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OF THE
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Foreword

As 1999 opened, and we marked the last year of the 20th century, Americans took stock of our blessings. And they were many. We had the longest peacetime expansion in our Nation's history, nearly 18 million new jobs, low inflation, peace at home, and strength abroad.

We looked ahead to the next century and sought to meet its new challenges. We announced grants that will bring 30,000 new teachers into our Nation's classrooms to prepare the leaders of tomorrow. We proposed the Medicare Modernization plan to secure Medicare for the next two decades and offer our citizens affordable prescription drug coverage. And I asked the Congress to commit 60 percent of our budget surplus to Social Security for the next 15 years to put it on a sound footing for our generation and for those who follow us.

Overseas, America stood firm with those who stand for peace—and against the forces of aggression and hatred. Our NATO Alliance celebrated its 50th anniversary, admitting three new members—the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. With our NATO allies, we defeated ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and kept the peace in that troubled corner of Europe. Together, we put the integration of the Balkans into Europe high on the international agenda. And our relationship with Russia stood up to challenges as Russia helped make and keep the peace in Kosovo.

We helped Israelis and Palestinians reach new accords at the Wye River Plantation, in Maryland, revitalizing the Middle East peace process. Northern Ireland installed its first institutions of self-government, the result of free and open elections and power-sharing agreements.

Here at home, we celebrated one of the most important achievements of our century, and looked back on our progress, when we honored Rosa Parks with a Congressional Gold Medal for her courageous leadership in the civil rights movement. Looking ahead to the future, I created the President's Initiative for One America to promote racial reconciliation in the century ahead.

We were also faced, again and again, with the tragedies and difficulties of our modern age. As a Nation, we struggled to make sense of the horrific shootings at Columbine High School; and we pressed to pass commonsense gun safety legislation to make such tragedies less likely.

In my State of the Union address, the last of the 20th century, I reminded Americans that, 100 years from now, America will end a 21st century shaped in so many ways by the decisions we make here and now. "Let it be said of us then," I said, "that we were thinking not only of our time, but of their time; that we reached as high as our ideals; that we put aside our divisions and found a new hour of healing and hopefulness; that we joined together to serve the land we love."

William Clinton

Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the 42d President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period January 1–June 30, 1999. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against a tape recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed full-text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes, and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. That coverage provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary. Also included are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed full-text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Hoover, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of Frances D. McDonald, Managing Editor, Office of the Federal Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit, Gwen H. Estep, Chief. The Chief Editor of this book was Karen Howard Ashlin, assisted by Brad Brooks, Anna Glover, Margaret A. Hemmig, Maxine Hill, Alfred Jones, Jennifer S. Mangum, Melanie L. Marcec, Lisa N. Morris, Michael J. Sullivan, and Karen A. Thornton.

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Raymond A. Mosley
Director of the Federal Register

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Archivist of the United States

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Administration of William J. Clinton

1999

The President's Radio Address *January 2, 1999*

Good morning. As we celebrate this last New Year of the 20th century, I want to speak to you about the debt we owe to those who make every season a season of peace for America, the men and women of our Armed Forces.

Almost 1.4 million Americans are serving our country on active duty today. Nearly a quarter million of them are overseas, doing what needs to be done as no one else can, whether that means thwarting Iraq's ambition to threaten its neighbors or the world with weapons of mass destruction, or standing watch in Korea on the last fortified frontier of the cold war, or safeguarding the peace in Bosnia, or helping our neighbors in Central America or the Caribbean dig out from natural disasters, or simply giving us the confidence that America will be forever strong, safe, and secure.

We rely on our Armed Forces because this is still a dangerous world. We're proud of them because they are the best in the world. And we remember today what makes them the best, not just the quality of our weapons but the quality of our people in uniform. Their skill, dedication, and professionalism are unstinting, unquestioned, and unmatched.

When we give our service men and women a mission, there is a principle we must keep in mind: We should never ask them to do what they are not equipped to do, and we should always equip them to do what we ask. The more we ask, the greater our responsibility to give our troops the support and training and equipment they need. As Commander in Chief, I have no higher duty than this: to give our troops the tools to take on new missions, while maintaining their readiness to defend our country and defeat any adversary; to make sure they can deploy away from home, knowing their families have the quality of life they deserve; and to make certain their service is not only rewarding but well rewarded, from recruitment to retirement.

I'm confident our military is ready to fulfill this mission today. Our troops continue to exe-

cute complex and dangerous missions far from home with flawless precision, as we've just seen in the Persian Gulf. Our challenge is to retain the ability to do this as we carry out our entire defense strategy.

For this reason, we asked Congress to add \$1.1 billion to this year's budget to keep our readiness razor-sharp and to improve recruitment. And Congress did.

I've also worked with our military leaders to ensure their highest readiness priorities are reflected in our budget request for the year 2000. The budget I will submit to Congress for next year will provide an increase of over \$12 billion for defense readiness and modernization through a combination of new spending and budgetary savings. This is the start of a 6-year effort that will represent the first long-term sustained increase in defense spending in a decade.

We want our Armed Forces to remain ready to deploy rapidly in any crisis, and that is what this effort will assure, by funding joint exercises, flight training, badly needed spare parts, and recruiting for critical positions. We want our forces to remain the best equipped in the world into the next century, and that is what this effort will assure, by paying for the next generation of ships, planes, and weapons systems. It will also enable our military to play its part in meeting emerging threats to our security such as terrorism and proliferation. It will help us to do right by our troops by upgrading and replacing aging equipment, barracks, and family housing. It will include a military pay raise of 4.4 percent, the largest since 1982, a restructuring of paid reward performance, and the reinstatement of military retirement benefits that were taken away over a decade ago.

We must undertake this effort today so that our Nation will remain strong and secure tomorrow. We must do it as well because we have the most sacred obligation to those who accept dangers and hardships on our behalf. They are our sons and daughters, husbands and wives, friends and neighbors, from cities and towns

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all over America. We must give them the support they need to keep doing their jobs well and to keep coming home to America, safe and sound.

Thanks for listening, and happy New Year.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:55 a.m. on December 30, 1998, in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 2, 1999. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 31, 1998, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Decline in the National Murder Rate *January 2, 1999*

The Justice Department study on homicide trends released today shows that America's murder rate has fallen to its lowest level in 30 years, with much of the decline coming from the drop in youth gun homicides. Our cities are now the safest they have been in a generation. With the help of the '94 crime act, cities have replaced gang and gun violence with more police and tougher gun enforcement, and their efforts are paying off in dramatic decreases in homicides. A variety of studies show that crime, and especially homicide, should continue to decline into

the new year, and that is good news for Americans in 1999. But we have more to do, and we must stick to our plan. We must finish the job of putting 100,000 more police on our streets, putting tougher laws on our books, and providing better opportunities for our young people.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 31, 1998, but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m. on January 2, 1999.

Remarks Announcing a Long-Term Health Care Initiative *January 4, 1999*

The President. Thank you, Patricia, for your fine statement and for the power of your example. And we appreciate you and your husband being here today and the work that you're doing.

We thank Congressman Hoyer for bringing his constituent here today. And we welcome Senator Reid, Senator Breaux, Senator Specter, Senator Dodd, Senator Wyden, Congressmen Brown, Cardin, Moran, and Cummings. And I'd also like to say, Senator Mikulski has a special interest in this issue and wanted to be here today, but could not.

You know, this new year gives us all a sense of making a fresh start, a sense of being able to think anew. It should also give us a sense of rededication. I'm delighted to see here, along with the members of our administration, Secretary Rubin, Secretary Shalala, and Janice Lachance, so many advocates not only for seniors but for the disabled.

We need to be looking ahead at the issue that Patricia Darlak described so clearly and powerfully, to the challenges that the new century will present us, because there will be many, many, many more stories like hers. That is the fundamental reality. Already there are millions of people out there helping to care for an aged or disabled loved one, but there will be many more like her in the 21st century.

Now, that is, for those of us who are part of the baby boom generation, what we would call a high-class problem, because we will be "them"—"they"—we will be "they." Is that the right—but the baby boom is about to become a senior boom, and like the baby boom, the senior boom will change the face of America. During the next 30 years, 76 million baby boomers will join the ranks of the retired. The number of elderly Americans will double by 2030; by the middle of the next century, the

average American will live to an age of 82. That's 6 years longer than the average life expectancy today.

Now, as I said, those of us who hope to be in that group consider that a high-class problem. We also are very encouraged that people are living stronger, healthier lives. We are encouraged that disabled Americans have more options to live fully and healthily for a longer period of time. We are encouraged that all these folks are proving that retirement can be a beginning as well as an end. We see all kinds of people learning new ideas, taking up new work, doing new community services, traveling and going places they never would have imagined before.

But we know that with aging, inevitably, come the infirmities of age. Nearly half the people over 85, one of the fastest growing segments of our population, need help with everyday, basic tasks—eating, dressing, going to a doctor. We cannot expect that every older American will be able to fend for himself or herself. And the real question is, what are our obligations to help every American get the care that is appropriate for each individual case?

Millions require the care that can only be provided in a nursing home. But millions more choose to remain at home with family and friends. Indeed, the elderly are remaining at home in record number. The same is true of people with disabilities. Today, millions and millions of households are caring for elderly relatives or even for neighbors. They represent the best of America, fulfilling a family obligation often unspoken but deeply resonant in the American character.

Providing long-term care at home is more and more a common choice, but as you have just heard, it is rarely an easy one. Since this kind of care is almost never covered by private insurance or Medicare, out-of-pocket expenses can be staggering. So, too, are the professional costs. Caregivers who hold jobs outside the home—that is, the vast majority—may have to take unpaid leave or work fewer hours to fulfill their responsibilities. In countless ways, caregiving is vital, meaningful work. But as you have heard, it can also be very stressful.

The First Lady has mentioned some of the things we have worked to do to ease the burden of families: improving nursing homes, strengthening Medicare, making Medicaid more flexible.

But more will be asked of us in the 21st century, and more must be done.

Today we announce a critical new initiative to give care to the caregivers, to help Americans provide long-term care for aging, ailing, and disabled loved ones. The size of the senior boom demands it. The needs of our disabled population require it. The length of our lives makes it more important than ever and so does the sacrifice of American families who put the well-being of their relatives above their own.

This is a complicated challenge that requires a range of responses. Therefore, to improve long-term care in America and to give it a priority and support these families, we proposed to do four things: first, to provide a long-term care tax credit, \$1,000 for people with long-term care needs or for the families that shelter them. It is far better to devote this money to help keep the elderly and the disabled at home than to spend the same amount to pay for them to live away from home. And if it makes it possible for more people to stay home, it may well be cheaper, too. Our parents worked and saved and sacrificed for us in our youth; adult children are now working, saving, and sacrificing for their parents in old age. It is the cycle of life and one we should recognize and reward.

This targeted tax cut of \$1,000, paid for in our balanced budget, would meet the individual needs of individual families, supplementing the care they already provide, empowering them to decide what to do and how to do it best. It would help to offset the direct cost of long-term care, like home health visits and adult day care, as well as the indirect costs, like unpaid leave some caregivers must take. The care they provide is invaluable, but we can show that it is valued by our society.

Second, we should create a family caregiver support program, a new national network to support people caring for older Americans. In decades past, families could do little for ailing relatives but give them shelter and love. But today, because of advances in science, caregivers tend to everything from dialysis to depression, preparing intravenous meals and insulin injections. This initiative enables States to create one-stop shops, places caregivers can access the resources of the community, find technical guidance, obtain respite and adult day care services. This is especially important for those families who are thousands of miles away from their loved ones but who still want to help. These families

want to provide the best possible care. We want to do everything in our power to help them.

Third, we must educate Medicare beneficiaries about long-term care options. Medicare does not cover most kinds of long-term care, so it is important that beneficiaries understand their alternatives. This initiative helps to answer essential questions efficiently: What are my choices; what should I look for in private long-term care insurance policies? By launching a national education campaign, we can help to ensure people get the answers they need when they need them and the quality care they deserve.

Fourth, I am proposing that the Federal Government, as the Nation's largest employer, use its market leverage to set an example, offering private long-term care insurance to Federal employees. By promoting high-quality, affordable care, we can encourage more people and more companies to invest in long-term care coverage. We can help more employees in every part of our economy to prepare for the future.

There's no single solution to the challenges of caregiving. But together, these initiatives represent a powerful first step to force the kind of changes we need in our society. To fulfill our fundamental obligations to older Americans and people with disabilities, we must act together, members of both parties, both branches of Government, putting progress above partisanship. I believe there is an enormous amount of interest in and support for this initiative in the Congress, and I thank the Members who have come here today.

I hope that the Congress will do many things on this front in the coming session. I hope these initiatives will pass. Senator Breaux will soon give us a Medicare Reform Commission report; I hope we will save Medicare for the 21st century. I hope we will use the surplus to save Social Security for the 21st century. All of these things will help to strengthen America as we go forward.

The senior boom is one of the central challenges of the coming century. I can tell you that, as literally the oldest of the baby boomers, those of us born right after World War II, one of the central worries of my generation is that, as we age, we will impose unsustainable burdens on our children and undermine their ability to raise our grandchildren. We must use this time now to do everything in our power not only to lift the quality of life and the security of

the aged and disabled today, and the baby boom aged and disabled, but to make sure that we do not impose that intolerable burden on our children.

I have asked the Vice President—who will speak with us, along with Mrs. Gore, in just a moment—to conduct a series of forums around the country on this initiative, to solicit other ideas and reach out to people and to build grassroots support. We want to hear from the people of the country about how we can help to meet the long-term care needs of their loved ones.

Again, let me thank all the people in the administration who worked on this, the Members of Congress who are here, the members of the aging and disability community who are here. And I thank you, Patricia Darlak, for your moving statement. Hillary and I have had our own experiences with long-term care of our parents—in my case, our grandparents. We have seen the Vice President and Mrs. Gore deal with the same challenge. So this is a personal thing that I think we feel very deeply.

I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to the Vice President, because he's had such an interest in our family caregiving program. He is now going to speak to us from California. He's coming up on the satellite, along with Mrs. Gore, and he's got some folks with him who know quite a bit about this.

Good morning, Mr. Vice President. The floor is yours. Good morning, Tipper.

[At this point, Vice President Al Gore and his wife, Tipper, made brief remarks by satellite.]

The President. Thank you very much. I want to thank the Vice President and Tipper, and also all the folks that are out there with them in California, for the example they are setting and the initiatives that are being made in California. I know the Vice President is about to go to the new Governor's inauguration out there. You ought to take the opportunity to put in a plug for what we're doing there. I'm sure you will. [Laughter]

Ladies and gentlemen, let me say again how grateful I am for all the people who worked on this proposal, for the advocates for the elderly and the disabled who are here, for the very large representation from Congress. And thank you again for the passion and the commitment that you manifested in your statement and for having the courage to come here and tell us

about your situation. I hope it will help to change the future of America.

God bless you, and happy New Year. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:36 a.m. in the Grand Foyer on the State Floor at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to caregiver Patricia Darlak, who introduced the President, and her husband, Dennis.

Statement on the Launch of the New European Currency *January 4, 1999*

We welcome the launch of the euro, an historic step that 11 nations in Europe have taken toward a more complete Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The United States has long been an advocate for European integration, and we admire the steady progress that Europe has demonstrated in taking the often difficult budget

decisions that make this union possible. A strong and stable Europe, with open markets and robust growth, is good for America and for the world. A successful economic union that contributes to a dynamic Europe is clearly in our long-term interests.

Remarks on the Zero Tolerance for Drugs in Prison Initiative *January 5, 1999*

Thank you very much. Let me begin by just expressing my appreciation to all who have spoken and to all who are here for the years and years and years of commitment you have manifested in this endeavor. I thank my good friend Senator Leahy and Congressman Rangel. I thank General Reno and General McCaffrey for making it possible for us to continue to emphasize these things and to actually make progress, for being both practical and idealistic.

Thank you, Mayor Griffin, for what you said and for what you're doing and for bringing your police chief, Chief Hoover, here with you.

I want to say, obviously, a special word of appreciation to Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who has literally redefined what it means to be a Lieutenant Governor—I would hate to succeed her as Lieutenant Governor of Maryland—[*laughter*—for her indefatigable energy. I thank the others here from Maryland who are involved in her endeavor.

I'd also like to say a special word of welcome to Judge Joel Tauber and all the others who are here from the drug courts throughout America. I'll have more to say about them in a moment, but I am especially grateful for their endeavors.

Six years ago, as has already been said, our country was at peace, but too many of our communities were at war. Illegal drugs were ravaging cities on both coasts and the American heartland in between. Crack and methamphetamine use were at near record levels. Drug dealers controlled whole neighborhoods and thought nothing of opening fire on passing police cars. Many communities lived in terror; many children feared walking down the street.

I actually met, in a school in California—I'll never forget this—with a group of children who were drilled on how to jump out of their desk and hit the floor if they were subject to drive-by shootings. It had a searing impact on me. One of the reasons I ran for President was to give those kids their futures back. And all of you have done a lot to give them their futures back, and I'm very grateful to you.

In every successive year, I have proposed a larger antidrug budget. In 1999, we had a 30-percent increase just between then and 1996, even as we produced the first balanced budget in a generation. Under General McCaffrey's leadership, we have put these resources to good use: unprecedented new tools for domestic enforcement; unprecedented new campaigns to

convince young people to stay off drugs—I hope you saw one of our ads on the football game last night, if you watched it—unprecedented new efforts to stem the flow of drugs across our borders; unprecedented new efforts to stop the revolving door between the prison and the street.

As you've heard from Attorney General Reno and General McCaffrey, this strategy is working. We do have the lowest crime rate in 25 years. Drug use is falling. Finally—thank goodness—drug use is beginning to fall among our young people.

But the crime rate is still too high. The streets are still too violent. There is still too much drug use, especially in our prisons. The mayor of Reno whispered to me when Kathleen was talking that Mayor Daley told him it was easier to get drugs in the Illinois penitentiary than it was on the streets of Chicago. I say this not to criticize the Illinois penitentiary; that's a statement that could be made in more than half the States in this country. So we still have a lot to do. There is no better way to start than to help our prisoners break clean from drugs.

