

won't hurt in trying to get more Americans interested in Ghana, going to Ghana, and contributing to Ghana's future. I thought it was quite a clever idea myself. [Laughter]

Thank you very much.

President Rawlings. No, no, no. Hold on, Mr. President. [Laughter] On one condition—that if you fall foul of the laws and regulations of my country, the—what do you call it?—the judiciary, the police, and the laws of my country will take their course without the American Government attempting to intervene, to say, this is a citizen of my country.

President Clinton. I think that's what the rule is.

President Rawlings. Thank you, sir.

President Clinton. There's a whole lot of law on that. I think that's the rule.

Thank you.

Q. I want to say to you something.

President Rawlings. Yes, sir.

Q. You know, we the people—

President Rawlings. Yes sir.

Q. —of African descent that are Latino, are ready, willing, and able to cooperate with

Africa—[inaudible]—and our experience, the President of the Dominican Republic, and I, as a Cuban-American, reside here for—[inaudible]—are ready and willing to help you in the African initiative. And I guarantee you with my friend of the Republican Party is going to give me 100 percent support for the initiatives of the President of Africa—[inaudible]. So you have the cooperation of the Latinos, like the Jewish have for their people in Israel.

President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 169th news conference began at 2:35 p.m. in the Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to David E. Kendall, the President's personal attorney; President Laurent Desire Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. President Rawlings referred to Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Richard Kwame Peprah of Ghana.

Radio Remarks on Fighting Medicare Fraud

February 24, 1999

We need your help to fight Medicare fraud. Most health care providers are honest, but a few bad apples threaten the system. You can help us spot those bad apples by checking your Medicare records carefully. If you see questionable charges or services, call your doctor's office first, then call your Medicare representative. If

you still have questions, call us at 1-800-HHS-TIPS. Fighting Medicare fraud is everybody's responsibility.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 3:45 p.m. in the Oval Office for later broadcast as a public service announcement.

Statement on Fighting Medicare Fraud

February 24, 1999

I am pleased to join the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice, and the AARP in launching the new "Who Pays? You Pay" campaign, a new initiative to combat fraud and abuse in the Medicare program.

This new campaign is another step towards ending the fraudulent practices that rob taxpayers and threaten the future of the Medicare Trust Fund. Today we are partnering with beneficiaries to teach them how to detect Medicare

fraud. We have worked with, and we will continue to work with, those in the provider community who are equally committed to eliminating health care fraud.

We have a long-standing commitment to crack down on fraud, waste, and abuse, and I am proud to say that since 1993, the administration's efforts have saved taxpayers more than \$38 billion, with health care fraud convictions increasing by more than 240 percent. The partnership between providers, the law enforcement community, and beneficiaries created by this ini-

tiative is a critical step towards ending waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare program. Physicians, nurses, hospitals, and nursing homes know that it is in everyone's best interest to weed out the bad-apple providers who threaten our ability to provide high-quality and affordable health care for older Americans.

I congratulate Secretary Shalala, Attorney General Reno, and the AARP for their commitment to preserve the Medicare program and ensure the provision of high-quality, affordable health care to our senior citizens.

Statement on the Resignation of Paul Begala as Counselor to the President *February 24, 1999*

Paul Begala has been a close and trusted adviser since I first sought the Presidency. I value his advice; I appreciate his loyalty; and I treasure his friendship. I am grateful that he has used his razor-sharp mind and wit in the service of core values and the common good. Paul has given long hours to the service of his country,

and he has more than earned the right to seek new horizons, through teaching and writing, and to spend more time with his three young children. I expect he will continue to be a powerful and persuasive voice for the cause we share in years to come. Hillary and I wish him, Diane, and the children all the best.

Remarks at the State Dinner Honoring President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana

February 24, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. I want to welcome President Rawlings and Mrs. Rawlings and the entire Ghanaian delegation, along with the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, and our other distinguished guests to the White House. Hillary and I are delighted to see you all here.

There was so much interest and enthusiasm about this dinner that we had to move it from the dining room into the East Room. And you might be interested to know that it was in this room that Thomas Jefferson met with Meriwether Lewis to plan the great Lewis and Clark expedition, which explored the American Continent. It is fitting that we are having this dinner here, almost 200 years later, to chart a new century and to explore our relationship with Ghana and with Africa.

It was no accident that Ghana was our first stop, our gateway to Africa, when Hillary and I and our delegation, the Members of Congress, the administration, and citizens traveled to Africa last year. Mr. President, in the last decade, under your leadership, Ghana has made great strides toward fulfilling President Nkrumah's vision of a proud, strong country.

In important ways, it may even have surpassed that vision. Starting our African journey in a democratic country with a growing economy, a powerful commitment to tolerance at home and peace around the world allowed us to highlight for all Americans the progress that Africa has made and the promise of our future together. It allowed us to reaffirm for all of Africa that the United States is proud and determined to build a partnership of mutual respect with African nations which share our dreams of a better