

and more to do to stabilize the global economy, if we expect economic growth to continue.

We all know about the economic troubles in Asia; we all see sectors of America's steel industry being overwhelmed by imports at firesale prices. We have all read the headlines about Boeing's layoffs because of the inability of Asian airlines to pay for planes which they have already ordered. We see other problems in the global economy as well. Now we're working hard to reverse the problems in Asia, to limit their reach, to stabilize the long-term system under which so many Americans and so many hundreds of millions of people around the world have benefited. But it is a sobering thought to remind us that we have to continue to work on this.

Finally, let me say, we have to continue to work on the conditions of working families here at home. Many people still cannot get affordable child care. The minimum wage should still be raised. We still have a great deal to do to stabilize the conditions of working families and to genuinely reward work in this country.

In the last session of Congress we passed an expansion of our empowerment agenda to try to bring more jobs, more incomes, more investments into poor inner-city and rural areas. We still have a great deal to do there.

So as you leave there today, and you think about Amy and these other two fine mothers and these beautiful children who are here, and the millions and millions of people whom they represent all across America, I hope you will always be proud of what you have done. But remember, this economy still is not working for everyone, and it is still living in a very turbulent international environment. So I ask you also to continue to support our efforts to deal with the challenges which still have to be met to keep the growth going, and to make sure that what we do here, so far from the lives of most Americans, actually helps them to make those lives better.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all. Thank you, Congressman Rangel. It's good to see you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Amy Hillen, a job counselor who introduced the President; working mothers Bernadette Hockaday and Rhonda Clarke; Robert Greenstein, executive director, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; and Justin Dart, Jr., advocate for the rights of disabled persons.

Statement on the International Space Station

December 4, 1998

America has taken a bold and exciting step toward a permanent U.S. presence in space with today's launch of the first U.S.-built component of the International Space Station. A passion for discovery and a sense of adventure—both deeply rooted American qualities—spur our de-

termination to explore new frontiers in space and spark our can-do spirit of technological determination. All Americans join me in congratulating the thousands of men and women in our space program that are transforming the dream of an orbiting space station into a reality.

Joint Statement From Pakistan and the United States

December 4, 1998

At the invitation of President Bill Clinton, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, visited Washington on 1-4 De-

cember 1998. The Prime Minister was accorded a warm welcome in Washington.

During a cordial and productive meeting and luncheon at the White House on December 2,

President Clinton and Prime Minister Sharif stressed the importance of the longstanding friendship and cooperative relations between Pakistan and the United States. They reaffirmed their commitment to further improve bilateral relations and addressed a number of issues of common concern.

The two leaders reviewed progress in the U.S.-Pakistan dialogue on security and non-proliferation. The President welcomed the Prime Minister's statement made at the UN General Assembly regarding adherence to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Pakistan's decision to participate constructively in the upcoming negotiations at Geneva on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, consistent with its legitimate security interests.

The President emphasized the importance the U.S. attaches to further progress on non-proliferation and peace and security in South Asia. The Prime Minister affirmed Pakistan's desire to exercise mutual restraint with India consistent with Pakistan's security interests. Both sides welcomed progress made in the U.S.-Pakistani dialogue on security and nonproliferation. The President noted that further progress would facilitate the restoration of broad-based cooperation between the United States and Pakistan.

The President reaffirmed the United States' strong interest in a stable and prosperous Pakistan and reiterated the U.S. commitment to assist Pakistan through its current economic difficulties. Both leaders endorsed the efforts of the International Monetary Fund and multilateral development banks to assist Pakistan. They agreed that an effective, expeditiously approved, and fully implemented IMF program would be a major step to help Pakistan in maintaining sustained economic growth. They acknowledged the importance of reaching a settlement between the Pakistani government and foreign energy investors and expressed hope that such an agreement would help attract fresh foreign investment.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif appreciated President Clinton's decision to waive some of the sanctions which had been imposed on Pakistan. He expressed hope that further steps would be taken to remove all remaining sanctions. In this regard, the President emphasized the need for further progress in the ongoing U.S.-Pakistani dialogue on security and non-proliferation. The Prime Minister informed President Clinton about Pakistan's conventional

defense requirements. He emphasized the need for an early and fair resolution of the F-16 issue. The President reaffirmed his commitment to such a resolution.