Today we release a new study from the Department of Justice that offers more convincing evidence that drug use stokes all kinds of crime, from property crimes like burglary, auto theft, to violent crimes like assault and murder. It shows that one in six offenders landed in prison for a crime committed just to get money for drugs, that nearly a third of prisoners were using drugs at the time they committed their crimes, that more than 80 percent of prisoners have a history of drug use. And when you consider that—plus the breathtaking statistic that Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend gave us about the volume of heroin and cocaine used by people who are in the criminal justice system—it is clear to us that if we are going to continue to reduce the rate of crime, we have to do something to avoid releasing criminals with their dangerous drug habits intact.

As you've heard from previous speakers, we've already done a lot to expand drug testing and treatment in Federal prisons and to encourage States to do the same. But today we want to make a dramatic leap forward. The balanced budget I will submit to Congress will contain a \$215 million zero-tolerance drug program designed to promote drug supervision, our Nation's most comprehensive effort ever to test and treat

not only criminals in prison but also those on probation and parole.

To inmates in every State, we want to send a message: If you stay on drugs, you must stay behind bars. To probationers and parolees, we want to send a message: If you want to keep your freedom, you have to keep free of drugs.

Through this initiative, we will also expand our efforts to help communities build and administer drug courts. Charlie Rangel mentioned Attorney General Reno's efforts as a young prosecutor. Many years ago, long before I ever thought I would be standing here as President, because my brother-in-law was a public defender in the Miami drug court that the Attorney General set up, I used to go and visit it in the eighties. I went three times; one time I stayed for the whole session of court, almost all day. I have never had a more exhilarating experience in a courtroom in my life, including the sessions of the United States Supreme Court I have attended, because finally I saw something that I thought could actually work to change people's lives, to restore people to productive use in society, to reduce the crime rate, to make people safer, and to stop the policy of warehousing people in ever-increasing numbers in order to keep our streets safe.

When I took office, there were just a handful of these drug courts in operation, including the one that the Attorney General launched in Miami. Today, there are more than 400. If our budget proposal is approved by Congress, we can move to have more than 1,000 up and running by the end of next year. That is a worthy goal. It will change America for the better. It will give a lot of people their lives back and make our streets safer.

I'm also proud to say that on top of these proposals, we will free up another \$120 million for drug-free prison initiatives this year, funds to help States boost testing and treatment, funds to purge their prisons of drugs with advanced new technologies.

At the end of this century, we've made great progress in our efforts to free our children and our communities from drugs and crime. As we begin a new century and a new millennium, we have an enormous opportunity to finish the job, to harness all the resources of the criminal justice system—our courts, our prosecutors, our prisons, our probation officers, our police—to break the drug habits of prisoners and people on parole and probation. We have to break this

cycle. We have to give all these people a chance to be drug-free and to be productive citizens again. It is the only way we can ever, in the end, assure our children the future they deserve.

Thank you all for what you do. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:04 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his re-

marks, he referred to Mayor Jeff Griffin and Chief of Police Jerry Hoover of Reno, NV; Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; Judge Jeffrey S. Tauber, president, National Association of Drug Court Professionals; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL; and Hugh Rodham, the President's brother-in-law.

Statement on United States Policy Toward Cuba *January 5, 1999*

Last March, in the wake of Pope John Paul's historic visit to Cuba, I authorized measures designed to ease the plight of the Cuban people and help them prepare for a democratic future. The restoration of direct passenger flights, resumption of family remittances, expansion of people-to-people contacts, and increases in the sale of medicines since then have had a positive impact. They demonstrate the United States' compassion for the Cuban people, our strong interest in building bonds between the citizens of our nations, and our determination to provide the people of Cuba with hope in their struggle against a system that for four decades has denied them even basic human rights.

Building on the success of the measures I announced last March, I am today authorizing additional steps to reach out to the Cuban people:

- Expansion of remittances by allowing any U.S. resident (not only those with families in Cuba) to send limited funds to individual Cuban families as well as to organizations independent of the government.
- Expansion of people-to-people contact through two-way exchanges among academics, athletes, scientists, and others, including streamlining the approval process for such visits.
- Authorization of the sale of food and agricultural inputs to independent non-governmental entities, including religious groups and Cuba's emerging private sector, such as family restaurants and private farmers.
- Authorization of charter passenger flights to cities in Cuba other than Havana and from some cities in the United States other than

Miami in order to facilitate family reunification for persons living outside those cities.

—An effort to establish direct mail service to Cuba, as provided for in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992.

At the same time, we are taking steps to increase the flow of information to the Cuban people and others around the world, by strengthening Radio and TV Marti and launching new public diplomacy programs in Latin America and Europe to keep international attention focused on the need for change in Cuba. The United States will continue to urge the international community to do more to promote respect for human rights and democratic transition in Cuba.

I am also pleased to announce that I intend to nominate Mr. Jose "Pepe" Collado and Ms. Avis Lavelle as members of the Advisory Board for Cuba Broadcasting. I further intend to designate Mr. Collado as Chairman upon confirmation by the Senate. This important advisory body has been without a Chairman since the death of Jorge Mas Canosa more than a year ago. We are processing other nominations and, in cooperation with congressional leaders, will continue to name members of this bipartisan board.

These steps are designed to help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban Government. They are consistent with our policy of keeping pressure on the regime for democratic change—through the embargo and vigorous diplomatic initiatives—while finding ways to reach out to the Cuban people through humanitarian efforts and help in developing civil society. They are also consistent with the Cuban Democracy Act and the Cuban Liberty and

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Democratic Solidarity Act. They reflect a strong and growing bipartisan consensus that the United States can and should do more to work

with the Cuban people toward a future of democracy and prosperity.

Statement on Efforts To Redress Discrimination Against African-American Farmers

January 5, 1999

In December 1997, Vice President Gore and I met with a group of African-American and other small farmers who came to the White House to discuss farm issues and claims of discrimination by the Department of Agriculture. During the meeting we heard painful statements about the plight of several African-American farmers who were struggling to ensure that their farms remain alive and vibrant. At the time, I pledged, along with Secretary Glickman, that the USDA would work tirelessly to ensure that a proper resolution to their concerns was reached.

Today Secretary Glickman announced an historic settlement of a civil rights lawsuit between African-American farmers and the USDA. I want to take this opportunity to thank Secretary Glickman and his staff, members of my staff, and the Department of Justice for working so hard to bring about this major milestone. I also want to applaud the farmers themselves for their unceasing efforts to make their Government hear their calls for justice. Finally, I want to thank all those in the Congress, particularly the Congressional Black Caucus, Senators Robb and Grassley, and Speaker Gingrich, who worked to pass critical legislation waiving a statute of limi-

tations provision which had prevented less timely, but no less deserving, discrimination cases from being addressed.

Today's action is an important step in Secretary Glickman's ongoing efforts to rid the Agriculture Department of discriminatory behavior and redress any harm that has been caused by past discrimination against African-American family farmers. For more than 2 years, the Secretary has worked diligently to restructure the Civil Rights Office at USDA to make it responsive to the needs of all farmers who wish to have their claims heard.

My administration has always been committed to fighting discrimination and expanding opportunity for all Americans—in our offices, in our factories, and on our farms. America's farm families stand for the values that have kept our Nation strong for over 220 years, and African-American family farmers have played an historic role in building that tradition. By helping to eliminate artificial barriers to African-American farm ownership, we will help to ensure that discrimination does not harm this proud heritage—and that all of America's farmers go strongly into the 21st century.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

January 5, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On June 9, 1998, by Executive Order 13088 (63 *Fed. Reg.* 32109, June 12, 1998), I declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security

and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), and the Republic of Serbia with respect to Kosovo. The order blocks

all property and interests in property of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro within the United States or within the possession or control of United States persons, and prohibits all new investment in the territory of the Republic of Serbia by United States persons, and the approval or other facilitation by United States persons of other persons' new investment in the territory of the Republic of Serbia.

1. The declaration of the national emergency on June 9, 1998, was made pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code. The emergency declaration was reported by message to the Congress dated June 10, 1998, pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(b)).

The present report is submitted pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and 1703(c) and covers the period from June 9 through December 8, 1998. It discusses only Administration actions and expenses directly related to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency in Executive Order 13088.

2. The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), acting under authority delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury, implemented the sanctions imposed under the foregoing statutes and Executive Order 13088 and has issued the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) Kosovo Sanctions Regulations, 31 CFR part 586 (the "Regulations") (63 *Fed. Reg.* 54575, October 13, 1998). A copy of the Regulations is attached to this report.

The Regulations block all property and interests in property of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro that are in the United States, that hereafter come within the United States, or that are or hereafter come within the possession or control of United States persons, including their overseas branches. The Regulations also prohibit financial transactions with, including trade financing for, the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro by United States per-

sons. However, the Regulations provide an exemption, contained in section 2 of Executive Order 13088, for financial transactions, including trade financing, by United States persons within the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) that are (a) conducted exclusively through the domestic banking system within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in local currency (dinars), or (b) conducted using bank notes or barter.

The Regulations also prohibit all new investment in the territory of the Republic of Serbia by United States persons, and the approval or other facilitation by United States persons or other persons' new investment in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. The term "new investment," means (a) the acquisition of debt or equity interests in, (b) a commitment or contribution of funds or other assets to, or (c) a loan or other extension of credit to, a public or private undertaking, entity, or project, other than donations of funds to charitable organizations for purely humanitarian purposes. Any transaction by a United States persons that evades or avoids, or that has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate, any of the prohibitions set forth in Executive Order 13088 is prohibited. Finally, the Regulations provide a general license, authorizing all transactions by United States persons involving property or interests in property of the Government of the Republic of Montenegro, except as provided pursuant to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnian Serb-Controlled Areas of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sanctions Regulations, 31 CFR part 585.

3. Since the issuance of Executive Order 13088 on June 9, 1998, OFAC has issued 73 specific licenses, the majority of which (55) authorized financial transactions with respect to personal remittances by individuals to the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and funding of humanitarian operations by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). Other licenses authorized certain diplomatic transactions, transactions related to air safety issues and payment of overflight fees, the closure of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) entities formerly operating within

the United States and the liquidation and maintenance of blocked tangible property, and intellectual property protection for U.S. firms operating in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). OFAC also instituted a mechanism for NGOs to continue to support humanitarian operations in Yugoslavia and administers a registration program for NGOs to route money and supplies there as appropriate.

Since June 9, 1998, U.S. banks and banks in the United States have reported to OFAC that they have blocked 877 transactions totaling \$20,361,767 pursuant to the sanctions. Most of the blockings were of funds transfers originating from, or destined for, Serbian banks.

4. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from June 9 through December 8, 1998, that are directly attributable to the declaration of a national emergency with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Serbia in connection with the situation in Kosovo are estimated at approximately \$715,000, most of which represents wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in OFAC and its Chief Counsel's Office), the Department of State, and the National Security Council.

5. The situation reviewed above continues to present an extraordinary and unusual threat to the national security and foreign policy of the

United States. The declaration of the national emergency with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Serbia contained in Executive Order 13088 was made in reaction to the unacceptable actions and policies of the Belgrade authorities in Kosovo, and continues to apply. The current situation in Kosovo is fragile and, as yet, unresolved. It is of particular importance that developments in Kosovo should not disrupt progress in implementing the Dayton peace agreement. This threat to the peace of the region constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security of the United States.

With this in mind and in support of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1099 and 1203, I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal with respect to the measures against the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro, as long as these measures are appropriate, and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks on the Budget Surplus for Fiscal Year 1999

January 6, 1999

Thank you very much. Thank you, and good morning. Let me begin by saying that, for me, a primary purpose of this event is not only to formalize our budget projections for this coming year but just to thank all of you. I guess I ought to begin with John Podesta and the Vice President. I never dreamed when I asked John Podesta to be Chief of Staff that he would become the stand-up comic of the administration. [Laughter] Sort of seemed out of character, but I thought it was pretty good. And I could see a lot of you were reliving your holiday excruciating experiences.

One of the hardest jobs of the Vice President—he has to do all these very burdensome representations of the administration. He has to go places that I can't go, or don't want to go, and shoulder burdens I can't bear. And he just really—he went above and beyond the call by representing the administration at the Tennessee-Florida State football game. [Laughter] And I want to thank him for that enormous sacrifice. [Laughter]

I'd also like to thank the members of the economic team who have already been mentioned. We have had an extraordinary relationship over the last 6 years. It began before I

assumed office, with endless discussions and arguments about the finer points of what would be in the economic plan of 1993. It continued yesterday, with a 2-hour meeting about what is the appropriate thing to do with the crisis that the American steel industry faces now.

And in every meeting, we have what I consider to be examples of genuine patriotism because the people around the table are always working for what is in the best interest of the American people over the long run. And I want to thank all of you because, without you, none of these arguments would amount to anything, because you have to put flesh on the bones of the policies that we adopt. And I thank you for that.

Let me say that the preparation of a national budget, I think, sometimes does get lost in the agony of the numbers-crunching or the cleverness of finding one final way to solve one last problem. But we should never forget that there are human stories behind all these numbers. Because of the work that you have done, we literally have opened the doors of college education to all Americans, and you should never forget that. Because of the work that you have done in the balanced budget, we were able to provide the opportunity for another 5 million children to have health insurance, to figure out a way to make that big downpayment on the 100,000 teachers.

And for those who are skeptical, I would remind you that we are now going to finish, this year, our commitment of 1993 to 100,000 police officers, ahead of schedule and under budget, giving the United States the lowest crime rate in 25 years. So I thank you for all of that.

You heard the Vice President say that when we took office—well, actually, shortly before we took office—at Blair House, I got the final estimate of the budget deficit for the first year of my Presidency: \$290 billion. And I was told that, by this year, if I survived this long—and back in '93 I wondered, when I looked at those deficit numbers—that it would be over \$400 billion.

We then had some very difficult decisions to make, because we wanted to reduce the deficit and balance the budget; we wanted to bring interest rates down; we thought there was no way to get the American economy going again without doing so. But we knew that we had to invest in the future of America. And we also knew that we were in the middle of a 20-year

decline in the real earnings of average middle-class citizens. And we wanted to give particularly lower income working people with children a tax cut even in 1993, which we did by doubling the earned-income tax credit. So we had to put that very tough budget together.

The key was doing enough—figuring out enough to get interest rates down, because high interest rates were keeping entrepreneurs from starting new businesses or expanding them. They were discouraging young people from buying homes. They were, as has already been said, causing grave questions about the leadership the United States and the rest of the world. Our deficit had become a symbol of the inability of Government to play its essential role in American life.

So we put together our strategy based on fiscal discipline, investing in our people, and expanding American sales of products and services abroad. The results have been clear. There were a lot of dire predictions from the naysayers, and the budget passed by the narrowest of margins. But it began the process which led to the 1997 balanced budget, led to the second balanced budget we passed last year, and has now given us over 17 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest percentage of our people on the welfare rolls in 29 years, and the highest homeownership in history. All of you can be justly proud of the role you played in that.

Now, just 3 months ago we were able to announce, for the first time in three decades, a budget surplus. The surplus I announced that day, \$70 billion, was the largest in American history; as a share of our economy, the largest since the 1950's.

Today I am proud to announce that we can say the era of big deficits is over. We are now entering the second year of an era of surpluses. Our economists project that in 1999 we will close out this century with a surplus of not less than \$76 billion, the largest in the history of the United States. And I thank you for your role in that.

Now, the chart over here—Gene Sperling never wants me to get up here without charts, so here I am. *[Laughter]* The chart over here shows you the difference, starting in 1999, of the projections for this year, as compared with the reality. And the gap is all the money the American people have saved, the money that has gone back into the economy, the money

that has made it possible for interest rates to be lower and investment to be higher.

Just as exploding deficits were the symbol of a Government failing its people in the 1980's, these surpluses are a symbol of a Government that works in the 1990's and beyond, one that lives within its means, cuts wasteful spending, that still honors the values and the priorities of the American people: education, health care, the environment. It is the smallest Government in 35 years, by well over 300,000 fewer people than when we took office, but more prepared than ever to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Deficit reduction has brought tangible benefits to millions of families. We saved the American people more than a trillion dollars on the national debt. More than 7 million new families have realized their dream of owning a home. Another 18 million families have refinanced their homes at lower mortgage rates, and I'd bet anything that includes some people in this room. For millions of Americans, the lowest—these low interest rates have amounted to a tax cut of tens of billions of dollars, putting in reach a family vacation, a new car, perhaps a college education.

So today, I wish we could say our job is done, in the midst of this celebration. At a time like this it would be easy just to do that, to call a halt to this meeting and to say go back to work and just figure out how to keep these numbers in line. But the truth is, all of you know we still have very large challenges as a country, challenges that this surplus gives us the opportunity to meet. We worked hard to bring fiscal discipline to produce this surplus. Like any family with long-term financial needs and a little more earnings than we expected, we can't go out and spend the surplus today; we have to plan for the future.

That is why I have said repeatedly, before we even consider new spending or tax cuts, first we must set this surplus aside until we save Social Security for the 21st century. We know that in about 30 years the Social Security Trust Fund will no longer be able to meet the retirement needs of our generation—mine, the baby boomers. No parent wants his retirement to be funded by his children. No parent in the baby boom generation wants our children to have to spend less on our grandchildren's education and upbringing because we failed to fix Social Security at this time.

So, therefore, I have said, and I will reiterate today: While there are many needs out there in this country—there's still investment needs in education, investment needs in research, investment needs in the environment, investment needs in other health care initiatives—while there are many arguments that can be made to give families further tax relief, particularly those coping with the burdens of raising their children and the cost of child care while going to work, first we must save Social Security for the 21st century, before we consider new spending or other tax cuts.

Some say that this task will be too complicated for the Congress and the administration to achieve, that the will is too weak, that the political system too divided. I do not agree with that. I heard that 6 years ago when I showed up here—the political system was weak and the parties were divided. And look at all that's happened in the last 6 years by a sustained, good-faith effort, not just with the budget but in the area of education, in the area of crime control, in the area of the environment, in the area of health care, in the area of promoting world peace, in the area of biomedical research, and so many other things.

