

Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Robert J. Higgins, president and chief operating officer, Fleet Financial Group; Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri and his wife, Jean; former welfare recipient Carlos Rosas, who intro-

duced the President; and Eli Segal, president and chief executive officer, Welfare to Work Partnership. The President also referred to Public Law 104–193, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

Statement on BP Amoco's Efforts To Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions *January 25, 1999*

I commend BP Amoco and its chief executive, John Browne, for once again demonstrating the kind of corporate leadership needed to meet two of our most pressing environmental challenges—air pollution and global warming.

Last fall British Petroleum set a new standard in corporate responsibility by voluntarily pledging to reduce dramatically its emissions of greenhouse gases. Today BP Amoco extended this pledge to cover Amoco's production facilities as well. These commitments demonstrate that leading corporations can serve their investors and their customers, even as they join us in the fight against global warming.

Also today, BP Amoco announced plans to market cleaner fuels in 40 cities around the

world to help improve local air quality. By using the latest technology to custom tailor fuels to address the unique pollution concerns of these cities, the company will help produce cleaner, healthier air for millions of people worldwide. And it is helping to build the kind of partnership between the fuel and automotive industries that will be needed to deliver clean, efficient transportation for the 21st century.

With today's announcements, BP Amoco offers further proof that a strong economy and a healthy environment go hand in hand. Working together, we can ensure that future generations breathe cleaner air, and we can protect them from the grave risks of global warming.

Remarks at the Fifth Millennium Evening at the White House *January 25, 1999*

The President. Thank you very much. I would like to take about the last four sentences of Professor Marty's talk and emblazon it in the consciousness of every human being on the face of the Earth.

This is a wonderful night. I'd like to begin by thanking the First Lady for leading our Millennium Project and by bringing these two remarkable people here. I'm terribly impressed with both of them. They took about 40 minutes, by my count, and did the last 1,000 years and the entire future. [*Laughter*] Took me an hour and 17 minutes the other night to talk about one year. [*Laughter*]

I also want to express my gratitude to both of you for not making fun of those of us who insist on ignoring the Gregorian calendar and

proclaiming the millennium next New Year's Eve at midnight. [*Laughter*]

I thought Professor Davis did a great service to all of us who are less well-read in what happened 1,000 years ago by debunking some of the popular myths. Clearly, not everyone was giving away all their possessions or cowering in churches waiting for the world to end. Maybe what was said tonight will discourage some of our fellow citizens who seem determined to buy desert land and hoard gold, bullets, and Skoal in their pickup trucks. [*Laughter*] I don't know. You laugh; this is a major source of conversation every morning in the White House here. [*Laughter*]

I also thank her for reminding us about the bold voyages of discovery, the important advances in human knowledge. I thank her for

reminding us that people were, and I quote what she said, “enmeshed in reading texts together.” Who would have thought about book clubs 1,000 years ago?

I thank her for telling us about the medieval Peace of God movement, which has a millennial connection to us in what has been going on in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa. I thank her, too, for reminding us that ordinary people, even a long time ago, can make a difference to a good end.

I thank Professor Marty for his fundamental insights, for reminding us to be both hopeful and humble. He asked all these questions. I enjoyed Professor Hawking being here and trying to deal with all these questions of time: how we measure time; why do we care so much about the millennium, or a century, or a year, or our birthdays and anniversaries, for that matter? We have to have some way of organizing our thoughts and our plans against the mysteries of time and timelessness. We have to find some way of explaining our poor efforts to fulfill our own destinies and to live out our small piece of God’s design. Most of us, sooner or later, come to the conclusion that life really is a journey, not a destination, until the end. But we all still need a few benchmarks along the way to get there.

I thank them both for ending on a note of hope and for recognizing that you cannot have hope without faith—for believers, faith in God—and in the end you cannot practice hope without charity or love.

One of the dilemmas I constantly confront as President is the necessity of believing in the idea of progress, with the certainty of man’s and woman’s constant demonstration of making the same old mistakes over and over again, millennium after millennium, in new and different guises, and the certainty that perfection cannot be achieved in this life.

