

The more we know about school violence, the more we can do to ensure our children's safety. Last December I asked the Attorney General and Secretary Riley to develop an annual report on school safety. Today I'm pleased to accept their framework for these reports. From now on, at the beginning of every school year, parents and principals, lawmakers and law enforcement will have a valuable tool that tracks school violence, gives examples of school programs that are working, and suggests actions parents can take to make their children's lives safer at school.

We know one of the best ways to reduce violence is to involve the young people themselves. In the last several years, AmeriCorps volunteers particularly have helped hundreds of students to resolve their conflicts peacefully. This adds to AmeriCorps' remarkable record of helping improve our schools and communities through volunteer service.

Parenthetically, I want to say that today we had an announcement up on the Hill, with the First Lady participating, that we are sending legislation to Congress to extend our national service program into the 21st century. I hope Congress will support AmeriCorps as it has in the past.

Let me say, finally, as Mr. Berg said so eloquently, we know that all of our schools need parents to play the primary role in their chil-

dren's safety, both in the school and in the home, and when necessary, in the neighborhood. Today I ask all our parents who are concerned about this to become involved in your communities and your children's schools, to join a community policing partnership. Senator Robb got the budget; we're releasing the funds. We can talk about what works, but in the end, real live American citizens are going to have to show up in every school in this country to make this work.

You know, if you look at these young people here today, if you think about the remarkable achievements of this fine school we honor, if you imagine the interesting, fascinating lives they can have, and you remember that, as they have good lives, it will make all the rest of our lives better, it is clear that we all have a responsibility to ensure that their educations will be safe. We can do this, and America's future in the 21st century depends upon it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:09 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Herbert Berg, superintendent, Alexandria City schools, Alexandria, VA; Mayor Kerry Donley of Alexandria, VA; and students from T.C. Williams High School, whose success at reducing violence and crime was accounted during the event.

Videotaped Address to the People of Africa *March 19, 1998*

To all our friends in Africa, let me say how very much I'm looking forward to my upcoming trip. I'll travel to Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Botswana, and Senegal. It will be a real privilege for me to be the first American President to visit those countries.

This journey will be my opportunity, and yours, to help to introduce the people of the United States to a new Africa, an Africa whose political and economic accomplishments grow more impressive each month. I want to see for myself what America can learn from Africa and how we can work with you as partners to build a better future for all our children.

As I visit your countries and meet your leaders and citizens, I'll have in mind four central goals for us to work toward together. First, we want to support Africa's democracies, those with long and proud histories and those that are newly emerging. Together we can create a global community of nations that respect and promote human rights, tolerance, and broad participation in public life.

Second, we want to increase trade and investment with Africa. When it comes to economic development, America and Africa can help each other, opening markets, building businesses, creating jobs on both continents. A prosperous future awaits us if we strengthen the economic

ties between our countries and give all our people the education and training they need to succeed in this new global economy.

But democracy and prosperity are threatened where there is violence, so our third goal is to look for ways to work in partnership with the nations of Africa to prevent armed conflict. Ethnic and political violence continues to plague parts of Africa. Together we can, and we must, find solutions.

Fourth, the United States wants to play a role in preserving Africa's majestic natural beauty and wildlife and ensuring sustainable development of Africa's natural resources. The nations of the world must continue to cooperate and avoid environmental destruction and to leave a rich heritage to our children.

There are many other areas where we can progress as partners: improving nutrition and health care, eradicating diseases like AIDS and malaria, empowering women, fighting crime and

drugs, expanding civic and cultural ties across the ocean. With the 21st century fast approaching, Africa, the cradle of human civilization, is forging a vibrant future for itself with new leaders, new opportunities, and new hope. The core values that are driving Africa's renaissance—democracy, diversity, free enterprise—those are the values that the United States shares.

My wife, Hillary, my daughter, Chelsea, the entire United States delegation, and I look forward to being with you and sharing our experience with the American people.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 2:30 p.m. on March 5 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 19. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Statement on the Agreement on Internet Taxes

March 19, 1998

In my recent speech on the future of the Internet, I called for a short-term moratorium on new and discriminatory taxes that would slow down the growth of the Internet and a search for long-term solutions to the tax issues raised by electronic commerce. We cannot allow 30,000 State and local tax jurisdictions to stifle the Internet, but neither can we allow the erosion of the revenue that State and local governments need to fight crime and invest in education.

I believe that the agreement reached by groups representing State and local elected offi-

cials is an important and constructive step toward a long-term solution. I particularly want to thank Governors Leavitt and Romer for their bipartisan leadership on this important issue. I look forward to working with all parties with a stake in this issue to enact legislation this year.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Raise the Minimum Wage

March 19, 1998

Two years ago, we raised the minimum wage to reward work and help millions of Americans raise their families with dignity. With our expanded earned-income tax credit and the higher minimum wage, we said to hard-pressed working

families: If you work full-time, you should not have to raise your children in poverty. Without another minimum wage increase, too many of these families will fall through the cracks and back below the poverty line. That is wrong.