We cannot use anything as an excuse not to deal with our most pressing priorities. I do not intend to do it. I do not think the American people expect us to do it, and I think that we will surprise the skeptics by dealing with the Social Security challenge over the next several months. You have given us the tools to do it, with this surplus. And when that happens, you can also take a full measure of pride in that achievement.

Now, let me also say to you that there are also a lot of other challenges, as I have said. We have to deal with the Medicare challenge; it's the same thing as the Social Security challenge, except that it will hit us sooner. We have to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights; we have to continue to fund our education commitments. But we can do all these things.

But believe me, at every single turn in the road, we'll have to figure out how to make the numbers add up, how to stay within our commitment to fiscal discipline, how to be as clever as we can in the use of our resources without going over the line and being so clever we endanger the fiscal responsibility, the low interest rates, the economic success that has brought us to this point.

We have to depend on you to keep that balance, to have that creative tension. I know you will do it. I hope you will think about this chart when you go home tonight. I hope that you will be proud of what you have done for your

country. And I hope you will know that we are very proud of you and very grateful.

Thank you very much, and happy New Year.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict *January 6, 1999*

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (the Convention) and, for accession, the Hague Protocol, concluded on May 14, 1954, and entered into force on August 7, 1956. Also enclosed for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State on the Convention and the Hague Protocol.

I also wish to take this opportunity to reiterate my support for the prompt approval of Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, concluded at Geneva on June 10, 1977 (Protocol II). Protocol II, which deals with noninternational armed conflicts, or civil wars, was transmitted to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification in 1987 by President Reagan but has not been acted upon.

The Hague Convention

The Convention was signed by the United States on May 14, 1954, the same day it was concluded; however, it has not been submitted to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification until now.

The Hague Convention, to which more than 80 countries are party, elaborates on obligations contained in earlier treaties. It also establishes a regime for special protection of a highly limited category of cultural property. It provides both for preparations in peacetime for safeguarding cultural property against foreseeable effects of armed conflicts and also for respecting such property in time of war or military occupation. In conformity with the customary practice of nations, the protection of cultural property is not absolute. If cultural property is used for

military purposes, or in the event of imperative military necessity, the protection afforded by the Convention is waived, in accordance with the Convention's terms.

Further, the primary responsibility for the protection of cultural property rests with the party controlling that property, to ensure that the property is properly identified and that it is not used for an unlawful purpose.

The Hague Protocol, which was concluded on the same day as the Convention, but is a separate agreement, contains provisions intended to prevent the exportation of cultural property from occupied territory. It obligates an occupying power to prevent the exportation of cultural property from territory it occupies, requires each party to take into its custody cultural property exported contrary to the Protocol, and requires parties to return such cultural property at the close of hostilities. However, as described in the report of the Secretary of State, there are concerns about the acceptability of Section I of the Hague Protocol. I therefore recommend that at the time of accession, the United States exercise its right under Section III of the Hague Protocol to declare that it will not be bound by the provisions of Section I.

The United States signed the Convention on May 14, 1954. Since that time, it has been subject to detailed interagency reviews. Based on these reviews, I have concluded that the United States should now become a party to the Convention and to the Hague Protocol, subject to the understandings and declaration contained in the report of the Department of State.

United States military policy and the conduct of operations are entirely consistent with the Convention's provisions. In large measure, the practices required by the Convention to protect

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cultural property were based upon the practices of U.S. military forces during World War II. A number of concerns that resulted in the original decision not to submit the Convention for advice and consent have not materialized in the decades of experience with the Convention since its entry into force. The minor concerns that remain relate to ambiguities in language that should be addressed through appropriate understandings, as set forth in the report of the Department of State.

I believe that ratification of the Convention and accession to the Protocol will underscore our long commitment, as well as our practice in combat, to protect the world's cultural resources.

I am also mindful of the international process underway for review of the Convention. By becoming a party, we will be in a stronger position to shape any proposed amendments and help ensure that U.S. interests are preserved.

I recommend, in light of these considerations, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification and accession, subject to the understandings and declaration contained in the report of the Department of State.

Protocol II Additional

In his transmittal message dated January 29, 1987, President Reagan requested the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification of Protocol II. The Senate, however, did not act on Protocol II. I believe the Senate should now renew its consideration of this important law-of-war agreement.

Protocol II expands upon the fundamental humanitarian provisions contained in the 1949 Geneva Conventions with respect to internal armed conflicts. Such internal conflicts have been the source of appalling civilian suffering, particularly over the last several decades. Protocol II is aimed specifically at ameliorating the suffering of victims of such internal conflicts and, in particular, is directed at protecting civilians who, as we have witnessed with such horror this very decade, all too often find themselves caught in the crossfire of such conflicts. Indeed, if Protocol II's fundamental rules were observed, many of the worst human tragedies of recent internal armed conflicts would have been avoided.

Because the United States traditionally has held a leadership position in matters relating to the law of war, our ratification would help give Protocol II the visibility and respect it deserves and would enhance efforts to further ameliorate the suffering of war's victims—especially, in this case, victims of internal armed conflicts.

I therefore recommend that the Senate renew its consideration of Protocol II Additional and give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to the understandings and reservations that are described fully in the report attached to the original January 29, 1987, transmittal message to the Senate.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
January 6, 1999.

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

Remarks on Funding for Quality After-School Programs

January 7, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President. I want to thank all those who have spoken before and all of you who are here. I say a special word of appreciation to the Members of the Congress who have come, the members of the education community, the employees of the Department of Education.

I want to thank Congressman Ford for his stirring speech. I was looking at Congressman Ford, thinking, you know, I was 28 once. [Laughter] And when I ran for Congress at that age, I got beat. I see why he got elected. [Laughter]

I thank Senator Kennedy, for his lifetime of literally an example of unparalleled service in

the United States Senate, and Secretary Riley, who has been my friend since we started our governorships together over 20 years ago now. And I'm glad to see Mrs. Shriver here, and I thank the family of Congressman King for coming, my colleague in the Irish peace process. We're glad to see all of them.

But most of all, I want to thank Lissette Martinez and Leonard for showing up and reminding us why we're all here today, because they were great. When she held her children's pictures up here, I thought, if those kids and their parents are the future of America, we're going to be just fine—we're going to be just fine.

Even though the definition of well-educated was very different over 200 years ago when this country was founded, our Founding Fathers thought it was of pivotal importance. In 1787, they declared that all new territories set aside land for public schools, establishing the principle that public education, though a State and local responsibility, must always be a national priority. In 1862, President Lincoln signed the legislation creating the land grant college system. In 1944, the GI bill gave millions of returning veterans tickets to what became the first mass middle class in the history of the world. In 1958, the launch of Sputnik led to Federal funds to improve science and math education in our country. In 1965, Federal support for education expanded further to bring minorities and the poor, long shut out of the classroom, inside to the full benefits of public education. At each of these turning points in our history, our country strengthened public education to match the challenges of the times.

Now in our time, as others have said, we face another challenge, the emergence of a global economy that is fast-paced, technologically sophisticated, driven by information and, at the same time, the emergence in our country of a breathtakingly diverse group of young people, diverse by race and ethnic background, by religion, by culture, by income, by circumstance.

We now have an economy in which the workplace is no longer just for men but also for women; the workday is no longer bound by the hours of 9 to 5; and the workplace is increasingly at home. When I became President 6 years ago, only 3 million Americans were earning their living at home; when I ran for reelection, the number was 12. Today there are about 20 mil-

lion Americans earning their primary income out of their homes. This is a stunning statistic.

To meet the challenges of this new economy with our new society, we have to rely on our old values, but we have to make sure that we manifest them in modern ways. That means our public schools must change. They must teach our children while reflecting the way we work and live now and will work and live in the 21st century.

In the last 6 years we have worked hard on this, with the help of all of you in this room and those whom you represent throughout the United States. Forty-eight of our 50 States have now adopted tougher academic standards which we called for when the Goals 2000 program passed back in 1994.

Thousands of schools have become safer, better learning environments, cracking down on gangs and guns, violence and discipline, adopting school uniforms and other systems designed to create a better, more equal learning environment. The percentage of students who report being threatened or injured at school nationwide is down.

We've begun to organize an army of tutors to help elementary school children learn to read and middle school and high school students to prepare for college. And I'm very proud of all the young people all across America who are working in these tutoring and mentoring programs.

We've dramatically increased our investment in early childhood learning through the Head Start program. We're making real progress in connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000. And as Secretary Riley said, the E-rate for which the Vice President fought so hard means that we've not only hooked up those classrooms, but they can actually afford to log on.

Last fall, we fought for and won from Congress a downpayment on 100,000 new highly trained teachers to reduce class sizes in the early grades, and we made a beginning on our proposal to offer to pay off the college costs of young people who will go into our most underserved areas and teach for a few years when they graduate from school. I hope the new Congress will keep up the payments so we can keep the teachers going. And I hope they will work with me to build or modernize 5,000 schools.

The charter school movement, which I have championed since 1992, is growing. When I took

the oath of office as President, there was one charter school in the whole United States, a public school organized by parents or teachers within the school system but free of a lot of the bureaucratic limitations that are on so many schools. In 1996, there were 700. There are now about 1,000. We are well on our way to our goal of having 3,000 by the year 2000.

All these efforts and others are beginning to show up in SAT scores, which are up; math scores, which have risen in nearly all grades nationwide; even on a lot of the international tests, when we didn't do so well for years and years, our younger people are tending to do better and better.

We should be pleased and thankful, but we should not be fooled into complacency. Why? First, reading scores have hardly budged, and many of our foreign competitors are improving their schools faster than we are. Secondly, while our children do very well on these international test scores in elementary school and reasonably well in middle school, by the time they're in high school their rankings have dropped dramatically.

We know we have more to do. We know that a majority of our schools have not kept pace with the new family patterns and work patterns which dominate America. We know that more and more parents are being drawn into the work force. On any given day, as many as 15 million school children are left to fend for themselves at home, idle in front of the television or out on the streets, vulnerable to gangs, drugs, and crime. On any given day when school lets out, juvenile crime goes up and also the number of children themselves victimized by crime. On any given day when school lets out, tens of millions of working parents look nervously at the clock, hoping and praying their children will be okay.

It is no secret that I believe that the best way for our Nation to meet these challenges is to expand the number and improve the quality of our after-school programs. With quality after-school, parents and educators will be given the tools they need to succeed; students learn their lesson in the schoolhouse, not on the street; youth crime and victimization plummet. Quality after-school programs both enhance opportunity and bolster responsibility. In so doing, they strengthen our communities; they honor our values; they benefit our Nation.

That's why I've supported grants for these kinds of quality programs through the 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative, first introduced by Senator Jeffords from Vermont, championed by Senator Kennedy and Senator Boxer, Congresswoman Lowey from New York, and others.

Two years ago, this program received \$1 million from Congress. Then it grew the year before last to \$40 million, and then last year, to \$200 million, in the budget I signed, serving a quarter of a million children. Yet, the demand for quality after-school programs, the bipartisan support it has gained, and its potential to transform public education in America and the futures of our children far, far outweigh the investment we have made to date.

Therefore, today I am pleased to announce that in the new budget I will present to Congress this year, we will triple our investment in academically enriched after-school programs to give over 1 million children across America somewhere to go.

Now, you heard Lissette talking about the Chicago system. It's one I particularly favor. And last year I asked the Congress to set aside some funds that we could give to other school systems to help to adopt the comprehensive approach they have there. That is, no social promotion; more parent involvement in the schools; high standards, but don't flunk anybody because the system is failing the kids, don't say the kids are failing; give them the after-school programs, give them the summer school programs, give them the tools they need to succeed. So we are going to give priority to communities that end social promotion in the right way.

She talked about that eighth grade test. Hillary and I, when we were working together in Arkansas on education, made our State the first State in the country to have an eighth grade exit exam. But I never saw it as a way of identifying children who were failing. I thought it would identify the schools that were failing and give the children a chance to succeed. And that's what they believe in in Chicago and what we should believe in everywhere.

So I'm looking forward to working with all the Senators and House Members who care so much about this, both to improve after-school programs and to end social promotion but to do it in the right way. We have to do everything in our power—after school, smaller classes, better teachers, modernized facilities, Internet

hookups, summer programs—to help our kids succeed. We have to have high standards not only for students but for the preparation of our teachers and for the performance of our schools. And I'll have more to say about that later.

Scarce dollars should not be spent on failed policies. If we've learned anything, Hillary and Dick Riley and I, after 20 years and more of working at this, listening to teachers and parents, going into schools, it is what Congressman Ford said: We do believe all children can learn. And that gives a much greater urgency to this work.

Look, this is not really just about making the American economy strong or even making sure that when we baby boomers retire we'll be supported by two workers that made B's or better instead of a 1.7. [Laughter] It makes a good point, but that's not really what this is about. Everybody just gets one chance. Everyone just has one life. This is about giving people a chance to make the most of that one life. This is about the sure knowledge we have that the rest of us will just be fine, everything is going to work out all right, if we give our children the chance to make the most of their lives.

I watched Harold Ford up here giving that speech, and I thought, there's a 28-year-old young guy with his whole life before him. And I knew that he had a family that told him he had to show up in the morning, that his work was school, that he was expected to learn. And I want that for every child.

You know, I go to a lot of schools. Today when I speak to children—I was out in Maryland or Virginia not long before last November, and I was talking to this group of kids, this wonderful group of kids. And they said, "You know, all the parents are going to come, and we just only wish we had time to translate your remarks into Spanish and into Arabic, because there are so many parents who can't understand you." That's the America of tomorrow.

In a global society where we're trying to get other people to put aside their hatreds, to lay down the burdens of the past, to embrace one another, to reach across the lines that divide them, that's a great resource. But the challenge of giving all of the children, from whatever backgrounds they come from, the chance to make the most of that one life is more formidable than ever. Because of these after-school programs, a million kids will have a better chance. That's really what this is all about, a million more stories like those two beautiful pictures that Lissette showed us today. And that's what we should always, always remember.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:28 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder, Special Olympics; and Lissette Martinez, parent-mentor coordinator, Frederick Funston Elementary School, Chicago, IL, and her husband, Leonard.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Comprehensive Plan for Responding to the Increase in Steel Imports January 7, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting the attached *Report to Congress on a Comprehensive Plan for Responding to the Increase in Steel Imports* in response to the request from the Congress described in section 111 of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277 of October 21, 1998).

As the global financial crisis has unfolded, it has touched the lives of many Americans. I am very concerned about the surge in low-priced steel imports into the United States and its im-

pact on our companies, workers, and communities. Our steel industry and workers have taken difficult and commendable steps over the past 2 decades to make America's steel industry a world class competitor.

Our goal in this comprehensive action plan is clear: we seek to ensure that competitive American steel companies and steel workers have the opportunity to compete fairly and that they not be asked to bear an unfair share of the burden of a global financial crisis they did

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not create. The plan outlined in this report details our actions to vigorously and expeditiously enforce our own trade laws, engage major steel exporting and importing countries to enforce fair trade and fairly share the import burden, work with the IMF and our foreign partners to address the financial crisis that has contributed to the current surge of steel imports, and provide American steel communities, workers, and companies with the resources they need to adjust to the forces of globalization.

I will continue to make clear my deep personal concern about the steel situation, as I have done in recent statements. I will continue to engage leaders of Japan, Russia, the Republic of Korea, and the nations of Europe with the goal of ensuring that they follow fair trading practices, fairly share the burden of absorbing additional steel imports, and respect established international rules, including prohibitions on subsidization.

The solution to the financial crisis and the crisis facing our steel industry is not for us, or for any other nation, to go backward or turn inward. The solution is, instead, for America to continue to lead the world in stemming the current financial crisis and creating an open, rules-based trading system. At this critical jun-

ture, it is essential that all nations remain committed to open markets.

Open and fair trade is absolutely essential for both global economic recovery and continued U.S. prosperity. It is essential that all nations respect international trade rules to ensure that the trading system commands the confidence of the American people. Maintaining strong trade laws and vigorous enforcement will continue to be a critical element of my trade policy, just as I will continue to lead efforts to open markets around the world.

My Administration will continue to monitor developments in the steel industry and to consult with representatives of steel-producing and -consuming industries and labor, Members of Congress, and our trading partners, and we will consider additional actions as circumstances warrant. We will continue to work closely with Members of Congress in ensuring an effective response to this serious matter.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the Economic Club of Detroit in Detroit, Michigan *January 8, 1999*

The President. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, even though the mayor's promised warm welcome to Detroit turned out to be a bit of false advertising today, I am delighted to be back. I've had a wonderful time. The auto show made me feel like a kid again. I wanted to leave with 10 of the cars myself, but I was embarrassed to say, you know, I haven't bought a car in 6 years so I had to go around and ask what every one of them cost. *[Laughter]* I liked the concept cars. I liked the orientation toward the future. It was a wonderful thing. And we have some people here associated with the auto show, and I'd really like to thank them

for making me and the congressional delegation and our guests feel so welcome today.

I want to thank the mayor for letting me be his stand-in. We've been friends a long time. Mayor Archer's friendship is one of many thousands of things I owe to my wife. They were friends in bar association work. I knew Dennis Archer when he was just a mild-mannered judge with no political opinions. *[Laughter]*

I'd also like to thank your attorney general, Jennifer Granholm, for being here; my good friend Ed McNamara, to my left. Thank you, Jennifer. Thank you, Mr. McNamara, for being my friend. And City Council President Gil Hill; Frank Garrison, president of the Michigan

AFL-CIO. And I want to thank my good friend, Governor and former Ambassador to Canada, Jim Blanchard. I think he was the best American Ambassador we ever had to Canada, and you can be very proud of what he did there.

He also brought me here the first time—maybe there was this many people when I spoke in August of '92, but I don't remember it. This is the longest head table I've ever seen. [*Laughter*] I got up at 6 o'clock this morning; I didn't do my normal workout. It doesn't matter; I ran all the way down—[*laughter*].