I think there is a way to reconcile the idea of progress with the frailty of humanity. I think that you can make a case that, on balance, the world is a better place today than it was 1,000 years ago for people who have had a chance to drink fully of life’s possibilities. I think you can make a case that we are obliged, all of us as human beings, to try to extend that opportunity to more and more of our fellow citizens on this small planet. And Mr. Goldin’s successors in interest will be taking us into outer space

to see if we can find some others somewhere else to worry about 1,000 years from now.

We thank Professors Davis and Marty for giving us a chance to make some sense of the millennium and for reminding us, in the end, that the only meaning it will have is the meaning we give it in our own lives.

Thank you very much.

Now, I’d like to ask Ellen Lovell to take over the floor and turn over the floor to all of you and to the thousands who are joining us, thanks to technology, for some questions.

Ellen.

[At this point, Ms. Lovell, Director, White House Millennium Council, and the First Lady led the question-and-answer portion of the evening. The following question from the Internet was directed to the President.]

The First Lady. This is from Dr. Joseph W. Epstein, from Monroe, New York, and it’s for the President: Should the dawning of this new millennium see a greater participation of scientists in studies aimed at preserving our environment and recapturing what has been lost? Government and business incentives would be required to encourage scientists in these areas. Hopefully, a person who recaptures a rain forest could receive as much acclaim as the batter of ever more home runs. Thank you. [Laughter]

The President. Well, the short answer to his question is, obviously, yes. If you look at—one of the things I was going to say in my closing remarks I’ll just say now to respond to this question, because we don’t have enough time for everybody to ask a question, for us all to have a conversation. I wish we did.

I think something that would be helpful for all of you is if, when you go home tonight, before you go to bed, if you would take out a piece of paper and a pencil or a pen, and write down the three things that you’re most worried about, with the dawn of the new millennium, and the three things that you’re most hopeful about. And then ask yourself what, if anything, can you do about either one?

Now, I think, with the growth of the world’s population and with the emergence of a new economy based more on ideas and information and technology and less on industrial patterns of production, we still see an enormous destruction of the world’s resources. And the most serious problem is the problem of climate change, global warming.

The rain forest is important for a lot of reasons—he mentioned the rain forest—because an enormous percentage of the oxygen generated from non-ocean sources comes from rain forests; because well over half the plant and animal life on the globe lives in the rain forests; and therefore, the answers to some of my most profoundly important medical questions lie in the rain forest, quite apart from our responsibility to preserve it just for what it is.

So we have put a lot of emphasis on trying to create more financial and other incentives for people to deal with climate change and global warming, to try to help to save the rain forests. And I have, for years, kind of brooded about the prospect of having a global alliance between governments, chemical companies, and others that would have an interest in it, in joining together, in effect, to pay to save the rain forests. The Government of Brazil actually has a program there where they try to invest and set aside large tracts of rain forest land.

But I think one of the things that is going to happen in the next century is that we will move very close to the limits of our body's ability to live. I think you're going to see an exponential increase in life expectancy in the next 30 years or so. And to go back to what you said, I think that it's going to aggravate the underclass problem because you have, in countries where the health system is breaking down, a decline in life expectancy. Now, where that's going on, there will be more and more pressure to develop more and more scientific discoveries and also to more democratically spread it and to lift people out of poverty. I think that there has to be an enormous amount of money and incentives and time and thought given to how a lot of countries can skip a stage of economic development that would otherwise require them to destroy what remains of the world's natural resources and put us in a position where we could never solve this global warming problem.

And that's why I signed the Kyoto treaty on climate change, why I have pushed it so hard. I think it can be the organizing principle to get to the objective that our questioner asks. Unfortunately, my successors will have to do a lot of the work, but I hope we'll at least have laid the foundation for it, because it will be one of the most significant public questions of the next, not just the next century, the next couple of decades. It would be on my list of three.

[*The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. The President then made closing remarks.*]

The President. Well, I will be very brief. First of all, I think we should thank our speakers again. They were magnificent. [Applause]

Secondly, I would like to say that I think we all leave here feeling that we now have more questions than we did when we showed up, which means they succeeded. I would just like to leave you with this one thought. You all know that I am a walking apostle of hope and progress. The question is, how do you pursue it without arrogance, with appropriate humility, and without a definition that is too narrow?

Reverend Jackson asked a question about Africa, and Dr. Marty gave a great rejoinder about how we had to be more concerned because there were more and more Christians growing in Africa and fewer elsewhere. I would like to ask you to think about another thing.

