern, multimedia computers; giving teachers the training they need to be as comfortable with the computer as they are with the chalkboard; and increasing the availability of high-quality educational content. When America meets the challenge of making every child technologically literate, children in rural towns, the suburbs, and inner city schools will have the same access to the same universe of knowledge.

I believe that Federal agencies can make a significant contribution to expanding this universe of knowledge. Some agencies have already launched a number of exciting projects in this area. The White House has a special "White House for Kids" home page with information on the history of the White House. NASA's K-12 initiative allows students to interact with astronauts and to share in the excitement of scientific pursuits such as the exploration of Mars and Jupiter and with experiments conducted on the Space Shuttle. The AskERIC service (Education Resources Information Center), supported by the Department of Education, has a virtual library of more than 900 lesson plans for K-12 teachers, and provides answers to questions from educators within 48 hours—using a nationwide network of experts and databases of the latest research. Students participating in the Vice President's GLOBE project (Global Learning and Observation for a Better Environment) collect actual atmospheric, aquatic, and biological data and use the Internet to share, analyze, and discuss the data with scientists and

students all over the world. With support from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense's CAETI program (Computer-Aided Education and Training Initiative), the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory has developed a program that allows high school students to request and download their own observations of the universe from professional telescopes.

We can and should do more, however. Over the next 3 months, you should determine what resources you can make available that would enrich the Internet as a tool for teaching and learning, and produce and make available a new or expanded version of your service within 6 months.

You should use the following guidelines to support this initiative:

- Consider a broad range of educational resources, including multimedia publications, archives of primary documents, networked scientific instruments such as telescopes and supercomputers, and employees willing to serve as tele-mentors or answer student and teacher questions.
- Expand access not only to the information and other resources generated internally, but by the broader community of people and institutions that your agency works with and supports. For example, science agencies should pursue partnerships with professional societies, universities, and researchers to expand K-12 access to scientific resources.
- Update and improve your services in response to comments from teachers and students, and encourage educators to submit curricula and lesson plans that they have developed using agency material.
- Focus on the identification and development of high-quality educational resources that promote high standards of teaching and learning in core subjects. Of particular importance are resources that will help students read well and independently by 4th grade, and master challenging mathematics, including algebra and geometry, by 8th grade.