

28 understandings to which Senator Dole referred.

Now, we can't let the minor and relatively small number of disagreements that remain blind us to the overwhelming fact, to use the words of Admiral Zumwalt, that at the bottom line our failure to ratify will substantially increase the risk of a chemical attack against American service personnel. None of us should be willing to take that. As Commander in Chief, I cannot in good conscience take that risk. I'm very proud of the work that's been done under the two predecessor administrations to mine of the opposite party. And I'm very proud that we're all standing here together today as Americans in support of a good and noble and tremendously significant endeavor. And all working together, maybe tomorrow it will come out all right.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Q. Mr. President, at his briefing today, Senator Lott appeared to be leaning toward supporting this treaty—that's sort of my analysis—because of the so-called 28 conditionalities, as he says. If there are so many provisos—if this passes with so many provisos, what is the rest of the world going to think of this treaty? And can we just—the United States say, because we're putting so much in the bill—can we just say, "You accept it the way we like it?"

*The President.* If you read the provisos tomorrow, every one of them is consistent with the overall treaty and would clearly be a clarification of it. I think the rest of the world will applaud what we have done. And I believe that in very important respects they will say, "That's the way we read the treaty all along." So I believe it will be reinforcing it. And I think you'll see the differences over the debate tomorrow, where the line falls. I think it will be clear that this will strengthen and enhance the meaning of the treaty, not only for ourselves but for others all around the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Wallace, executive director, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Gen. Brent Scowcroft, USAF (ret.), former National Security Adviser; Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN (ret.), former Chief of Naval Operations; Gen. David C. Jones, USAF (ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Vice Adm. Stanley R. Arthur, USN (ret.), former Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Logistics; Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and former Senator Bob Dole.

## Statement on the Supreme Court Decision To Expedite Review of the Line Item Veto

*April 23, 1997*

I am pleased that the Supreme Court has granted the Solicitor General's request to provide an expedited review of a lower court ruling on the line item veto. The line item veto provides a critical tool for the President to strike wasteful spending and tax items from legislation.

Congress took the correct step giving the President this authority, and I was pleased to sign the line item veto into law. It is my hope that this expedited ruling will clear up any confusion on this matter.

## Message on the Observance of Take Our Daughters to Work Day

*April 23, 1997*

Warm greetings to everyone participating in "Take Our Daughters to Work Day." We dedi-

cate this special day each year to empowering girls with the encouragement and practical work

experiences that will enable them to become leaders in the workplace of the future.

Young girls must never believe that there are limitations on what they can do or become in this country. That's why all of us have a responsibility to renew our commitment to gender equality not only at work, but also in our homes, schools, and communities. It is time to treat our children the same, to embrace their unique gifts, and to allow them to utilize their God-given talents as they choose.

As parents, family members, mentors, and teachers, we also have an obligation to introduce our children to new experiences and to extend their education beyond the boundaries of the classroom. If we are to fulfill the exciting promise of the twenty-first century, we must instill

in our girls and boys a deep appreciation for lifelong learning and the confidence and self-esteem to live out their dreams.

I commend the thousands of families, businesses, schools, and communities participating in "Take Our Daughters to Work Day" for showing America's young women that we believe in them and in their ability to lead us in the years to come. You are making a lasting investment in America's future.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a memorable observance.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 24 but was not issued as a White House press release.

## Statement on Proposed Employment Non-Discrimination Legislation *April 24, 1997*

Today Vice President Gore and I met with a bipartisan delegation from Congress, representing the lead House and Senate sponsors of the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" ("ENDA")—an important piece of civil rights legislation which would extend basic employment discrimination protections to gay and lesbian Americans. At our meeting, I underscored my strong support of the bill, which will soon be reintroduced in Congress, and our intention to work hard for its passage.

As I said in my State of the Union Address this January, we must never, ever believe that our diversity is a weakness, for it is our greatest strength. People on every continent can look to us and see the reflection of their own great potential, and they always will, as long as we strive to give all of our citizens an opportunity to achieve their own greatness. We're not there yet, and that is why ENDA is so important. It is about the right of each individual in America to be judged on their merits and abilities and to be allowed to contribute to society without facing unfair discrimination on account of sexual orientation. It is about our ongoing fight against bigotry and intolerance, in our country and in our hearts.

I applaud the bipartisan efforts of Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, and Lieberman and Con-

gressmen Shays and Frank to make the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" the law. I also thank the members of the Human Rights Campaign and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, whose executive directors joined in our meeting, for their early support and hard work on behalf of this bill. It failed to win passage by only one vote in the Senate last year. My administration worked hard for its passage then, and we will continue our efforts until it becomes law.

Discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is currently legal in 41 States. Most Americans don't know that men and women in those States may be fired from their jobs solely because of their sexual orientation, even when it has no bearing on their job performance. Those who face this kind of job discrimination have no legal recourse in either our State or Federal courts. This is wrong.

Individuals should not be denied a job on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work. Sadly, as the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee has documented during hearings held in the last Congress, this kind of job discrimination is not rare.

The "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" is careful to apply certain exemptions. It provides