I'd also like to thank the unusually large delegation from Congress who came with me today. And I'd like to ask them to stand and be recognized: Congressman John Dingell and Debbie; John Conyers is here with his son; David Bonior; Sandy Levin and Mrs. Levin; Jim Barcia; Bart Stupak and Mrs. Stupak; Carolyn Kilpatrick; and Debbie Stabenow. They're all here, and I thank them for coming with me from Washington.

Here in Detroit nearly a century ago, as all of you know better than me, Henry Ford set history in motion with the very first assembly line. He build not only a Model T but a new model for the way America would do business for quite a long while. He said he was looking for leaders and thinkers and workers with, I quote, "an infinite capacity to not know what can't be done." People like that came together in Detroit and all across America; they forged America's transition from farm to factory. Detroit led the way, and America led the world.

Today, as Mayor Archer just documented, Detroit is still leading the way, and America continues to lead the world. Indeed, we gather today at a time of an American economic renaissance. Our budget is balanced for the first time in a generation. We are now entering a second year in an era of surpluses. This week I announced that our economists project we will close out the year and the century with a surplus of no less than \$76 billion, the largest in the history of the United States for the second year in a row.

Today we received the December unemployment figures. Unemployment was 4.3 percent, the lowest monthly rate since February of 1970. For the year, it was 4.5 percent, the lowest annual rate since 1969. It's the lowest peacetime rate of unemployment since 1957. There were 378,000 new jobs last month, for total of 17.7 million. The welfare rolls are the lowest they've

been as a percentage of our population in 29 years. Homeownership is the highest in history, and in the last 6 years, 7 million Americans have bought new homes and another 18 million have refinanced them at lower interest rates.

We also know now with this last month that this peacetime expansion is the longest economic expansion in peacetime in the history of the United States. And equally important to me, this one is different from the ones of the last several years. It is inclusive, not exclusive. We have seen, for example, the highest real wage growth in over two decades, growing at twice the rate of inflation; the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded since we began keeping such statistics in 1972; and average family income up after inflation by \$3500. This is a rising tide that is lifting all boats.

Closer to home, for many of you, we learned that this week was also quite a remarkable year for U.S. automakers, 15.5 million cars and light trucks sold last year, the most in 12 years. Ford had its best year since 1978. The sales of the former Chrysler Corporation—I met with the Daimler people again today, and again I asked them to sell me a Mercedes at the price of a Chrysler. And I'm working on making that deal for all Americans, I want you to know. [*Laughter*] But anyway, we're excited about this merger, and their brands hit a record high, 2½ million vehicles. GM ended the year on a strong note with great momentum for 1999.

Now, let me compare just for a moment how far we have come these last 6 years. The last time I spoke here, when Governor Blanchard brought me as a nervous candidate for President in August of 1992, it seemed America had lost its way in the strong headwinds of economic change. In August of 1992, I said we had a choice to make, whether to create a high-growth, smart-work, high-wage economy, or to continue to drift into a low-growth, hard-work, low-wage future.

In August of 1992, the unemployment rate for this entire area was almost 9 percent, the same for the State as a whole. In August of 1992, Michigan had lost more than 60,000 jobs in the previous 2 years. Businesses were folding; residents were losing jobs and hope; crime and poverty were hitting record levels. The new world of high technology and greater global competition threatened to bypass America's

heartland. Foreign competitors actually described America as another great power in a state of inevitable decline. On our own bestseller list, there was a remarkable book that asked a question with its title, "America: What Went Wrong?"

Well, 3 months after I was here, in my Inaugural Address I said that I believed there was nothing wrong with America that cannot be fixed by what is right with America. And today we can, thankfully, ask the question: America, what went right?

The answer is, a lot of things. In fact, most things are going right for our country. Our real recovery began when we returned to a principle as old as our Republic: "We, the People." We have pursued a vision of 21st century America with opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all Americans. We have married old ideals to new ideas, to fit our new economy and our new society. We have moved beyond the false choices of using Government to hold back the tides of change or leaving people to sink or swim all alone.

We believe the role of Government is to empower people, to ride the tides of change to greater heights. We believe in a Government for the information age that is progressive, creative, flexible, and yes, smaller. You might be interested to know that the Government that you have today has more than 300,000 fewer people than it did when I last came here to speak in August of 1992. Indeed, it's the smallest Federal Government since John Glenn first orbited the Earth.

For example, under the Vice President's leadership, we've cut more than 16,000 pages of Federal regulations; streamlined or simplified 31,000 more; committed to work with those who bear the burden, as well as those who receive the benefit, of future regulations in drafting them. In areas from workplace safety to the partnership for new generation vehicles with your automakers, which I'll discuss more in a moment, to climate change, we are working with business to use technology, research, and market incentives to meet national goals.

Some have called this political philosophy the Third Way. It has modernized progressive political parties and brought them to power throughout the industrial world. Here in America it has led us, I believe, to a new consensus, making the vital center once again a source of energy, action, and progress. That, I believe, is

the only way for any advanced industrial nation to thrive in the new global economy.

Our new economic strategy was rooted in a few basic ideas—first, in fiscal discipline. In an era of worldwide capital markets, nations purchase prosperity by saving and investing and being prudent, not by running big deficits. So we cut the deficit, balanced the budget, sent interest rates down, helping people to buy new homes, helping more entrepreneurs to start new businesses.

Also, the reduction of the deficit and the ultimate balancing of the budget has freed up more than \$1 trillion in capital for private sector investment. Unlike past expansions where Government bought more and spent more to drive the economy, during this expansion Government spending as a share of the economy has actually fallen. And over 90 percent of those 17.7 million new jobs are private sector jobs.

The second part of our strategy has been to invest in our people. In 1992, we had two deficits, one in the budget but another in our investment in our people and our future. A high-tech economy that places even greater demands on skills must put people first, as the mayor said. Therefore, even as we cut spending and eliminated hundreds of programs to balance the budget, we nearly doubled our annual investment in education and training. Even as we closed the budget gap, we have expanded the earned-income tax credit for 15 million low-income working families, giving them hope and lifting over 2 million working people out of poverty. Even as we cut Government spending, we have raised investments in our welfare to work jobs initiative and invested \$24 billion in a children's health initiative to bring health insurance to 5 million young people who do not have it.

Third, building a new American economy has meant making the world economy work for us. Until last year, when we had all the turmoil and trouble around the world, fully one-third of the strong economic growth we had enjoyed in the nineties came from expanded trade. For every country engaged in trade, for every market open to our products, the base of customers for American goods and services expands.

That is why it matters to all Americans that we have negotiated 270 trade agreements in the last 6 years. Not all of them have met all of our hopes, and a lot of them have been limited by the economic problems faced in particular

countries. I think those here associated with the auto industry know how hard we have worked on the auto trade agreement with Japan. We will never make the kind of progress we intend to make there until the economy begins to recover, which brings me to a point I will return to in a moment.

Nonetheless, if you look at our approach—fiscal discipline, investment in people, expanded trade—it has enabled the United States, the businesses and the people working here, to create a truly new, global, high-tech economy. More than 7 million Americans today work in technology-related industries, earning two-thirds more than average worker salaries. Technology has not just built the computer industry; it has transformed existing industries from high-tech research and development, in real estate, in construction, and as I saw today, to transportation. A lot of these cars now that I saw today have more computer power in them than Neil Armstrong had to steer *Apollo 11* to the Moon. It's an interesting time in which we live, and we should feel fortunate to be here.

The question for all of us today and the thing I want you to think about is, okay, we feel good—and Dennis reeled off the statistics, and you clapped, and I was pleased. [Laughter] And I like it even better knowing that there are real families now that have work and a stronger future for their children and safer streets for them to live on. But the question for us today is the question you have to face every day you get up, whether it's a good day or a bad day: What are you going to do today? And what do you intend to do tomorrow? What are we going to do with this prosperity? We can rest on our laurels or press ahead.

In a sentence, here's how I assess our present condition. America is working again. It's working. Not just the economy; the crime rate is the lowest in 25 years. A lot of our social problems are receding. It's working again. That is the good news. But no serious analyst of our condition could seriously say that we have met the long-term challenges that our people will face in the 21st century. And there will never be a better time to meet them than a time when we have a surplus in our budget and a strong surfeit of confidence in ourselves and our ability to meet the challenges ahead.

So I say this is the time to press on with the big challenges of the 21st century, not just to have America work but to know that it's

going to be working for decades ahead. What are those challenges? They are many, but I will mention just three I'd like to ask you to think about, in the context of the mission of the Economic Club.

First, we must maintain our prosperity and spread its benefits to people and places that have not yet felt it. And we must deal with the challenges of the global economy, for without a successful global economy, our ability to continue to grow and prosper will be dramatically limited.

Second, we must deal with the challenges of the old and the young in America. We have to face the fact that the baby boomers are about to retire, and when they do, there will only be about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security; that more and more we are living longer—the average life expectancy in America today is over 76 years; in 20 or 30 years it will be well over 80 years. That will impose great new challenges to meet in long-term care. And we must face the fact that we have a challenge of the young, because more and more and more, our children tend to have higher poverty rates than our seniors; and more and more, our children come from very diverse populations in race, in religion, in culture, in income, in condition. And yet, every one of them needs to have a world-class education and a world-class opportunity to make the most of his or her life.

And third, we have to grow the economy while meeting the challenges of global responsibility, including global environmental challenges. And if we are ever forced to really choose between one or the other, then our children and grandchildren will be the losers.

So let's deal with these things briefly. In the economic arena, I think we have to do the following things. First, in the next year and beyond we must maintain our hard-won fiscal discipline, keeping our budget balanced, saying that no tax cuts or spending programs, no matter how attractive, can put our prosperity at risk by driving us back into deficits.

Second, since all respected prognoses tell us that we are, in fact, entering an era of sustained surpluses, we should use this as an opportunity to address the challenges of an aging Nation. As I said, soon the number of elderly Americans will double. This represents a seismic demographic shift for the United States.

I am grateful that last year the Congress agreed with me to set aside the surplus until we save Social Security. Now it is time to actually save Social Security for the 21st century and to strengthen and secure Medicare for many more years. Medicare is a great legacy of Congressman Dingell's father. It is a great program. A lot of people depend upon it. It needs some support. And there will be some money involved.

We have the ability now to deal with the challenges of the aging population. And as you know, I also proposed a few days ago a tax credit to help people pay for long-term care. If we can save Social Security for the 21st century, if we can strengthen and secure Medicare for the 21st century, if we can help families to deal with the challenges of long-term care, we will have gone a long way not only to make sure that the older years of people will be more secure but to alleviate one of the principal worries that people of my generation have, which is that our retirement, because we're such a big group, will be so costly that it will undermine our children's standard of living and their ability to raise our grandchildren. None of us want that, and we have to take this surplus and this opportunity and deal with these challenges. And we ought to do it right now, this year, with no excuses.

Now thirdly, we must do more to continue to close the investment gap for our young people and our people in their working years. For more and more, the income gap in America is a skill gap. We've made dramatic progress in opening the doors of college to all Americans, in hooking our classrooms up to the Internet, in raising standards in our schools and promoting more school choice and charter schools, in putting 100,000 new teachers in our schools to deal with the growing student population, which we began to do last year and we must continue this year.

In my upcoming State of the Union Address, I will propose further reforms and improvements in our public schools, and I will also advance a new training agenda to give the American people the assurance that they will be able to get the skills they need for a lifetime of competition in the global economy.

Fourth, at this time of turmoil in the international economy, we must do more to make the world economy work for all our people and, indeed, for ordinary citizens throughout the

world. I want to press forward with open trade; I have always believed in it. It would be a terrible mistake, at this time of economic fragility for so many of our friends and neighbors and democratic allies, for the United States to build walls of protectionism that could set off similar responses around the world and lead us into a sustained global recession. That would be a mistake. On the other hand, if we expect the American people to support open trade, we must be prepared to bring the full force of our trade laws to bear upon any and all unfair trade practices.

Just yesterday I addressed such a practice when I sent a comprehensive action plan to Congress outlining our response to the dramatic increase in steel imports into the United States, especially in the area of hot-rolled steel, where the prices are below what anyone believes the reasonable cost of production is anywhere in the world.

Let me be clear: I am especially concerned about the dramatic surge of steel imports from Japan. But there are problems elsewhere, too. If these imports do not soon return to their pre-financial-crisis levels, my administration is willing to initiate forceful action under our section 201 surge protection laws and under our antidumping laws. An open, fair, rule-based system is essential to American prosperity. I cannot go to the Congress and ask for expanded trading authority, for an Africa trade initiative, for a trade initiative for our neighbors in the Caribbean, unless the American people know that whatever the rules are, we intend to play by the rules, and we expect others to play by the rules, as well.

I would also tell you that this question of whether ordinary working people are benefited by expanded trade is an even more deep question in other countries than it is in the United States. I went all the way to Switzerland a few months ago on the 50th anniversary of the World Trade Organization, to argue for changes in the world trading system for the 21st century, changes that will make sure that the competition never becomes a race to the bottom, changes in labor protection, consumer protection, environmental protection. We should support more free trade, and we should support more input from and consideration of those sectors. We should be leveling up, not leveling down.

Strengthening the foundations of trade also means we have to stabilize the architecture of

international finance. Now, I'd like to just talk about this for a moment.

All of you know in the last year how the global financial crisis has hurt our farmers, our ranchers, our manufacturers. You've seen it in the steel industry. One of the problems we have with the import of steel from Russia is that the currency value has collapsed as the money has flown the country. One of the problems that they had in a lot of the Asian countries, from Indonesia to Korea to Thailand to other countries that have been troubled, is that money flees the country. Money moves across the globe in volumes and at speed far greater than ever before. And it has created a situation which permits enormous increased investment almost overnight, but also can trigger a collapse. All these financial mechanisms, the derivatives and hedge funds and all that, very often have investments that are guaranteed by only 10 percent margins, far lower margins than people can buy stock, for example.

And the real danger has been, as you have seen all this happen, is, number one, that a problem in one country can spread to another and a problem in one region can spread to another region. And then if all of our trading partners are affected, then we are affected because there aren't any markets for our products anymore.

Now, we can't have a global trading system unless people can move money around in a hurry and at great volumes. No one wants to interfere with that. So the question is, how can we do that and still avoid running the risk of having these huge boom/bust cycles in the world economy of the kind that caused domestic depression in the United States and elsewhere in the late twenties and throughout the thirties? And we are working very hard with other countries to come to grips with this, to try a way—find a way to facilitate it.

But to give you some idea of the magnitude of the problem, every day about \$1.5 trillion crosses national borders in currency transactions—far, far, far—a multiple times more than the daily value of trade and goods and services and daily investments. So the trick is that we've been struggling with the Europeans, struggling with the Asians, struggling with people on every continent who understand this.

How can we modernize the financial architecture, which was created 50 years ago, to facilitate trade and investment so that it also supports

this global economy and the movement of money in ways that never could have been imagined? I think we're making progress, but I expect it to be a major focus of my international efforts this year. And I hope, even though it's a fairly obscure process, it will be clear enough to everyone that we will have support for the United States leading the way.

Let me say, finally, we have to do more to renew our greatest untapped markets so that we can continue growth without inflation. They are not around the world; they are in our under-invested urban and rural areas here at home.

You heard Mayor Archer say that the unemployment rate in Detroit proper had gone from 16 to 6 percent. I hope the empowerment zone had something to do with that. We have done everything we could across a whole range of policies to help our cities and our rural areas to attract more investment and opportunity. My budget in the next few weeks, which I'll submit to the Congress, will include more initiatives to have more opportunities.

Next week at the Wall Street Project in New York, convened by the people who run the Stock Exchange, major companies, and Reverend Jackson, I will talk about how we can do more to bring growth to emerging markets here at home.

And lastly, let me just say a brief word about the environment. Last May here at the Economic Club, the Vice President spoke and asserted that we believe we can achieve economic growth along with cleaner air and cleaner water and meeting the challenge of global climate change. That is, after all, the idea behind the partnership for the next generation vehicle, which we started 6 years ago with those of you in the auto industry here, developing cleaner, more fuel-efficient cars and hoping to make American car companies even more competitive in the global economy. I was pleased to see some of the fruits of that partnership, along with the fruits of other governmental-funded investment, at the auto show today. And I'm looking forward to seeing the concept cars from each of the companies in a year or so.

Now, let me say, these are some of the big challenges. You may not wake up every day worried about the global financial markets. You may not wake up every day worried about the Social Security system. And if you're anywhere near drawing it, I hope you don't, because it's fine

for the next few years. But it has been a generation since we have had the combination of economic and social circumstances which give us the emotional and financial space to think about the future. And this country is changing in dramatic ways. I didn't talk about the challenges of immigration today and our obligations to children and to our new citizens. There are lots of things that we didn't have time to talk about. The main idea I want to leave you with is that the temptation to rest on our laurels and relax because times are good must be resisted.

Every business here subject to competition knows that good times today can become bad times tomorrow if you don't stay ahead of curve. The same is true for a nation. We will never have, in all probability, in the lifetime of the people in this room, a better opportunity to take the long view, to imagine how our children will live when they're our age, to imagine how our grandchildren will live when they are our age. These are the challenges we should be dealing with today. And as we deal with them, because they will inspire further confidence and further investment, they will strengthen the American economy and the American society in the near term, as well.

Henry Ford said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is a success." That is the question for us: Will we rest on our laurels, become diverted in our energies, or keep working together? If we work together, there are no limits to 21st century America. And that's what we owe our children, no limits.

Thank you, and God bless you.

New European Currency

Q. Mr. President, we work until 1:30, and with that in mind, we have some questions that have come from the audience. They are a series of questions, but I'll boil them down on this issue: What are your thoughts about trade and finance after the launch of the euro, and what effect will the euro dollar have on the United States economy?

The President. I have supported the economic and political integration of Europe for a very long time now. As it proceeds and as people begin to see Europe as a single entity, we will all come to understand that they have more people in the aggregate and a bigger economy in the aggregate than we do. There may come a time in the future when, instead of the dollar

being the accepted standard of international currency, it will be the dollar and the euro. No one really knows.