Our whole sense of time and marking time is so rooted in the development of our various monotheistic philosophies, Christianity for me and for many of you, or Judaism or Islam. How do you think this whole discussion would sound tonight to a serious Buddhist or a serious Confucian? How would we argue with them about the idea of progress? How would they argue with us about the idea of the immutable? How can we reconcile the two? Because in the end, that's what religious faith does. It gives you a sense of the timeless and a sense of what you're supposed to do with your time.

And I just—this has been thrilling for me. But I hope all of you will remember the question I asked you. And if you feel so inclined later, feel free to write to me about the things that you're most worried about and the most hopeful about, and what you think I ought to spend my time between now and the millennium doing for you and the rest of the world.

Thank you. Join us in the dining room for a reception. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The White House Millennium Evening program began at 7:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The lecture, entitled "The Meaning of the Millennium," was presented by Natalie Zemon Davis, professor emeritus, Princeton University, and Martin E. Marty, director, the Public Religion Project. In his remarks, the President referred to physicist Stephen W. Hawking

and civil rights leader Jesse Jackson. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, Pro-

fessor Davis, and Professor Marty, as well as the question-and-answer portion of the evening. The lecture was cybercast on the Internet.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for Pope John Paul II in St. Louis, Missouri

January 26, 1999

Your Holiness; Archbishop Rigali; Archbishop Montalvo; Governor Carnahan; Mayor Harmon; County Executive Westfall; Ambassador Boggs; Members of Congress; members of the Cabinet; our visitors from the Vatican; my fellow Americans:

Your Holiness, on behalf of all of us gathered here today, indeed, on behalf of all the people of our beloved Nation, we welcome you back to America. Your return brings joy not only to the Catholic faithful but to every American who has heard your message of peace and charity toward all God's children. And we thank you for first going to Mexico and for reaching out to all the people of the Americas.

We greet you, and we thank you. For 20 years, you have lifted our spirits and touched our hearts. For 20 years, you have challenged us to think of life not in terms of what we acquire for ourselves but in terms of what we give of ourselves.

This is your 7th visit to the United States, your 85th visit abroad as the Bishop of Rome. Through it all, you have given of yourself with a boundless physical energy which can only find its source in limitless faith. You have come in the final year of a century that has seen much suffering but which ends with great hope for freedom and reconciliation. It is a moment anticipated by countless prayers, brought forward by countless hands, and shaped very much by you, Holy Father, and your 20-year pilgrimage.

We honor you for helping to lead a revolution of values and spirit in central Europe and the former Soviet Union, freeing millions to live by conscience, not coercion, and freeing all of us from the constant fear of nuclear war. We honor you for standing for human dignity, human rights, and religious freedom and for helping people to find the courage to stand up for themselves, from Africa to Asia to the Western Hemisphere.

We honor you for your work to bring peace to nations and peoples divided by old hatreds and suspicions, from Bosnia and Kosovo, to central Africa, to Indonesia, to the Middle East, even to our own communities. People still need to hear your message that all are God's children, all have fallen short of His glory, all the injustices of yesterday cannot excuse a single injustice today.

Holy Father, we are moved by your desire to mark the new millennium with a journey to Jerusalem, to bring mercy and reconciliation to all those who believe in one God, in the holy place where all our faiths began.

Your Holiness, we honor you, too, because you have never let those of us who enjoy the blessings of prosperity, freedom, and peace forget our responsibilities. On your last visit to the United States you called on us to build a society truly worthy of the human person, a society in which none are so poor they have nothing to give and none are so rich they have nothing to receive. Today you visit an America that is thriving but also striving, striving to include those who do not yet share in our prosperity at home and striving to put a human face on the global economy by advancing the dignity of work, the rights of women, the well-being of children, and the help of our common environment.

You will see an America that is not simply living for today but working for future generations, an America working harder to be what you have asked us to be, an example of justice and civic virtues, freedom fulfilled, and goodness at home and abroad.

The Catholic Church in America is helping all of us to realize that vision. Here in St. Louis, Catholic charities are helping families conquer violence and drug abuse, helping people in need to find work and to finance their first homes, helping refugees from war-torn lands to build