

with efforts to increase cooperation with the Russian Federation and to build on the openings for constructive dialogue created by the NATO-Russia Founding Act. I am committed to continue efforts with Russia and other countries to reduce our nuclear stockpiles, combat the dangers of proliferation, and stabilize arms levels across Europe. We must continue working together to create the opportunity for a lasting peace in Bosnia and the Balkans. We will continue working with the European Union, which also is adding members, and which makes its own important contribution to Europe's stability.

NATO is the cornerstone of our transatlantic security efforts, however, and the Alliance is proving its value—through the Partnership for Peace program and many other efforts—in projecting stability throughout Europe. For that same reason, we must leave the door open to the addition of other qualified new members in the future. The “open door” commitment made by all the allies has played a vital role in ensuring that the process of enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just these first three new members.

At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of the Alliance's enlargement at our next summit. At this point, however, neither NATO nor my Administration has made any decisions or commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about admission of these first three countries, and I pledge the same pattern of consultation before any decisions on these matters in the future. In any case, any future addition of members will require the advice and consent of the Senate.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Senate to reject any effort to mandate a pause on the

process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and unwise, for it would reduce our own country's flexibility and leverage, fracture NATO's open door consensus, and draw a new and potentially destabilizing dividing line in Europe.

I am gratified by the outstanding cooperation between our two branches of government, and between both parties, that has been a part of the ratification effort. I commend you for the creation of the Senate's NATO Observer Group, which has worked closely with the Administration in development of this policy, and I commend Senators Helms and Biden and the Foreign Relations Committee, as well as other committees, for their thorough examination of the complex questions involved in NATO's enlargement.

That kind of bipartisan cooperation was indispensable to our successful efforts throughout the Cold War to sustain a strong Alliance, to defend our security, and to pursue the goal of freedom and democracy across Europe. In the same spirit, I hope the Senate will draw together on the question of NATO's enlargement. By doing so, the Senate can help signal America's continuing engagement in Europe, our commitment to a strong NATO Alliance, and our determination to build a foundation for transatlantic security into the next century.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This letter was sent to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. A similar letter with minor differences was sent to Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle. The letters were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 16 but were not issued as White House press releases.

Opening Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion on Education and an Exchange With Reporters in Silver Spring, Maryland

March 16, 1998

The President. First of all, let me welcome you all here. Let me thank you for coming. Many have made an extraordinary effort to come from a long way away, and I thank you so much

for that. I want to make some brief opening remarks and ask Secretary Riley and Mr. Schmidt to make some remarks, and then we'll

just begin the roundtable. And I want to hear from everyone before we go.

Earlier this month, our country received a wakeup call. Our high school seniors ranked near the bottom in math and science achievement when compared with their peers around the world, according to the TIMSS test results. This must be a call to action for all of us. That's why I've asked some of America's top educators, advocates, political and business leaders here today, to mobilize our schools to raise standards, demand accountability, and specifically, to strengthen math and science education and performance all across America.

A little over 40 years ago—a lot of us are old enough to remember when America got another wakeup call—when the Soviets had just launched *Sputnik* and beat us into space. Then President Eisenhower said, if we were going to conquer the heavens, we had to strengthen math and science education here on Earth. Because we answered the call, in the years since, we have landed on the Moon, roved the surface of Mars, launched countless satellites that have revolutionized the way we live, work, and play here on Earth, and we're preparing to put the international space station into work.

The young people Eisenhower inspired are now fueling America's new economy. They work at NASA, at NIH, in high-tech labs in Silicon Valley, in Wall Street boardrooms, in classrooms all across our Nation. Now we have to strengthen math and science education for a new generation of Americans in the 21st century. We know that for our time we need a revolution in high standards, accountability, and rising expectations. We know the revolution works. A report released just today by the University of Minnesota has found that charter schools are meeting and sometimes exceeding their promises to raise academic achievement. Now we have to spread these lessons throughout the educational system.

In our balanced budget, I proposed a comprehensive strategy to help make our schools the best in the world: to have high national standards of academic achievement, national tests in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math, strengthening math instruction in middle school, providing smaller classes in the early grades so that teachers can give students the attention they deserve, working to hire more well-prepared and nationally certified teachers, modernizing our schools for the 21st century,

supporting more charter schools, encouraging public school choice, ending social promotion, demanding greater accountability from students and teachers, principals and parents.