But I believe that anything that facilitates growth and opportunity for our friends in Europe has to be good for us, as long as they don't build walls around the European community. That is, if Europe continues to be a more open trading environment, if this gives them the confidence and security to take down even more barriers—because our economy is still more open than Europe—this will be a very good thing.

We need to support their success. We should hope that this will lead to a more rapidly rising standard of living in the European countries that don't have such a high standard of living. We should hope that this brings them great new opportunities. And we should believe and have enough confidence that if they'll keep their doors open, that we'll get more than our fair share of opportunities.

We should also hope that it will bring more political self-confidence and that we will be able to work with them even more rapidly and more comprehensively in dealing with other challenges, like the challenges we face in Kosovo, or the one we faced a few years ago in Bosnia that we're still working on.

So on balance, I have to say, I think this is a good thing, and I think it's an inevitable thing. And I don't think it would be worth a moment's attention by anyone to rue the day it happened. They are the masters of their own fate; they are going in this direction. I think, on balance, it's positive, and we need to figure out how to make it a good thing for America and a good thing for the world.

Steel Imports

Q. Mr. President, you touched on this in your remarks, but perhaps you could amplify. The question is: Dumping of steel by foreign producers is hurting American steel industries severely. What is the administration going to do about dumping of steel in the American market?

The President. Well, first of all, let me say there are—in my judgment, this steel dumping problem—I have to be careful about this. The Secretary of Commerce is examining the dumping facts, and that's a term of legal art, so I shouldn't be characterizing it before he has made his actual factual determination. I know of no place in the world, however, where steel

can be produced at the price that it's been sold in the United States in recent months, over the last year, by Japan and Russia and, to a lesser extent, by Korea and others.

The Secretary—the first thing we're doing is that the Secretary of Commerce, Bill Daley, under the law, is responding to the American steel companies who have asked for an anti-dumping determination against Japan, Russia, and Brazil. And he is looking into that, and he will make findings. And if he finds that the legal definition is triggered, then he will be able to impose offsetting duties.

The second thing is what I said in my speech. I went to Tokyo not very long ago, you may remember, after—I went to Korea and to Japan, along toward the end of last year. And I have made it very clear that while I am very sympathetic with Japan's economic problems and I want to do everything I can to support the Government there in getting out of them, bankrupting the American steel industry—that went through so much to become competitive through the 1980's and has already given up a huge percentage of its employee base in modernizing—is not my idea of the way to achieve it. And quite simply, we expect those exports from Japan in the hot-rolled steel area to return to pre-crisis levels. And if they don't and don't do it soon, then we are prepared to go forward with this antisurge section 201 action I mentioned, as well as to look at antidumping action and other steel products. I should tell you that the preliminary indications are that the exports have dropped quite a lot in the last month since that message was made clear and unambiguous. But I think that's important.

I offered yesterday a tax change in the law, on a 5-year basis only, to increase the loss carry-forward capacity of our steel companies, because this is unprecedented. At least in the 6 years I've been President, I've never seen anything like this happen to one sector of our economy so quickly with such obvious consequences.

We are also negotiating with the Russians to return to pre-crisis levels there and deal with the problem. Again, I'm very sympathetic; the Russians need to earn all the money they can. They've had all kinds of people taking money out of their economy. And we want a democratic Russia to stay democratic and free and open. But we took last year roughly 20 times the hot-rolled steel from Japan, Russia, and other countries that Europe did, and their market is 30

percent bigger than ours. So I hope none of you will think that I've gone stark-raving protectionist by simply trying to enforce our laws and keep a fair system here.

Defense Spending

Q. Mr. President, you recently proposed boosting the defense by about \$100 billion over the next 6 fiscal years. What is it that you hope to accomplish? And another question was asked, among several—what is the policy that you have implemented to attempt to keep so many key military men and women from leaving their positions?

The President. From leaving their positions?

Q. Aging out or—

The President. Well, first of all, the military budget peaked in the late eighties and has been going down either in absolute terms or relative to inflation ever since, until a couple of years ago when we stabilized it. We have dramatically reduced the size of our Armed Forces. We have dramatically reduced the civilian work force supporting those Armed Forces.

But we now have downsized our force almost to, I think, the point where we shouldn't go lower. We can't go any lower and maintain our present military strategy, which among other things, calls upon us to be able to fight in two separate regional conflicts at roughly the same time and enables us to fulfill our responsibilities from Bosnia, where we're keeping the peace and have saved Lord knows how many lives, to Central America, where today and for the last several weeks—ever since Hurricane Mitch, the worst hurricane in well over a century, devastated Central America—you've had several thousand of your fellow Americans in uniform who have been down there working every day to help rebuild it.

And we have people on the seas, people in foreign countries, all over the world, on every continent. I visited in Africa, when Hillary and I went to Africa this year, I visited the young Americans that are part of the Africa Crisis Response Initiative, training African soldiers to deal with civil wars and other problems there. We are everywhere.

And what's happening is, as we've downsized the military, the following problems have arisen, and you should all be aware of them. Number one, the deployments overseas are lasting longer, and the breaks between them are shorter. Number two, we haven't had the money to replace

and repair our equipment as rapidly as we should. Number three, married people in the military who have families and children and who need to live in military housing have not seen any significant improvements in their military housing. Number four, we have not done as much as we could have done, and as much I think we'll have to do in the years ahead, in modernizing the weapons that we have. And as you saw in the recent military action in Iraq, where we did a terrific amount of damage to the military infrastructure and the weapons of mass destruction infrastructure—while causing the deaths, the unintended deaths of far, far, fewer civilians than were lost even in the Gulf war a few years ago—the technological edge the United States has is very important.

Finally, in certain critical areas, we just can't keep up with recruitment. We have a lot of pilots leaving because the airlines are doing very well, and they can get jobs making a lot of money working for the airline companies. And I don't blame them, but it would bother you if you knew I needed the American Air Force and there weren't enough people to go fly the planes.

So when I say we're going to spend \$100 billion over 10 years, you should know that some of that money is coming out of savings the Defense Department has achieved. And when inflation is lower than we thought, when fuel costs are lower than we thought, normally they'd have to give up that money—we're just letting them have money that they were budgeted for anyway. Some of that money will be new money. But we have to raise pay, we have to improve living conditions, we have to make sure that people are on safe equipment.

You know, not a single one of those planes that flew in Iraq came down, not a single bolt came loose, because people that you will never see worked like crazy, maintaining those planes in tip-top shape condition. They should—no American pilot, no man or woman that flies those airplanes should ever have to worry about getting into an airplane, worrying about whether it's been properly maintained, whether the equipment was there and all of these things.

So that's what this is all about. And we are going to invest some more money in modernized equipment. I hope you will support this. I know everybody would like to see more money spent everywhere else, but they deserve it.

White House/Nelson Mandela

Q. Mr. President, we are out of time, but as a presiding officer I always attempt to try to reach to our young people who have tried to ask—and they do ask some very interesting and challenging questions. I close with these two combined, one written by a person who is age 13 and the other by the age 12.

Mr. President, are there horses and a horse barn at the White House; if so, could you please send me a picture? And who is the most interesting person you have met during your Presidency?

The President. There are no horses or horse barns in the White House. There is a place where Socks and Buddy sleep. However, the President can ride horses either in Rock Creek Park or up at Camp David, and the National Park Service keeps horses, wonderful horses, which my family and I sometimes ride. And if we have friends come spend the weekend with us, we can ride. So we do have access to horses, but they're not right there on the premises.

It's very difficult to answer who is the most interesting person I've met since I've been President, because I meet all different kinds of people. For example, some of you know I love music very much, and one of the big perks about being President is that if you ask somebody to come perform, they'll pretty well do it. [*Laughter*] So it's been a real kick, you know.

And I've met a lot of very fascinating people in public life. But among the most interesting people I've met are the President of China, who is a fascinating man; Boris Yeltsin, who is a fascinating man—remember, he got up on a tank alone when they tried to take democracy back in Russia, and he said to all the soldiers all around him in the threat to take democracy away, "You may do this, but you'll have to kill me first," and he was standing on that tank all by himself; the late Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated by one of his own citizens for working for peace with the Arabs, after he'd spent a lifetime protecting the people of Israel in uniform.

But I think among the politicians, the political leaders I've met, I could mention many more, but I think the most interesting one I've met, for me, for a particular reason, is Nelson Mandela, the President of South Africa. And I say that for this reason, to the young people:

You should think about this the next time something bad happens to you and you get discouraged. Bad things happen to kids, you know. People they like don't like them; gang members try to push them around, maybe threaten them, maybe even hurt them; they make grades that they don't think are as good as they ought to be. You know; disappointments happen in life.

Nelson Mandela was in prison for 27 years because of his political beliefs. And we talked once about it. And he walked out of there with enough mental and emotional strength to take all the support that he had generated by becoming the symbol of South African freedom and to win in a landslide the first free election they had had in 350 years and to do it in a way that brought people together across racial and political lines instead of driving them apart.

When I went to South Africa, Nelson Mandela, for example, arranged for me to have lunch with legislative leaders. And one of them was the leader of the most militant right-wing white party there, who had once threatened to restart a civil war if Nelson Mandela got elected President. And Mandela sat down and talked to him and convinced him he ought to be part of the political system. And then when I came to South Africa, instead of having me eat lunch with all of his allies, he had me sit down and eat lunch with this fellow.

I have a minister friend who ran into President Mandela at the airport in Johannesburg, and he came up to a little 5-year-old white girl, and he asked the young girl if she knew who he was, and the young girl said, "Yes, you're President Mandela. You're my President." And he looked at this little child now, after all his life, and he said, "Yes, young lady," and he said, "If you study hard in school and you learn a lot about things, you, too, could grow up to be President of South Africa."

Hillary and Chelsea and I have all become friends of President Mandela but also fascinated by how he survived 27 years in prison—there was over a decade in which he didn't have a bed in his cell, a dozen years of breaking rocks—an experience which cost him seeing his children grow up, ultimately cost him his marriage, and subjected him to all sorts of physical and emotional abuse. And he walked out of prison, got elected President, invited his jailers to his Inauguration.

So I asked him one day, I said, "How did you do this?" I said, "How did you go without

hating them?" And he said, "Well, you know, I did hate them for a long time, about 12 years." And he said, "One day I was out there breaking rocks in prison, and I thought, look what they've taken away from me. They've taken the best years of my life. I can't see my kids grow up. They brutalized me. They can take everything. They can take everything from me but my mind and my heart. Now, those things I will have to give to them. I don't think I will give them away." You think about that—"I don't think I will give them away."

The morning Nelson Mandela got out of prison, it was an early Sunday morning in America, in the Central Time Zone. And I got my daughter up, and I took her down to the kitchen and turned the television on and sat her up on the counter—she was a little girl—and I said, "I want you to watch this. This is one of the most important things you'll ever see." And some of you remember when Mandela took that last long walk to freedom, when he was coming out of the prison.

So I asked him, I said, "Now, when you took that last walk, tell me the truth, didn't you hate them again?" He said, "Yes, I started to." And he said, "I was also scared because I hadn't been free in a long time; I was actually scared. And I was filled with anger. And then I thought to myself, when I become free, I want to be free. If I still hate them, I won't be free. They've had enough of my time. I'm not giving them any more, not another day."

This is a very long answer to a child's question, but it's an important answer. That's why he's the most interesting person I've met, because I don't know another human being that suffered so much for so long and came out so much stronger and richer and deeper than he went into his period of suffering.

And so I ask the children here and the parents here to think about it when times get tough. And I ask America to think about it when we have all these racial and religious and political divisions that we think are so big; we spend all of our time trying to solve the problems in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and other places in the world. None of the people—practically none of the people that are involved in any of this stuff around the world and nobody here in America has ever been through anything—anything—like what he went through.

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And so when we call for a spirit of reconciliation and unity and community and mutual respect in America, we ought to think about Nelson Mandela. If it was good for him, it would sure be good for us.

Thank you, and bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:48 p.m. at the Cobo Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit;

Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara; former Governor and former Ambassador to Canada James J. Blanchard; Representative John D. Dingell's wife, Debbie; Representative John Conyers, Jr.'s son, John Conyers III; Representative Sander M. Levin's wife, Vicki; Representative Bart J. Stupak's wife, Laurie; civil rights leader Jesse Jackson; President Jiang Zemin of China; and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia.

Statement on the Decision of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew M. Cuomo Not To Seek Election to the Senate

January 8, 1999

Earlier today Secretary Cuomo announced that he would not run for the United States Senate. I told Secretary Cuomo that I would support his decision either way, but on a personal level, I am glad that he is staying to build on HUD's new empowerment agenda. New

Yorkers should be proud of the job he is doing. Andrew believes that his job at HUD is not finished. Therefore, he has chosen to continue his public service at the Department, and I applaud his decision.

The President's Radio Address

January 9, 1999

Good morning. I'm speaking to you today from Solidarity House in Detroit, Michigan, where for more than half a century the members of the United Auto Workers have led the fight to improve the lives of America's working families. I've come to America's industrial heartland to talk about what we must do to strengthen our workers and manufacturers for the 21st century.

Over the past 6 years, we've created the longest peacetime economic expansion in American history, with 17.7 million new jobs, the lowest combined unemployment and inflation rate in more than 30 years, the highest homeownership ever. Wages are going up at all income levels, and finally, the rising tide of our economy is lifting all boats.

But today and in the years to come, America's prosperity depends upon the world's prosperity. In our new global economy, a financial crisis half a world away can be felt on factory floors here at home. For more than a year, a recession

in other countries has forced them to cut imports of our goods, from cars to computers to jumbo jets, and to boost exports of their own products to our shores. After years of double-digit growth, U.S. manufacturing exports have slowed, and that's led to thousands of layoffs. These developments cause no small amount of concern.

With millions of American jobs depending on foreign exports, we must help manufacturers find new markets and attract new customers for our goods overseas. That's why my next balanced budget will include a \$108 million initiative to spur nearly \$2 billion in additional U.S. exports, which will sustain or create 16,000 high-wage American manufacturing jobs.

We'll begin by boosting our support for our Import-Export Bank, which currently finances 10 percent of all U.S. capital equipment exports. For every dollar it spends, the bank generates some \$16 in American exports. By expanding credit, we can foster billions of dollars in exports

that might have been deferred or canceled due to this financial crisis. We'll also expand the Department of Commerce's efforts to help small exporters to sell their goods in emerging markets such as China, Latin America, and Africa. And we'll help developing countries establish a legal and regulatory infrastructure to make it easier for our firms to export.

Most of all, we must ensure that the new global economy works for working people. Working families around the world must be able to exercise core labor rights, benefits from legal standards for fair pay and reasonable hours and safe working conditions, and improve their lives through unions, just as generations of Americans have done through the UAW. The United States supports the International Labor Organization in its efforts to advance core labor rights, rights that are crucial to building a strong and stable global economy.

That's why, in my balanced budget, America will provide, for the first time ever, up to \$25 million to create a new arm of the International Labor Organization, to work with developing countries to put in place basic labor protections, safe workplaces, and the right to organize, so that workers everywhere can enjoy the advan-

tages of a strong social safety net. We hope all countries will adopt and enforce the ILO's core labor standards and that developing countries will accept the unique assistance of the ILO. And I encourage other nations to join us in helping the International Labor Organization and insisting that trade and investment agreements reflect these core principles.

Today, in the rooms and hallways of Solidarity House, you still can hear the echoes of the voices of the men and women whose sweat, energy, and vision lifted millions into our middle class and transformed America into the world's greatest force for peace, prosperity, and freedom. With them as our guide and our inspiration, we can and we will harness the power of our new global economy to build a bright future for all our people in the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:40 p.m. on January 8 in the auditorium at Solidarity House in Detroit, MI, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for President Carlos Menem of Argentina *January 11, 1999*

President Menem, members of the Argentine delegation, distinguished guests. It's a very special pleasure for me to welcome President Menem to the White House for this first state visit of the new year. The United States is proud of its strong relationship with Argentina, and I am grateful for the personal and national partnership that President Menem and I have developed together.

Mr. President, over the last decade, the Americas have turned a page in our history. Our future has never been brighter. Last year Argentina and the United States helped to resolve a border dispute between Peru and Ecuador that had persisted for decades. This year we are a hemisphere at peace, essentially without international conflict, moving beyond historic animosities to discover new opportunities.

In every nation but one, democracy has replaced dictatorships, open markets have replaced command economies, a marketplace of ideas has replaced the battle zone of ideologies. From Point Barrow to Patagonia, the peoples of the Americas are greeting a new American century with a conviction that this will be our best time yet.

Mr. President, under your leadership, Argentina has been at the forefront of Latin America's resurgence. You have built trust with neighbors and strengthened relationships with nations around the world. By courageously examining their past, the Argentine people have set an example for other nations seeking to bolster human rights. Argentina's wise economic policies are helping the region to recover from economic

challenges and to restore confidence in open markets.

We are also particularly grateful for Argentina's leadership beyond the Americas. Day-in and day-out, your peacekeepers promote stability in Haiti, Cyprus, Bosnia, the Persian Gulf, and other trouble spots, often working side by side with our troops. President Menem has consistently worked to encourage constructive dialog between nations and to oppose those who would intimidate their neighbors through military aggression.

Finally, he has shown real vision and courage before one of the great challenges of the new century, securing his people's prosperity while protecting the environment for future generations.

In 1999 our two nations will continue to work together closely, building a vibrant, open international economy while preserving natural resources, forging international peace and stability, honoring individual rights along with the larger community to which we all belong.

Mr. President, our two nations have come far together over this past decade. But thanks in no small measure to your leadership, there is no limit to our progress in the century ahead.

Bienvenidos. Welcome to America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House, where President Menem was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Menem.

Statement on the 90th Anniversary of the Canada-United States Boundary Waters Treaty

January 11, 1999

Today the United States and Canada mark the 90th anniversary of our Boundary Waters Treaty, signed on January 11, 1909. I salute the U.S.-Canada International Joint Commission (IJC), established to implement the treaty's terms, meeting today in Ottawa. For most of the 20th century, the IJC has served to prevent and resolve disputes over the use of shared waters and to provide independent advice on other transboundary environmental issues. The excellent relationships we have developed in dealing with the precious air and water resources we hold in trust together reflect the success of the Commission's efforts. From cleaning up the Great Lakes to managing water levels and flows

in transboundary lakes and rivers, the Commission has come to serve as a global model for international cooperation in the realm of shared resources. More importantly, the IJC has improved the quality of life for Americans and Canadians while preserving for future generations the beauty and vitality of our lakes and rivers.