The two leaders reviewed the security situation in South Asia and emphasized the need to resolve all outstanding issues in the interest of peace and stability in the region. Prime Minister Sharif highlighted the centrality of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute to peace and security in South Asia and emphasized the need for an early resolution of this dispute in accordance with the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. The President emphasized the importance of the continuation of bilateral negotiations between Pakistan and India with a view to addressing the root causes of their disputes, including Kashmir, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. President Clinton reiterated his support for these negotiations and his expectation that they will bring results beneficial to both Pakistan and India. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif welcomed the interest shown by the international community in addressing the Kashmir issue and emphasized his belief that the major powers, especially the United States, need to effectively engage in facilitating a just and lasting solution to the dispute. The President said the United States was willing to lend its assistance to the bilateral dialogue if both sides requested it.

The President and the Prime Minister reaffirmed their strong opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They expressed their resolve to work closely to combat international terrorism and emphasized the need for prompt and effective action against international terrorists.

The two leaders agreed to work for an immediate end to the conflict in Afghanistan and the restoration of durable peace, stability and normalcy in the country based on the principals of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs, as well as a political reconciliation and respect for the human rights of all Afghan citizens, including women and girls and ethnic minorities. In this context, they endorsed the efforts of the United Nations "Six Plus Two" group.

The President welcomed Pakistan's efforts to combat narcotics and offered additional funds for law enforcement training. The Prime Minister appreciated the offer, which would

strengthen Pakistan's counternarcotics enforcement agencies and meet common goals, including interdiction, extraditions, and eradication.

The President and the Prime Minister agreed to remain in close contact and to continue efforts to build a strong and more broad-based relationship between the two countries. The

Prime Minister reiterated his cordial invitation already extended to President Clinton to visit Pakistan. The President said that he hoped it would be possible to visit Pakistan next year.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

The President's Radio Address

December 5, 1998

Good morning. In 1993 I took office determined to get our country moving again, to provide opportunity for all responsible, hard-working citizens, and to create the conditions of a genuine community in our country.

First, we had to get the economy going. Yesterday we got the good news that unemployment is down to 4.4 percent, the lowest in 28 years, with 17.3 million new jobs. But America needs more than jobs to really work. Our country also has to be safer. And we've worked very hard to make our streets, our schools, our neighborhoods safer places to live, work, and raise families. We've put in place a comprehensive strategy of more prevention, strong enforcement, tougher punishment. We've taken more guns and criminals off the street and put more police on the beat. Crime has dropped for 6 years in a row now, to a 25-year low.

This week America launched a new effort to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and make our streets safer. For the first time ever, the Justice Department, working with the States, conducted computerized background checks on all firearm purchases. In its first 4 days, the new national instant check system reviewed more than 100,000 prospective gun sales to make sure only law-abiding citizens took home new guns. And in just 4 days, we stopped more than 400 felons, fugitives, stalkers, and other prohibited purchasers from walking away with new guns. That's more than 100 illegal gun sales blocked each day. Who knows how many lives were saved.

But within just 24 hours after the instant checks went into effect, the National Rifle Association went to court to stop the new system. The gun lobby's goal is plain. As the NRA's

executive director himself put it this week, they want to "scale back" the Brady law.

Five years ago, as the Brady bill was nearing passage in Congress, the gun lobby spent more than a million dollars in a desperate effort to kill it. Fortunately, the good sense of Congress and the will of the American people prevailed. The gun lobby lost. But the American people won. Unfortunately, as we saw this week, they'll stop at nothing to gut the Brady law and undermine our efforts to keep more guns from falling into the wrong hands, even though we now have 5 years of evidence that it works.

We can't turn back. In these last 5 years, Brady background checks have stopped nearly a quarter of a million illegal handgun sales. We can't go back to the days when dangerous criminals walked away from stores with new guns, no questions asked.

Police, prosecutors, and the American people they protect have made it clear they want to strengthen, not weaken, the Brady law. That's why, when the new Congress goes into session next month, one of my top priorities will be to pass legislation to require a minimum waiting period before a handgun sale becomes final. This "cooling off" period will help prevent rash acts of violence and give authorities more time to stop illegal gun purchases.

I also call on Congress to ban juveniles convicted of violent crimes from owning guns for life. There's no reason why young people convicted of violent crimes should be allowed to buy guns on their 21st birthday. And I want to thank Senator Bob Dole for his recent strong public support of this idea.

Finally, we must make sure that firearms sold at gun shows are not exempt from background checks, that gun shows do not circumvent our