

made, and I hope they'll just stay there and settle it today.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Block Island, Rhode Island. In his remarks he referred to Bruce Lindsay, Deputy Counsel to the President.

Remarks Upon Arrival in Block Island, Rhode Island *August 17, 1997*

Thank you. Well, first of all, let me say that Hillary and Chelsea and I are delighted to be here. We want to thank the Senator for coming over with us and thank the first warden for coming out to meet us. It took me a little—a moment to realize that the first warden was the highest elected official on the island. I thought maybe I was about to be arrested for something. *[Laughter]*

And let me say I was stunned to see this crowd when we were coming down in the helicopter. But this is the first opportunity I have had to thank the people of Rhode Island for giving the Vice President and me the enormous vote of confidence we got here last November. And I'm very grateful to you. Thank you so much.

Let me also say I'm just anxious to be here and have some fun. And I want to go through the crowd and shake hands. I want to have a picture taken with the students there from the Block Island School.

And I hope that all of you will always be committed to preserving this beautiful island.

I was so impressed when I came down, and Senator Reed was telling me a little about the conservation efforts. We have, all of us, a great responsibility to future generations to figure out how to keep growing this economy. I'm very grateful for the economic success that our Nation has had, for the millions of new jobs we have, for the lowest unemployment and inflation rates in decades. But we have to do it in a way that preserves the natural heritage that God has given us. I can see you're committed to that here, and I hope you will help to spread that to people all across New England and, indeed, all across the United States.

Again, thanks for having us here. We're delighted. And I want to get out and say hello to a few people.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. at Block Island Airport. In his remarks, he referred to First Warden Kimberly H. Gaffett.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Implementation of the Defense Exports Monitoring Program *August 18, 1997*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 40A of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2785), I transmit herewith the first annual report on the implementation of a comprehensive program to monitor the end-use of defense articles and services, and to prevent the diversion of technology incorporated in defense articles, sold, leased, or exported under the Arms Export Control Act and

the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 *et seq.*).

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives,

and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 19.

Remarks on the Tentative Settlement of the United Parcel Service Strike and an Exchange With Reporters in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts August 19, 1997

The President. Good afternoon. I would like to compliment UPS and the Teamsters on resolving their differences and agreeing to a new contract. I think it is very much in the interest not only of the company and its employees but also of all of the people it serves and of the United States, and I'm very pleased about it.

I also want to say a special word of thanks and appreciation to Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman, who I believe did a very fine job in working with the parties, trying to keep them working together and getting back together. I know that she deserves and will get some much-needed rest today. But I think it's a good thing for the country, and I'm very pleased it's resolved.

Q. Mr. President, can you walk through your own evolution in this? The first 2 weeks were sort of hands off, and then on Saturday you gave them a little bit of a nudge, and then by the time you reached Martha's Vineyard, it seemed a little more like a push. Why, specifically, did you choose to engage at those two moments?

The President. Well, first of all, the Secretary of Labor had been involved with this almost from the beginning. But I thought it was important to give the parties a chance to work out their differences. And obviously, I was getting reports about where they were. I just wanted to—when it was obvious that they were quite close—it's been my observation, not just from them but sometimes in our negotiations with Congress, for example—sometimes you get very close, and you've got 95 percent of the issues or 99 percent of the issues resolved, and maybe just a little nudge in the right direction helps you go over the top. And I was just hoping to do that.

They did the work, and they deserve the credit. They resolved their differences in a way that I think will be good for the company and good for the employees.

Q. Mr. President, is this an outright victory for the labor movement?

The President. I think it's a victory for the proposition that you can have a profitable, highly competitive company with good, solid labor relations providing good jobs and good benefits for the employees. That's what I think it's a victory for. It's not an outright victory if you mean it's also a defeat for UPS; I wouldn't characterize it that way. I think this company will go forward. It will do real well, and the workers will do well. And they've made some important agreements around the side about how they're going to work together to be even more productive and competitive, so I would say that it is a victory for the proposition that you can have good, strong labor relations and treat your employees well and make money in this economy of ours. That's what I wanted to prove from the time I became President, so I was very pleased by it.

Q. Mr. President, how much of an economic threat would there have been if this strike had not been resolved when it was, if it had gone on much longer?

The President. It's hard to say. That would depend upon something we'll never know, which is how quickly others could have absorbed the capacity. But it could have been very difficult for both the company and for its employees. So I think they were both advantaged by making the agreement they did before any irreparable harm was done to both sides. And that may well have been something they were thinking of.

The President's Birthday

Q. On a more personal note, sir, how does it feel to be another year older?

The President. Well, it feels good today. I've had a wonderful time here. I had a good day yesterday on the golf course, and this morning I got up and Chelsea and I went jogging. That's