Through its air quality monitoring and international watershed initiatives, the Commission is already confronting future environmental challenges along our border. I look forward to its continued success as the United States and Canada extend their partnership into the 21st century.

Statement on the Nigerian Elections

January 11, 1999

I congratulate the people of Nigeria for the strong turnout and orderly conduct of the January 9th elections for State Governors and assemblies. Although results from these elections have not yet been released, Nigeria should be proud

of its achievements to date in conducting transparent and inclusive elections that are building the foundation for a successful return to democratic, civilian government. I am pleased that

the United States is providing \$5 million to support this effort.

These elections represent a critical step in Nigeria's transformation. Since June, General Abubakar, his government, and the people of Nigeria have engaged in a sustained and serious effort to rectify the abuses of the past: political prisoners have been freed; onerous restrictions on labor unions have been lifted; the empty

positions on Nigeria's Supreme Court have been filled; and a transparent "Budget of Realism" has been announced by the government. I and the people of the United States look forward to continuing to work with Nigeria to ensure that these political and economic reform efforts continue. And I hope that some day soon, Nigeria will be able to resume its place as a democratic leader in Africa.

Remarks at the State Dinner Honoring President Carlos Menem of Argentina *January 11, 1999*

Good evening. Welcome to the White House and to this wonderful dinner. As you can see, we had so many people who wanted to be here, who love Argentina and respect you, Mr. President, that we're in more than one room tonight. But we're all happy to be here, and Hillary and I welcome you all.

Mr. President, we hope that we have, in some small way, repaid the hospitality you showed us during our unforgettable visit to Argentina in October of 1997. At our dinner in Buenos Aires, I cited the memory of Domingo Sarmiento, who loved the United States but who complained that we ate our meals far too fast, often in 5 minutes or less. *[Laughter]* Tonight I hope our guests from Argentina will see that we value constructive criticism. This will be a long, leisurely meal. *[Laughter]*

The friendship between our two peoples reaches back to our earliest days as sister republics. In fact, our first envoy to Buenos Aires was sent well before there was a nation called Argentina. In 1810, as Joel Poinsett was leaving to take up his post in Argentina, he was instructed by the State Department to "promote the most friendly relations" between us, and remember that all nations lie under—and I quote—"a common obligation to maintain that system of peace, justice, and good will which is the only source of happiness for nations."

Mr. President, those words are still a good description of our warm, rich, friendly relations. We share aspirations old and new, to deepen democracy, to strengthen justice, to educate our children, to preserve and enhance what we have inherited from our descendants, and to give

other peoples a chance to live as peacefully and as prosperously as possible at the dawn of this new century.

Now, there are certain disputes we will never resolve, like which country has the better beef or whose cooks have better mastered the ancient art of barbecue. *[Laughter]* But as we approach the 200th anniversary of our official relationships, our friendship has never been stronger. We have a common enthusiasm for the future and a common parallel in our history: two nations generously blessed, blessed by nature, blessed by hard-working immigrants eager to build a better life.

Mr. President, I know how much this legacy means to you personally. It says a great deal about Argentina that a child of Syrian immigrants would grow up to be its President. It is remarkable to consider how far you have come and how far the nation has come under your leadership in the last 9 years.

Over the last decade, the world has undergone a remarkable transformation. Nowhere has it been more dramatic or complete than in the Americas, where Argentina has led by its example at home and its commitment abroad to freedom and democracy, to peace and prosperity. A great deal of the credit for South America's achievements and for its promise belongs with the man we honor this evening.

Borges once wrote a poem about our great 18th century theologian Jonathan Edwards. It included this line: "Today is tomorrow and yesterday." Tonight let us remember the best days of our past and plan even better days yet to

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come. But first, let us enjoy an unhurried dinner together. *[Laughter]*

I ask you to join me in a toast to the President and to the people of Argentina.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:33 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Menem.

Remarks Following the Entertainment at the State Dinner Honoring President Carlos Menem of Argentina

January 11, 1999

President Clinton. Well, we want to say, first of all, thank you to our wonderful musicians, our magnificent dancers. I will never look at you again in quite the same way, Robert. *[Laughter]*

We are very grateful to you, and I hope, Mr. President, you feel a little more at home. Thank you, again.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to actor Robert Duvall. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Menem.

Remarks Announcing the Lands Legacy Initiative

January 12, 1999

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for that welcome. Thank you, Jean Mason, for taking the tour with us and for the work you do with the neighborhood association. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for showing up here today and being with us. Jean was telling us that a lot of the schoolchildren in Washington, DC, come to the Arboretum every year on tours. I hope your presence here and her remarks here will lead even more of the city's children to find their way to this remarkable place.

I'd like to thank Thomas Elias for the tour that he gave the Vice President and me and Jean today. And I thank Secretary Babbitt for his strong leadership for the environment, especially in the area that we're discussing today, and Deputy Agriculture Secretary Rich Rominger and the other representatives here from the Agriculture Department, the Commerce Department, the EPA.

And I want to thank Theodore Roosevelt IV for being faithful to his family and his national heritage in all the wonderful work he's done. And I'd like to say just a special word—I see my good friend Senator Gaylord Nelson out

there—people in public life have periodic chances to make an impact that will last far beyond their own lives. I think Senator Nelson certainly has.

Six and a half years ago, in the summer of 1992, in the late spring, when I first talked to Al Gore about joining the ticket in the '92 election, this—what we're here to do today—this is one of the things that I talked to him about. And I said, "I want you to come help me. There are things you know more about than I do." We differ on how many and what they are. *[Laughter]* But anyway, I said, "You know, there are things you know more about than I do." And I said, "We can make a difference that will last forever, for as long as the United States lasts." And he has been faithful to that in this administration, and I'm very grateful to him.

I also want to thank George Frampton for the work that he has done to put this proposal together.

We just took this tour to learn about the vital research the Agriculture Department does here, to also hear about the young children, the families that use this facility. I also heard

about the elementary schoolers who grow vegetables and donate much of their harvest to the D.C. Central Kitchen. I heard about the AmeriCorps members and hundreds of other dedicated volunteers who work here to make sure that we'll always have this beautiful sanctuary in the middle of our Capital City.

I'd like to mention one of them who is here, Mary Morose, over here. Thank you for being here. She is a retired Government geologist who recently donated more than \$1 million of her life's savings to help ensure that the Arboretum will always be here, for the children to see. Thank you, and God bless you.

We're just here trying to follow Mary's lead. We think every child in every community ought to have a chance to grow up around tall trees as well as tall buildings, to know what vegetables look like when they're growing in the ground, not just when they're in the grocery store, to know what it feels like to walk on a carpet of pine needles as well as one of asphalt.

At the dawn of the century, many Americans saw nature only as a resource to be exploited or an obstacle to be overcome. We can all take pride, each of us, in the work that we have done and will do. But it really is truly astonishing that at the dawning of the industrial age in America, Theodore Roosevelt even then knew nature was a divine gift, that old-growth forests were more than trees to be cut down, that a pristine peak was more than a repository of ore. He set aside millions of acres of forests and mountains and valleys and canyons, land shaped by the hand of God over hundreds of millions of years. He defined his great central task as leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us. In the last 100 years, I think only his kinsman, Franklin Roosevelt, approached his devotion to setting aside land and preserving resources.

We have tried over these last 6 years to fulfill that vision. We have set aside more than 1½ million acres in the spectacular red rock canyons in Utah. And I might say, I think more and more folks out there have decided it's not such a bad idea. [Laughter] We have protected vast acres of the Mojave Desert of California, designating three new national parks; saved more than 400,000 pristine acres of land in Alaska. We're about to complete an historic agreement to save vast tracts of ancient redwoods in California. We have worked hard to preserve the Florida Everglades and to restore much of them;

and put a stop to a massive mining operation planned for right next to Yellowstone, America's very first national park.

But we have a lot to do. All of you know that. Our population is growing; our cities are growing; our commitment to conservation must grow as well. We'll never have a better time to act because of the unprecedented prosperity, because we had our first surplus this year—or last year—in nearly 30 years. And we ought to remember what Theodore Roosevelt said, "We are not building this country of ours for a day. We have to make sure it lasts through the ages."

So today I am proud to announce a lands legacy initiative: \$1 billion to meet the conservation challenges of a new century, fully paid for in my new balanced budget, more than doubling our already considerable commitment to protect America's land. It represents the single largest annual investment in protecting our green and open spaces since Theodore Roosevelt set our Nation on the path of conservation nearly a century ago. And to keep on that path, we will be working with Congress to create a permanent funding stream for this purpose, beginning in 2001.

The first part of the plan builds directly on Theodore Roosevelt's conservation legacy by adding new crown jewels to our endowment of natural resources. Next year alone, we will dedicate \$440 million, largely from the sale of oil from existing offshore oil leases, to acquiring and protecting precious lands and coastal waters. Secretary Babbitt and I were talking about it on the way in.

Among our many priorities, we intend to secure an additional 450,000 acres of private land in and around the new Mojave and Joshua Tree National Parks, to expand beautiful forest refuges in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York, to continue our massive restoration of Florida's Everglades, to extend America's marine sanctuaries and restore coastal reefs.

In addition, I will propose to add the highest level of wilderness protection to more than 5 million acres of back-country lands within Yellowstone, Glacier, Great Smoky Mountain, and other national parks. If Congress approves this request, then these places will never know the roar of bulldozers and chainsaws. They will never drown out the call of the wild. Families will still be free to enjoy the lands, but they

will be expected to take only photographs and leave only footprints.

The second part of our plan, which works in tandem with the livable communities initiative the Vice President announced yesterday, represents a new vision of environmental stewardship for the new century. Today, it's no longer enough to preserve our grandest natural wonders. As communities keep growing and expanding, it's become every bit as important to preserve the small but sacred green and open spaces closer to home: woods and meadows and seashores where children can still play; streams where sports men and women can fish; agricultural lands where family farmers can produce the fresh harvest we often take for granted.

In too many communities, farmland and open spaces are disappearing at a truly alarming rate. In fact, across this country, we lose about 7,000 acres every single day. And as the lands become more scarce, it becomes harder and harder for communities to then afford the price of protecting the ones that are left. That's why we have to act now.

So we will also dedicate nearly \$600 million to helping communities across our country save the open spaces that greatly enhance our families' quality of life. With flexible grants, loans, and easements, we will help communities to save parks from being paved over. We'll help to save farms from being turned into strip malls. We'll help them to acquire new lands for urban and suburban forests and recreation sites. We'll help them set aside new wetlands, coastal, and wildlife preserves. There will be no green mandates and no redtape. Instead, the idea is to give communities all over our country the tools they need to make the most of their own possibilities.

Let me just give you an example of what I mean. South Kingstown, Rhode Island, was a quiet farming town for more than two centuries. Today, it's the fastest growing community in the State. Its citizens welcome growth, but they want to maintain their parks and their open spaces. They want to make sure parents won't have to sit in traffic jams when they could be home reading to their children. They want to remain the kind of livable town where employers have no trouble recruiting educated workers interested in a high quality of life. So South Kingstown is setting aside one of every 5 acres as green space. They're revitalizing the historic downtown by creating a greenway along the

Saugatucket River so people can stroll and bike right through the heart of town. And in November voters overwhelmingly approved a million-dollar bond measure to protect more farms and more open spaces.

This is the work we will help them to complete and the kind of work we will help people all over America to do. This is the kind of future-oriented community action all Americans, without regard to party or region, should be supporting, action that combines a vigorous commitment to economic prosperity with an equally vigorous commitment to conservation.

Ever since Theodore Roosevelt launched our Nation on the course of conservation, pessimists have claimed that this would hurt the economy. They've been wrong for 100 years now, but they haven't given up. Time and again they have been wrong. Whether the issue was park land preservation, acid rain, deadly pesticides, polluted rivers, the ozone hole, or any number of other environmental issues all of you know very well, we have always found ways to improve our environment, protect the public health, and enshrine our public heritage and still continue to grow our economy.

In fact, with the recent developments in technology and the looming problems of climate change, we now know that we will have a far more prosperous economy if we do the right things by the environment. And I hope that in the 21st century we will not have to fight that battle for another 100 years.

With this historic lands legacy initiative and the farsighted livable communities plan the Vice President announced yesterday, we will use flexible, innovative means to protect our Nation's and our communities' natural heritage. We will help to create livable cities where both citizens and businesses want to put down roots. We will honor the core principle Theodore Roosevelt set out for us 100 years ago: to leave this magnificent country even a better land for our descendants than it is for us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. at the National Arboretum. In his remarks, he referred to Jean Mason, president, Arboretum Civic Association, who introduced the President; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Thomas S. Elias, Director, National Arboretum; Theodore Roosevelt IV, member, board of directors, League of Conservation Voters, and great-grandson of

President Theodore Roosevelt; former Senator Gaylord Nelson, Earth Day founder; and George T. Frampton, Jr., Acting Chair, Council on Envi-

ronmental Quality. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Labor Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters *January 13, 1999*

The President. First of all, I want to thank these distinguished leaders of the American labor movement for coming here today for this meeting. We are meeting to talk about the economy, the challenges we face in the 21st century—in part, what I intend to say about it at the State of the Union next week. We will be discussing ways we can work together to save Social Security, to renew our public schools, to improve health care, and deal with a whole range of other issues.

In large measure, opportunity for America's labor families and their children will depend upon whether America can master the challenges of a global economy. We have worked hard over the last year, as all of you know, to deal with the global financial crisis and to restore growth. I talked about that at the Detroit Economic Club on Friday. This will require a very vigorous set of actions this year, and a part of it will involve the Congress, part of it will involve our work with other nations over the course of the year. But it will be very important.

I have received a briefing this morning from Secretary Rubin and my economic team on the situation in Brazil, and on the developments in the world markets. We are monitoring these developments closely, especially what is going on in Brazil. We've been in contact with key Brazilian Government officials, the G-7, and other important countries. We've been in contact with the International Monetary Fund. We have a strong interest in seeing Brazil, with whom we have worked on so many important things around the world, carrying forward with its economic reform plan, and succeed. And we certainly hope that they will.

At the present time, I think that's about all I have to say about developments there.

Senate Impeachment Trial

Q. Mr. President, what do you think will be the outcome of the impeachment trial? We know what your hopes are, but what do you think is really going to happen?

The President. I think the Senate has to deal with that. We filed our brief today. It makes our case. The important thing for me is to spend as little time thinking about that as possible and as much time working on the issues we're here to discuss as possible. They have their job to do in the Senate, and I have mine. And I intend to do it. I intend—

Q. Well, do you fear any removal from office, with the buildup of this case?

The President. I think that the brief speaks for itself and the statements which have been made by hundreds of constitutional experts and others—I trust that the right thing will be done. And I think, in the meanwhile, I need to work on the business of the people.

Q. Mr. President, your impeachment is before the Union, and you're giving your State of the Union Address. Don't you think you should directly address that matter during your speech?

The President. I think the American people have heard about that quite extensively over the last year. My instinct is that I should do their business. I think they would like it if somebody up here were putting their interests first, their business first. And I think that's what they expect me to do. They know the Senate has a job to do; they expect them to do it. There is nothing else to be said to the House about it. The Senate has to deal with it.

And my position is that, in addition to that, we have to deal with the problems of America, the challenges of America, the opportunities of America, and that's what I intend to do in the State of the Union speech.

Q. Mr. President, your lawyers are arguing that the charges against you don't amount to

high crimes and misdemeanors. Do you personally believe that perjury and obstruction of justice are not impeachable offenses?

The President. I believe that it's not necessary for me to comment further than our brief. The important thing I think you should be asking yourself is, why did nearly 900 constitutional experts say that they strongly felt that this matter was not the subject of impeachment?

My opinion is not important here. My opinion is that I should be doing my job for the country, and other people should be handling the defense and dealing with this issue. And that's what I intend to do.

Brazilian Currency Devaluation

Q. Mr. President, on Brazil. Do you—[inaudible]—harmful effect on the U.S. economy? We send a lot of exports to Latin America.

The President. Well, as you know, we have worked hard to keep the financial crisis in Asia, which engulfed Asia last year, from spreading to Brazil. Latin America is our fastest growing market for American goods and services. And Brazil is the largest country in Latin America. So obviously, we hope that the situation will be resolved in a satisfactory way not only for the people of Brazil but for all of the people in the Americas that want to continue to enjoy the good progress that all of us have enjoyed in the last several years. And we're working hard to that end and will continue to do so.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:30 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Remarks Announcing an Initiative To Improve Economic Opportunities for Americans With Disabilities

January 13, 1999

Wow! Wasn't she great? Let's give her another hand. She was great. [Applause] Thank you.

On behalf of all of us in our administration, many of whom are here, I want to thank all the advocates for persons with disabilities in our audience. I thank especially Tony Coelho, Becky Ogle, Paul Marchand, my great friend Justin Dart, Paul Miller, and others. I want to thank all the people in the administration, those in the Cabinet who are here with me and the agency heads and the others in the White House who have done so much to help to sensitize me and the Vice President and others to the challenges and our obligations.

I say a special word of thanks to Tom Harkin, who has personally taught me a lot about the issues we discuss today, to Senator Ted Kennedy, and to Senator Jeffords. I knew if I listened long enough, that Republican rhetoric would finally sound good around one issue. [Laughter] And you did it today, and I thank you. You were just great. It was great.

I'd also like to thank two great friends of this cause who are in the audience, Senator Jack Reed from Rhode Island, Congressman

Ben Cardin from Maryland. We thank them for being here.