And we have to bring more mentors into our middle schools to inspire our students to prepare for college early. I am pleased that this strategy is already moving forward in many, many States, that our Nation's Governors and State legislators of both parties are choosing to make a solid commitment to boost education, to advocate high standards, and to take advantage of this era of budget surpluses and good times to make our schools better so that we'll have even better times in the future. We'll work hard with Congress to make sure this plan becomes a reality. I urge the Senate to take the first step by passing the proposals to modernize schools this week.

In this era of fiscal discipline, we have to recognize that Government alone cannot do the job. We also have to mobilize all other Americans in a concerted effort especially, let me say, on the topic we're here today—math and science education. States have to make sure that every math and science teacher is qualified to do the job. We have to insist that they've majored in their subjects in college.

Today, nearly one of every five science teachers, more than a quarter of all math teachers, more than half of all physics teachers has neither majored in nor minored in the subjects they teach. The typical elementary and middle school teacher has taken just three undergraduate math courses. We can and we must do better.

So I call on the States to require new math and science teachers to pass high-level competency tests in their subjects before getting licensed. The requirements must be vigorously enforced. School districts simply mustn't continue to hire people who don't meet the standards. Students must challenge themselves and take the most advanced math and science courses they can. Again, this is a big problem. Among college-bound seniors, half have not taken physics or trigonometry; three-quarters have not taken calculus. Around the world, middle students are learning algebra and geometry. Here at home, just a quarter of all students take algebra before high school. Our children must not glide through school without gaining these important skills. Business has to help us get the message out, too, so that they will hear

that young people who study and do well will do better in the future.

Today I want to say that later this year I intend to convene a group of business leaders specifically to discuss ways that they can contribute to raising student performance across our country. Universities can also help by strengthening their programs in math and science teaching so that more students will consider teaching as a career, and so that our newest teachers will be better prepared than ever for the classrooms of the 21st century.

Finally, we need help from our parents, who should encourage and insist on teachers and students who do their best. I think it is profoundly important that parents keep up not only with the progress of their children in the courses they're taking but also in whether they're taking the right courses.

If we all do our part, I'm convinced this is a challenge that we can clearly meet.

Secretary Riley.

[At this point, Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and William Schmidt, national research coordinator, Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), made brief remarks.]

Deposition in Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Q. Mr. President, Kathleen Willey says that you made unwanted sexual advances toward her, and that directly contradicts your testimony. You can't both be telling the truth, can you?

The President. Well, I don't know what she said, because I didn't see the interview last night. But I can tell you this: Ever since this story came out months ago—and as you know, the story has been in three different incarna-

tions—I have said that nothing improper happened. I told the truth then. I told the truth in the deposition.

I am mystified and disappointed by this turn of events. But it's been out there for several months, as well as conflicting stories from people who have discussed it with her. You'll have to find the answer to that riddle somewhere else. But I can just tell you that I have done everything I could do to clarify the situation. I have a very clear memory of the meeting, and I told the truth.

Q. Mr. President, do you stand by your full deposition—[inaudible]—in the Paula Jones case? And should that serve as your explanation to the American people of what went on—[inaudible]?

The President. I certainly stand by the deposition.

Q. Will you make a further explanation to the American people, as you suggested you would when this story first broke?

The President. Well, I did suggest that, but that was before the deposition was illegally released, and it basically states my position. Whether and what else will be said I think is something that we'll have to deal with in the future, depending on how circumstances unfold.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Media Center at Springbrook High School. In his remarks, he referred to Kathleen E. Willey, former White House volunteer who gave testimony in both the Paula Jones civil lawsuit and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's investigation, and who was interviewed on the CBS News program "60 Minutes" on March 15.

Remarks at Springbrook High School in Silver Spring

March 16, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Durso, thank you for welcoming me here to Springbrook. Secretary Riley, thank you for bringing me along. I want to introduce the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley; the Secretary of Energy, Federico Pena. I thank Governor Glendening and Senator Sarbanes and Congressman Wynn and the Maryland State superintendent, Nancy Grasmick; your president of the school board, Nancy King,

and all the other people from Maryland who have made us feel so welcome; the Governor of West Virginia, Governor Underwood; and the mayor of Los Angeles, Mayor Riordan; and other people who were on our panel are over there. I'd like for all the people who came from all over America to be with us to stand up—Rudy Crew, the superintendent of New York;