

economy that offers opportunity to all, a society rooted in responsibility, and a nation that lives as a community with each other and with the rest of the world.

Again, I want to say to all the economic team how much I appreciate the special and the difficult work we have done these last 3 months as our country has coped with the General Motors strike, which, thank goodness, has now concluded on successful terms, and with the problems in Asia and elsewhere.

Thank you very much.

President's Testimony

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Wait, wait, wait. Everybody has got a question. Let me give you the answer to all of them.

Q. You didn't hear—

The President. I know—yes, I did. I heard all of you shouting about it.

No one wants to get this matter behind us more than I do—except maybe all the rest of the American people. I am looking forward to the opportunity in the next few days of testifying. I will do so completely and truthfully. I am anxious to do it. But I hope you can understand why, in the interim, I can and should have no further comment on these matters.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:57 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa of Japan.

Statement on Senate Action on Job Training Reform Legislation July 31, 1998

For years now, I have been fighting for a “GI bill” for America’s workers to modernize job training for the economy of the next century. I appreciate the bipartisan effort in the Senate that led to passage of legislation to do just that last night. This bill will make sure that job training in America helps our people meet the demands of a rapidly changing economy. I hope the House will continue this bipartisan effort to give Americans new training opportunities designed for the cutting-edge jobs of the future.

This legislation will fundamentally reform job training by empowering individuals to learn new skills with a simple skill grant. It also consolidates the tangle of training programs; creates a network of One-Stop Career Centers; in-

creases accountability to ensure results; allows States and communities to tailor programs to locally determined needs; and ensures that business, labor, and community organizations are full partners in system design and quality assurance. It targets vocational and adult education funds to educational agencies and institutions with the greatest need, and to activities that promote program quality. It improves the vocational rehabilitation program by streamlining eligibility determination, improving State planning, and strengthening program accountability. And it includes the youth opportunity areas initiative—which was funded in last year’s appropriations process—that will create jobs and opportunity for out-of-school youth in high-poverty areas.

Statement on Congressional Action on Job Training Reform Legislation July 31, 1998

I am pleased that both Houses of Congress have now passed a comprehensive bill to give Americans new opportunities and choices to train for the jobs of the future. This bill will

modernize job training to fit the needs of today’s economy, and I appreciate the bipartisan spirit that prevailed in getting that done. Modeled on my “GI bill” for America’s workers, this new

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training bill streamlines the vast array of existing job programs and empowers individuals to learn new skills with a simple grant. It makes sure

that job training helps Americans meet the demand of a rapidly changing economy, and I look forward to signing it into law.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Bill Richardson To Be Secretary of Energy

July 31, 1998

I am very pleased that the Senate today voted unanimously to confirm Ambassador Bill Richardson as Secretary of Energy.

Ambassador Richardson brings extraordinary experience and expertise to this vital post. As a Member of the U.S. Congress representing New Mexico, an energy-rich State that is home to two Department of Energy national laboratories, he has extensive firsthand experience on issues ranging from oil and gas deregulation to

alternative energy to ensuring strong environmental standards in energy development. As U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, he has been a vigorous and articulate proponent of U.S. engagement and has successfully tackled tough negotiating challenges around the world.

I am confident that Ambassador Richardson's tremendous energy, creativity, and leadership will help secure our Nation's energy future so that America continues to prosper.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in East Hampton, New York

July 31, 1998

First of all, I thank Bruce and Claude for their wonderful hospitality in this magnificent home and the terrific dinner. Our compliments to all the—the chef and the people in the kitchen. I thank Alan and Susan for dreaming up this weekend and all of you who have come to be a part of it.

We've had a great time tonight. Since Bruce asked me if I would go in there, when we're having coffee in the other room, and answer questions, I will spare you any extended remarks. I want to ask you to think about something. I am—we're here for the Democratic Committee, and I'm very grateful to Steve Grossman and to Len Barrack and to Fran Katz and all the other people. But I was born a Democrat because I was a Depression era—my parents were and my grandparents. My grandfather, who raised me until I was 4, thought he was going to Franklin Roosevelt when he died.

But I was determined in 1991 and 1992 to be faithful to the traditional values of our country and our party, but to modernize our party

and to bring a new set of ideas to the debate in Washington, which I thought, frankly, was stale and divisive and dominated by the people in the other party who thought they had an entitlement to the White House. Some days, I think they still do. *[Laughter]* And I thought the White House belonged to all the rest of you and everybody else in the country and was the instrument of ideas consistent with our democracy to keep our country moving forward.

Now, Hillary is leading this Millennium Project, which was referred to earlier. And you probably saw that they started—Hillary and Ralph Lauren started by saving the Star-Spangled Banner the other day. And then she went to Fort McHenry, and then to Thomas Edison's home, and then to Harriet Tubman's home, and then to George Washington's Revolutionary War headquarters in New York.

But the theme of the Millennium Project is honoring the past and imagining the future. So I think about that all the time. Tom said that McKinley was the last President to come here, for example; it must be true. *[Laughter]* Now,