You know, a lot of things have already been said, and I would like to say something not in my notes. I hope nobody will take this the wrong way, because everybody knows what a great enthusiast I am of athletics. Most of the cameras at this hour are somewhere else, and I want to say, on behalf of my wife from Chicago and myself, that we wish Michael Jordan well. We admire him. We like him very much, and we thank him for years of thrilling exploits. In my life, I don't know that I ever saw another athlete with such a remarkable set of qualities of mind, body, and spirit, not only somebody who had a body that would do things no one else's would do but who always expected to do whatever it was he tried to do. And I think it's appropriate that the sports fans around America take a day or two to ooh and aah and hold their breath again and be glad again.

But the courage of Karen Moore, and all the people like her, is greater still, by far.

I remember once, many years ago, after I lost an election and became the youngest former Governor in American history—[laughter]—with

very dim future prospects, a wise old country lawyer wrote me a letter. And he said, "Bill, you know, it takes a little bit of strength to sustain a terrible setback, but the real courage in life is living through the grind of day-to-day existence with dignity and nobility and charity." How much more true is that for people with disabilities, for whom daily existence can be a greater grind, for whom charity is harder to muster of the spirit, because so many of the rest of us have been so blindly insensitive to things which would enable all of us to get through that daily life better.

A lot of good things have happened since the seventies—Senator Kennedy talked about it—since these gentlemen and others passed the Americans with Disabilities Act. We did have a great renewal of the IDEA a year or so ago. But 75 percent of Americans with disabilities are still unemployed. You just heard why. Millions are forced to make the impossible choice between going to work and keeping their health insurance. Millions more lack the tools and services that could make the difference between dependence and independence.

We all know working is a fundamental part of what we say is the American dream. Maya Angelou once said that work is "something made greater by ourselves, and in turn, that makes us greater." You heard Karen; you heard what she said: "I'm working; how I love being at work. Oh, by the way, my family life is better, and I don't get sick as much." That is not an accident. Every single one of us, we want to be fully engaged in life. And we ought to have the chance to do so.

I like what Senator Jeffords said about how the Congressional Budget Office might or might not estimate this initiative, and I had that argument before and lost it, so I'm not going to get into that. But let me ask you this: When we've got the largest surplus in our history, the longest peacetime expansion in our history, perhaps the strongest economy we've ever had, if we cannot address this issue now, then when will we ever address it? Now is the time.

So, here is what we propose to do. First, you've already heard about the landmark legislation by Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, Roth, and Moynihan to assist millions of Americans with disabilities who want to work. Today I am pleased to announce that the balanced budget I will present to Congress fully funds this vitally important initiative. Americans should never

have to choose between the dignity of work and the health care they need. With this legislation, they'll have a ticket to work, not an impossible choice.

I will also continue to work with Congress to pass legislation I know is very important to the disability community, a strong enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights and to strengthen Social Security for the 21st century, not just for retirees but also for people with disabilities. And we ought to do it this year, with no excuses.

Second, we must make it easier for people with disabilities to get to work. As anyone with a disability can tell you, it takes more than a job to enter the work force. Often, it takes accessible transportation, specialized technology, or personal assistance. And the cost can be prohibitively high. Today I am pleased to announce a new \$1,000 tax credit so hundreds of thousands of people with disabilities will be helped to meet these critically important expenses.

Finally, we have to give people with disabilities the tools they need to succeed; we all need that. I hope all of you had a chance to experience and see the amazing displays out there in the Grand Foyer, from a portable computer kiosk that helps people with disabilities vote or find a job, to the latest voice recognition software that lets you use a computer without touching a keyboard, to a new generation of mobile telephones that connect directly to hearing aids, to a device to immediately translate music into braille. This kind of "assistive technology," as it is called, will empower people as never before. Today I am pleased to announce that my budget will double our investment in this sort of technology, to make it more available to people with disabilities. We also will help States to expand low-income loan programs to help more people afford these promising products. The Federal Government will become a model user of assistive technology. We will increase our commitment to research and development to continue our progress.

Increased access to health care, more assistance at home and in the workplace, remarkable new technologies made more available—this is how we can make sure that all Americans can take their rightful place in our 21st century workplaces.

Last summer the Vice President announced our plan to build at the FDR Memorial a new statue of President Roosevelt in the wheelchair from which he led our Nation, the wheelchair

he then felt compelled to hide because of the negative attitudes of his time. Well, we've come a long way since those days. And even though we in public life get to make the speeches, I think it's clear to all of us that you deserve the credit—all of the work you have done.

People with disabilities are increasingly a powerful presence in America, from our schools to our businesses to the halls of government—but maybe equally important, increasingly a welcome, comfortable, normal presence. President Roosevelt said, “No country, no matter how rich, can afford to waste its human resources.” This is really all about living up to that objective.

Thank you, Karen. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Let's go out and pass this legislation. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:58 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to polio survivor and transit system dispatcher Karen Moore, who introduced the President; Tony Coelho, Chairman, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities; Rebecca Ogle, Executive Director, National Task Force on Employment of Adults With Disabilities; Justin Dart, Jr., chairman and founder, Justice For All; Paul Marchand, chairman, Consortium for Citizens With Disabilities; Paul Steven Miller, Commissioner, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; five-time National Basketball Association MVP Michael Jordan, who announced his retirement; and poet Maya Angelou. The President also referred to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997, Public Law 105–17.

Statement on the Retirement of Michael Jordan

January 13, 1999

Today's retirement announcement by Michael Jordan marks a sad day for all those who love basketball and for sports fans around the world. In his many years on the court, Michael brought superhuman skill and unmatched athleticism, competitive fire, dedication, and teamwork to the all-American sport he loves. Like those other American pioneers, the Wright brothers, Michael Jordan proved that humans can indeed fly.

Beyond his uncanny ability to defy gravity or hit the crucial shot when everything depended on it, Michael showed generations of young

sports fans how to be a good person while being a great champion. Although we will miss seeing him play, we know at least that his career ended exactly as it should have, with one last game-winning basket to bring the Chicago Bulls their sixth championship.

As a daughter of Chicago, Hillary is especially sorry to see him go. We wish Michael, Juanita, and their family all the best in the future.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a statement by the President and the First Lady.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting a Certification Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention

January 13, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, I

hereby certify in connection with Condition (7)(C)(i), Effectiveness of Australia Group, that:

Australia Group members continue to maintain an equally effective or more comprehensive control over the export of: toxic chemicals and their precursors, dual-use

processing equipment, human, animal, and plant pathogens and toxins with potential biological weapons applications, and dual-use biological equipment, as that afforded by the Australia Group as of April 25, 1997; and

The Australia Group remains a viable mechanism for limiting the spread of chemical and biological weapons-related materials and technology, and the effectiveness of the Australia Group has not been undermined by changes in membership, lack of compliance with common export controls and nonproliferation measures, or the weak-

ening of common controls and nonproliferation measures, in force as of April 25, 1997.

For your information, the Australia Group has not loosened its controls on chemical and biological weapons-related items since the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting a Certification Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention *January 13, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, I hereby certify that:

In connection with Condition (9), Protection of Advanced Biotechnology, the legitimate commercial activities and interests of chemical, biotechnology, and pharmaceutical firms in the United States are not

being significantly harmed by the limitations of the Convention on access to, and production of, those chemicals and toxins listed in Schedule 1 of the Annex on Chemicals.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention *January 13, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Attached is a report to the Congress on cost-sharing arrangements, as required by Condition 4(A) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on

Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives,

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and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Comprehensive Trade and Development Policy for Africa January 13, 1999

Dear _____:

I am pleased to submit the fourth of five annual reports on the Administration's Comprehensive Trade and Development Policy for Africa, as required by section 134 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act. This year has seen progress in our trade policy and the deepening of trade relationships with Africa.

I was proud to be first President to undertake a comprehensive visit to Africa this past year. In March, I visited Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda, South Africa, Botswana, and Senegal. At each stop, I was struck by the remarkable opportunities for the United States to expand our growing relationship with Africa based on mutually beneficial trade and development. In the months since my return, my Administration has worked to expand and exploit those opportunities through practical measures, including undertaking trade missions, negotiating trade agreements, and implementing debt relief and technical assistance programs for Africa's strongest reformers.

These efforts continue to build on the strategy I announced in the June 1997 *Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity in Africa* (*Partnership*). Our goal continues to be sustained economic development for Africa, and we are guided by the conviction that economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa will benefit both Africans and Americans. We continue to believe, as outlined in the *Partnership*, that trade should not replace aid. Effective aid assists countries in building healthy, literate, and informed populations able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by increased trade and investment. Well-focused assistance, combined with strong reforms and increased trade and investment, will break Africa's old patterns of dependency.

The report I am sending to the Congress today reviews our achievements of the past year

in implementing the goals of the *Partnership*. First, we have improved market access for African and American products in our respective markets by negotiating trade agreements that are mutually beneficial and increasing interaction between the United States and African private sectors through trade missions and high-level visits.

Second, we have implemented technical assistance programs to increase African knowledge of, and ability to work within, the global trading system. Through invigorated reform and assistance efforts, we are helping Africa to build the trading infrastructure it will need to become a strong trade partner for the United States, integrated within the global economy.

We have also put in place a number of initiatives to increase private investment in Sub-Saharan Africa, including the Department of Transportation's Safe Skies Initiative, increased access to credit for projects in African countries through the Export-Import Bank, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation's equity funds to finance increased private investment. With FY99 funds appropriated for this purpose, we have begun to forgive remaining bilateral concessional debt owed by Africa's strongest reforming countries.

Finally, we have begun planning for a broad-based meeting at the ministerial level with African countries to discuss how we can work most effectively together to forward our shared goal of sustained and mutually beneficial economic development and trade. We hope to hold the first U.S.-African Economic Cooperation Forum with representatives from Africa's strongest reforming countries later this year.

I was disappointed that the 105th Congress did not complete consideration of the African Growth and Opportunity Act. This trade initiative is an important complement to our *Partnership* strategy. It would afford greater market

access for selected products from the strongest reforming countries in Africa and, by doing so, would help change the dynamic of our trade policy with the continent. The Act would also benefit American companies and workers by expanding our trade with the largest underdeveloped market in the world. I am committed to working for passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act early in the 106th Congress.

My Administration will continue working with the Congress, the U.S. private sector, the countries of Africa, and our trading partners to implement the policies and programs contained in the report and to promote reforms boosting trade, investment, and development in Africa.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; William V. Roth, Jr., chairman, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, ranking member, Senate Committee on Finance; and Bill Archer, chairman, and Charles B. Rangel, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14.

Remarks on the Next Generation COPS Initiative in Alexandria, Virginia January 14, 1999

Madam Attorney General; Deputy Attorney General Holder; Associate Attorney General Fisher; Mayor Donley; Chief Samarra; all the members of the Alexandria police force; to all the other chiefs and law enforcement officials who are here; the representatives of law enforcement who are here; Gil Gallegos, the president of the National FOP; Sam Cabral, the International Union of Police Associations president; Ron Neubauer, the International Association of Chiefs of Police president: I am delighted to see all of you.

I really enjoyed listening to Senator Biden and Senator Robb reminisce about how this bill came to be. I want to say a special word of thanks, if I might, to the team at the Justice Department and especially to Joe Brann, who himself is a former chief of police, the Director of our COPS program. Thank you, Joe, for doing such a great job with our police officers. [*Inaudible*]

You know, when I asked Janet Reno to be Attorney General, she had been the prosecutor in Miami. And the main thing I wanted to do with the Justice Department was to deal with what I thought the biggest problem in America was at that time—legal problem—which is that there was a very, very high crime rate, and the violent crime rate was especially high. And there was—I had spent a lot of time both as

attorney general of my own State and as a Governor. I had run a prison system and watched it explode. I had managed a large State police operation. Then, as a Governor and later as a candidate, I had actually walked the streets and been in the neighborhoods of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, San Antonio, Los Angeles, looking for strategies that worked to bring the crime rate down.

And so when I asked Janet Reno to come on, I said, “The most important thing is that the local police, the local prosecutors, the local mayors, the people that are out there worrying about the crime rate, they have to know not only that we are their friends but we are their partners. And we’re going to stop doing what normally happens in Washington, which is that you make speeches and talk tough and nothing happens. I would rather say less and do more.” And by 1993, when I took office, we were beginning to see in many major cities crime rates go down because of the development at the local level of community policing strategies.

And it is true that we would never have been able to do this without the leadership of Senator Biden and the support of Senator Robb. We finally were able to pass that crime bill, to get into community policing, to have 100,000 police on the street, to ban the assault weapons, to build more prisons, to have more prevention

programs to keep kids out of trouble in the first place. And I would like to say a special word of appreciation to law enforcement for proving that Joe and Chuck and I were right. You see a guy like Joe Biden up here, full of enthusiasm—wouldn't it break your heart if it turned out to be wrong? What kind of speech—can you imagine him giving a hang-dog speech? It would have been terrible. *[Laughter]*

So I want to thank you. I want to thank you for a lot of things, for staying with us with the assault weapons ban, for staying with us with the Brady bill, which has now kept a quarter of a million—a quarter of a million—felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting handguns. I want to thank you for proving that there are people like Irma Rivera out there in America—all over America—who want to wear uniforms and make the streets safer and give our kids their futures back. She was terrific, wasn't she? Let's give her another hand. *[Applause]* Thank you.

So we're very happy. If you look there at the reduction in crime on that chart, you see that crime rates overall have dropped to a 25-year low; property crime down; violent crimes declined 20 percent in the last 6 years. The murder rate is at its lowest level nationwide in 30 years, mostly due to the dropping number of young people with guns. We can take a lot of pride in what has happened and in the strategy that has brought it about.

We have seen the impact of more police. We've seen the impact of the prevention programs, of the penalties, the efforts to get guns out of the hands of criminals, the burning out of the crack epidemic, thank the Lord. And we've seen greater peace of mind coming, probably more than anything else, from the presence of the police on the street, in the neighborhood, in a preventive, cooperative fashion. And that is very, very good.

Now, having said all that, I want to go back to a point Senator Biden made. Dealing with crime, now that it's down, is kind of like dealing with the economy. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years. But it doesn't mean anything to somebody without a job or to a depressed neighborhood. And given how volatile things are in the world—all you have to do is pick up the paper every day and read about it—we've got to stay on the economy.

The same thing is true of crime, except in some ways more so, because, yes, the crime

rate is the lowest it's been in 30 years, and you heard the Attorney General say that means there will be under 3 million victims. Three million people is a lot of people—3 million families, 3 million friends. I don't know anyone who seriously believes that we have a country as safe as it ought to be. I don't know anyone who seriously believes that we're saving every young person and keeping them out of trouble in the first place. I don't know anyone who seriously believes that we can be the kind of country we want to be if we have to continue these levels of incarceration, if we have to continue spending more and more money on prisons that we ought to be spending on education, on after-school programs, on summer school programs, on keeping these kids out of trouble in the first place.

So I say, in spite of all this celebration, what we should do is to say, "Okay, we know what works. Now let's bear down and keep doing it until we have got this problem as small as it can possibly be." No serious person thinks that we are there. So, for my money, what we ought to be doing today is saying, "Hallelujah, this works! Now let's keep on doing it until we have squeezed every last drop of possibility for peace and security out of this strategy."

We are, as you have heard, on time, ahead of schedule, under budget with the 100,000 police program. In fact, we have already funded more than 92,000 of the 100,000 community police. We will fund them all in the near future, and that is very, very encouraging.

Now, we also have to deal with the fact—you heard Senator Biden mention this—that our community policing effort is set to expire in the year 2000. I still believe we need to do more. It's still dangerous work; 155 of your colleagues lost their lives in the last year. It's still a numbers game in some places.

When we started this 100,000 police program, the violent crime rate had tripled in the previous 30 years, but the size of the police forces, in the aggregate, had gone up only 10 percent. So we got the violent crime rate and the overall crime rate coming down, but there's still not an intersection. In other words, the police force is going from 500,000 to 600,000—that's a 20 percent increase—but we still need to do more.

Now, today I came here to say that in my balanced budget proposal to the Congress, which I will unveil at the State of the Union Address, we will have nearly \$1.3 billion, an

increase of more than \$6 billion over 5 years—\$1.3 billion for the next year, budget year—to renew our community policing program. This will help to hire and redeploy an additional 30–50,000 community police officers over that same period. It will be the best investment we can make in a safe future for our children, and I hope we can pass it with your help.

We also, as has already been said, need to make sure that our police officers have 21st century tools to do their jobs. Today, drug dealers communicate by cell phones and pagers; scam artists work the Internet; gangs carry cutting-edge weaponry. Criminals have the best technology. Police should, too. Therefore, today I propose we devote \$350 million in the balanced budget to put crime-fighting technology into the hands of police officers.

For too long, we have seen some criminals go free because the methods used to gather evidence were not up-to-date. But when police can report from their squad cars, rather than return to the station to fill out paperwork, they spend more time on the beat. When officers can track crime as it happens, using innovative crime-mapping technology, they can respond more quickly and effectively.

Chief Samarra has told us what a difference these new tools can make here in Alexandria. And the Vice President has put together a task force to help more communities take maximum advantage of available technology.

Police carry a heavy burden, but we know they can't carry it alone, and we have to do more to engage all our communities in the fight against crime, to help win the fight police have been waging so successfully.

We also have in this budget additional funds for community-based crime-fighting, everything from neighborhood DA's to work closely with police and residents, to faith-based organizations to help to prevent juvenile crime.

And I want to say one last thing about the role of the police. We could never have gotten the prevention funds we have gotten in the last 5 years if the law enforcement community

hadn't advocated it. I was astonished when I came to Washington to see how many Members of Congress were literally afraid to vote for prevention, afraid that people back home would think they were soft on crime or weak or looking the other way. But when all the people in uniform who had their lives on the line came up and testified, "Hey, we cannot jail our way out of this problem. We've got to keep more of these kids out of trouble in the first place. That's the least expensive, most humane, most ethical to proceed here"—you made it possible for these programs to work.

One of the things that's really going to help you do your job is something that is going to be in my education budget I announced last week. We are going to triple the funds for after-school programs to keep kids learning in school—something positive, rather than learning something negative on the streets—when during the hours after school the juvenile crime rate soars. None of this would have been possible if the police officers of the country hadn't been willing to come to the Congress and say, "Hey, this works. Help us keep these kids out of trouble in the first place." So we thank you for that as well.

America is grateful for the hard work of our men and women in uniform. Every day you make our streets and schools safer, our homes more secure, and in so doing—make no mistake about it—you make freedom more real for the American people. We know you can't do it alone. We've tried to be good partners. We intend to be better partners as we move to the next century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:42 a.m. at the Alexandria Police Station. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Kerry J. Donley of Alexandria; Chief Charles E. Samarra, Alexandria Police Department; and Officer Irma Rivera, Arlington County Police Department. The President also referred to the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) program.

Jan. 14 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Telephone Remarks to the Wall Street Project Conference *January 14, 1999*

I am very sorry that bad weather prevented me from being with you tonight. But if Mother Nature is kind, I will be in New York tomorrow. I want to thank all of you for coming together through the Wall Street Project to work to ensure that the unprecedented prosperity of our time reaches into every corner of America.

We are living in blessed times. Our economy is the strongest in a generation. Our social fabric is mending. That's why we must seize this moment of prosperity to tackle some of our greatest challenges. You gather tonight in one of the greatest monuments of American capitalism. But just blocks away, there are hard-working families who have yet to feel the prosperity. We have not only an opportunity, we've got an obligation to give all of them the tools they need to share in this bounty.

As leaders of the companies on the Big Board, as the men and women who have helped to transform America into the world's economic superpower, you must help to build the bridge between those who work in our gleaming office towers and those who live in their shadows,

between Wall Street and our greatest untapped markets. Tomorrow I'll talk about my plan to work with all of you to bring capital and hope to our most underserved neighborhoods.

Not too long ago, Reverend Jackson once talked about the freedom symphony he would write for America. The first movement would represent our liberation from slavery; the second would be the struggle to end legal segregation; the third would be the fight to win the vote; and the final movement would be the crusade to bring economic opportunity to all Americans. You can help to write that movement. In fact, it can't be written without you.

I thank you for helping to make sure that no family is left behind. And I look forward to seeing all of you tomorrow.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8:30 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House to the conference in New York City. In his remarks, he referred to Jesse Jackson, founder and president, Rainbow/PUSH Coalition.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 *January 14, 1999*

Dear _____:

Pursuant to section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-114), (the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 1999, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15.

Statement on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996
January 15, 1999

I am today notifying the Congress that I have decided to suspend for an additional 6 months implementation of provisions of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, which allow legal actions to be brought against firms trafficking in confiscated properties in Cuba. I believe that this decision best implements the Act's objective to enhance human rights and hasten the day when the Cuban people enjoy democracy and prosperity.

This action further enhances our efforts to strengthen international cooperation in promoting peaceful democratic change in Cuba. For the past 2½ years, the United States has pursued a strategy, coordinated by Under Secretary of State Stu Eizenstat, to increase international pressure on the Cuban Government to respect human rights and to begin political and economic reforms. We have urged our democratic friends and allies to take concrete actions in support of this goal. Encouraged by the results, in January 1997 I said that I expected to continue suspending this provision of Title III so long as our partners' stepped-up pro-democracy efforts continued.

Over the past 6 months, the Cuban Government has heard a more concerted message from the international community in support of democracy. A number of national leaders have publicly and privately pressed senior Cuban officials on the need for human rights and democracy. While visiting Cuba, they have spoken openly of the need for change, and they have met with and given important encouragement to pro-democracy human rights activists. In international forums, our friends in Latin America and Europe have been explicit in their con-

demnation of Cuba's deplorable human rights situation. The European Union has renewed its Common Position on Cuba, calling for "a peaceful transition to pluralist democracy, the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." The senior-level report made at the U.S.-EU Summit last month stressed our joint efforts to promote such a transition in Cuba. This partnership has succeeded in increasing international pressure on Cuba to respect human rights and make fundamental reforms. Nongovernmental organizations have augmented their efforts as well. A strong consensus is emerging among business and labor groups that investors in Cuba should adhere to clear "best business" principles. While we do not encourage investment in Cuba, we welcome efforts to seek the agreement of those who do invest to provide Cuban workers with decent pay, the right to organize, and safe working conditions. Major European NGO's have undertaken to develop an international working group to pursue this important initiative further.

We underscored our determination to support freedom in Cuba again on December 10, International Human Rights Day, when we honored human rights activists around the world, including the four members of Cuba's Internal Dissidence Working Group awaiting trial merely for defending their right to speak freely about their hopes for the future. Their willingness to make personal sacrifices for their peaceful, democratic cause inspires us to persevere on their behalf. I again pledge this administration's strongest efforts to encourage and work with our allies on effective steps to promote democracy and human rights in Cuba.

Remarks to the Global Forum for Reinventing Government
January 15, 1999

Thank you very much. Thank you. Mr. Vice President, Madam Secretary, Mr. Nye, Prime Minister Shipley, Vice President Bell, to the leaders of other nations and international organi-

zations; Mr. Smith from the Ford Foundation and all the others from the private sector in America; and I want to say a special word of thanks to the employees of our Government

who are here, without which none of this could be done.

I was glad to hear the joke that the representatives from Thailand told yesterday. I have cut a lot of redtape sideways in my life. I was glad to hear you laugh at the Vice President's remark about using plain language in Government regulations. I think that must be a common problem throughout the world. But mostly, I'm glad to see you in such a good frame of mind about this.

You know, one of the problems with having a continuous reinventing Government effort is that it almost never gets any headlines in the newspaper, and most people who cover it think it is about as exciting as watching paint dry. [Laughter] So I think that means that if you're going to do this, you need sort of an extra dose of determination and good humor, because I believe it is truly one of the most important things that those of us in public life today can do.

I've been interested in this for a long time. When I was the Governor of my State, we had what I believe was the first State government-wide ongoing effort in the country. When I became President, I knew we had to change old policies and old ways of doing things. Besides, we were flat broke and running a huge deficit. And even worse, the American people had a very low level of confidence in the Government. I used to say that everyone in America thinks that our Government would foul up a two-car parade. We wanted to change all that. We knew it was important for our economy. We knew it was important for our political success. We knew it was important for the integrity of our democracy.

Fortunately for me, Vice President Gore agreed. And he approached this task as he does everything he really cares about, with an astonishing amount of energy, determination, and intelligence. And I'm sure you have seen, he has absorbed about everything there is to absorb about this subject. And if you hang around long enough, he will give you a chance to know everything he knows about it. [Laughter]

We have a theory about this; most people think it's so boring we have to have a joke every 3 minutes when discussing it. [Laughter] But it is very serious. When the history of our time here is written, the leadership of the Vice President in doing this will be one of the signal

achievements of this administration, and I am very, very grateful to him for a superb job.

We also are heavily into reinventing speeches here; you see I crossed out the first paragraph, and I go from page one to page three. So you'll be out of pain before you know it. [Laughter]

Let me also say to you we have a selfish reason in hosting this conference. We've not tried to reinvent the wheel. We have tried to borrow good ideas wherever we could find them. We very much want to know what is going on in every other country in the world, just as we want to be helpful to every other country in the world if we can.

I'd like to make just one or two points if I might. First is one you know, but I think it bears repeating: This will not work if it is a one-shot effort, if it is something that happens for a month or 6 months or even for a year. In fact, I think you should measure your success in part by whether you have put in a system so integral to the operation of government—a process—and whether you have embedded in the public's mind the importance of this to the extent that all your successors in whatever offices you hold will have to follow suit. That, I think, is the ultimate measure of whether we are successful. Because no matter how long you serve, no matter how hard you work, you will either leave things on the table that are undone, or new opportunities will emerge with the revolutions and technology in human organization that are constantly unfolding.

Our basic theory has been that we ought to have a Government for the information age that is smaller, that lives within its means, but that actually is capable of doing more of what needs to be done. We believe what needs to be done is that we should focus mostly on giving people the tools they need to solve their own problems. We should help people who, through no fault of their own, can't get along through life without help. But most of what we should be doing is creating the conditions and giving people the tools to make their lives as dynamic as the world in which we live.

I also want to emphasize again how important it is to be able to stand up and say that we are giving people good value for their tax investment, because I found that our people tend to judge the reinventing Government sometimes not by what we think they would. It sounds

very impressive to say we have the smallest Federal Government since John Kennedy was President, because we are a much bigger Government. But people want to know, "Well, how does that affect me?"

If you say we've saved \$138 billion that helped us balance the budget, bring interest rates down, and lower their mortgage rates, that's something people can understand. If you say we reformed welfare, that sounds good. But if you say we have the smallest welfare rolls in 29 years, and we have gotten a lot of people into the work force but helped them with child care and education and transportation—so we're not just putting out numbers and behind it there are human people suffering because they are cut out of the safety net—that means something.

If you can say to a small-business person, "It used to take weeks or months for us to process your request for a loan, and now it takes a matter of days," and the form was once an inch thick, and now it's a page long, that means something to people because it affects their lives.

And so I would say to all of you—I made a lot of jokes about it, but I do think we have to find ways to talk about this that make it interesting to our people and that bring it home to them, because that is the best guarantee of our continuing to work.

One other point I'd like to make is for national governments—most national governments have regulatory and other relationships with the private sector and also have financial relationships with local government. I believe a very important and increasingly important aspect of this whole reinventing Government issue will be, how do national governments relate to their private sector. We're trying harder and harder to do less regulation and instead to create incentives and frameworks to solve problems that meet national goals. How do national governments relate to local governments? This is very controversial in our country from time to time. My theory is, just because we gave out money last year in the way we've been giving it out for 20 years, in education, law enforcement, or any other issue, doesn't mean we should continue to give the money out that way if it doesn't work anymore.

We had this huge argument back in 1994 when we tried to pass a crime bill because, interestingly enough, our conservatives argued that it was wrong for the Federal Government

to give money to local governments only if they would agree to hire police officers and put them on the street and have them work in a certain way. But we had learned from local governments that work that that was all that works to bring the crime rate down. So we jammed through this bill, and the people who were against it screamed and hollered that I was presuming to tell police chiefs what to do. Nothing could have been further than the truth. The police chiefs told me what to do. And what we told the people, between the President and the Congress and the police chiefs, was, "You can't have this money unless you do what they say works."

And we now have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest murder rate in 30 years, partly because of the improvement in the economy but partly because law enforcement works better. We have gone 30 years in which we had tripled the crime rate—violent crime rate—and increased our police forces only 10 percent.

So I think that there is a way in which we should look not only to the internal operations of our own Government, how our systems work and how they serve the people, but how the relationship between Government and the private sector and national governments and local governments can work more effectively.

Finally, let me say that I think that we have—and I'm sure all of you already know this—but I think we have a very strong vested interest in each other's success. If we didn't learn anything from 1998 and the financial turmoil we experienced all over the world, it is that, in the world we live in, competition is good, but failure of our competitors is bad. Competition is good, but the failure of our competitors is bad. We want competition to work within a framework in which we all do better, in which we urge each other on, economically, socially, politically, every way, to higher levels of humane development—so that the United States, for example, clearly has an interest that when the Government of Russia tries to put in place a system that will fairly assess and collect taxes.

Quite apart from the obvious interest we have, and all of you do, in having a system that will help us to continue to reduce the nuclear threat, the United States has an interest in the success of governments in Asia developing regulatory systems that will minimize the spread of financial contagion. We have an interest in nations in Africa and in Latin America and elsewhere who are trying to develop with limited

resources the very best possible education and health systems. We have an interest in learning from nations all over the world that have done a better job than we have in managing their natural resources and developing sound environmental policies while growing their economy.

We have an interest in seeing how the European nations are trying to adapt their social welfare systems that were created after World War II to the demands of the information age, so that they can lower unemployment, increase job growth, and still maintain the integrity of a genuine social safety net—big issue for developed countries. We have lower unemployment and greater inequality; they have more equality and higher unemployment. How can we bridge the gap? And we're interested in the experiments in Great Britain and the experiments in the Netherlands and in other countries. We have an interest. And if those countries succeed, we are not threatened; our lives are enhanced. And I think we should all have that attitude.

Finally, let me say that this is about more than economics. It's even about more than having our customers happy, although I must say one of the biggest kicks I've gotten as President is when a major national business magazine said that the Social Security agency was the best large organization in America, public or private, at providing telephone service to its customers. I like that.

This is about, in my judgment, the preservation of the vitality of democracy. In some countries that are new democracies, it may be about the preservation of democracy itself. But in the end, every one of us serves because people believe in the possibility of self-government through representatives. To the extent that people do not believe their representatives will handle their money for public purposes the way they themselves would, democracy itself is diminished; human potential is diminished; the capacity for worldwide cooperation is diminished.

So I say again, you may not get the headlines back home for this. You may have to tell your own jokes because you won't be able to make anybody else laugh. But never underestimate the profound and enduring importance of what it is you have come here to discuss. We are honored to have you here, and we thank you for your contribution and your dedication.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph Nye, president, Harvard University Kennedy School of Government; Prime Minister Jennifer Shipley of New Zealand; Vice President Gustavo Bell of Colombia; and Bradford Smith, vice president, Ford Foundation.

Remarks to the Wall Street Project Conference in New York City January 15, 1999

The President. Thank you. I'm not sure I know what to say. [*Laughter*] First I was thinking, here I have to go follow Jesse again. [*Laughter*] You know the story about the guy that went to heaven, and St. Peter said, "Well, we've got a lot of new entrants today, and we want everybody to stand up and tell them what the best thing they ever did in their life was. How would you like to participate?" The guy said, "I'd like to do that. I did a great thing once." He said, "Well, what did you do?" He said, "I saved a bunch of people in a flood." He said, "Fine, you go on right after Noah." [*Laughter*]

I will say one thing, Reverend. This marriage of Jesse Jackson and Wall Street, so full of promise, has already produced one incredibly vivid, concrete result: It has done wonders for your wardrobe. [*Laughter*] I see your sons out there thinking, "No, we did that." [*Laughter*]

I want to say, first of all, to all of you who are here, I'm grateful for the wonderful reception. To the previous speakers—I had actually no idea that they were going to say what they did, and I was very moved, and I thank you for that. That's the sort of thing you normally hear—or you normally don't hear because it's said—[*laughter*—that's the sort of thing people

say for your funeral—[laughter]—and I don't think we're there yet. [Laughter]

What you're here to do and what you said about what I tried to do is what I'd like to ask you to think about just for a few minutes. Just about everybody in our administration who's here has been introduced; they do come from all over, from all walks of life and all backgrounds. I'm proud of them. I'm proud of the work that Congressman Rangel and Congressman Bishop and Congressman Meeks and Congressman Jackson and others have done to help us. I'm proud that you have people like Jack Kemp and some Republican business leaders who are here. I'm proud of the fact that you have John Sweeney and Percy Sutton and my friend Ron Burkle and others here. I'm proud of the fact that you have tried to reach across all the lines that divide.

I'm very, very proud especially, Reverend, that you have made this initiative to Appalachia. You know, 20 years ago this year, I became the youngest Governor in America. And when I became Governor of my home State, 5 of the 25 poorest counties in America were in Arkansas: 2 were in the Mississippi Delta; 3 were in the Arkansas Ozarks, our Appalachia. Twenty years ago, that was a very sobering thing to me. It's all the more sobering that it hasn't changed all that much in a lot of rural America.

Fifteen years ago this year, I worked with other Governors to establish the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission. It went from the mouth of the Mississippi up through the Mississippi Delta, all the way up into all-white areas of east Tennessee and southern Illinois, who had—by the time I ran for President in 1992, in southern Illinois there were still counties with 20 percent unemployment.

Twenty-five years ago, when I came home wet behind the ears from law school, among my first clients were old coalminers whose lungs were rotted out with black lung disease and whose families barely had enough to live on. I have never understood, from the time I was a child in my grandfather's store—he had a sixth grade education and an African-American clientele—why in the wide world people with common needs, common dreams, and common capacities would spend their time fighting over a shrinking pie instead of building a bigger one. And this is a good thing for America.

Previous speakers have talked about the economy. I am proud of this visionary effort to build a bridge between Wall Street and our greatest untapped markets. And because the economy is so good, now is the time to build that bridge. If we can't do it now, when in the wide world will we ever get around to it? If there was ever a time when none of us have an excuse, this is that time. But the world changes very fast, and we have to seize the moment.

You know, Tuesday night when I give the State of the Union Address, I want to talk about the great long-term, still-unmet challenges of the 21st century: the aging America, the fact that we have the largest and most diverse population of children in our schools in history. But a big part of it is the need to build strong, economically successful communities in the places where prosperity has not reached, in the inner cities, in rural America, and don't forget, on our Native-American reservations, as well.

Jesse Jackson came to Wall Street—the same reason Willie Sutton robbed banks: That's where the money is. [Laughter] And I don't mean that in a pejorative way. How could any American of any station in life not be proud of the financial markets we have built and, as Mr. Grasso said, of the fact that now 200 million of our 260 million people actually benefit from it? We are beginning to share the wealth. We need to do more of that, and I'll have some more to say about that later. But that's why Jack Kemp is here and why I always liked him. [Laughter]

Mr. Kemp. I like you, too, Mr. President. [Laughter]

The President. Although, when Reverend Jackson said he was the ultimate Republican, I thought, would that it were so. [Laughter] I probably just destroyed his future prospects. [Laughter] I'll be glad to renounce that anytime you want. [Laughter]

But I ask you to think about this. Wall Street has done a great thing in spreading the wealth across America because now 200 million people directly or indirectly benefit from the stock market, because a lot of the stock market are pension funds, retirement funds, now mutual funds, things that get all kinds of people into the stock market. It is only natural that not only is this where the money is, but they have found ways to involve large numbers of people. And yet we know there are still pockets that are relatively untouched.

Now, some of them are just down the street. Treasurer McCall over there, he manages New York's money. He'd have more to manage if the unemployment rate in New York weren't twice the national average. He'd have more money to rebuild these old schools, more money to give all these kids in troubled neighborhoods after-school programs and summer school programs and opportunities they need to develop their full abilities.

You know, I always say, one of Clinton's 10 rules of politics is, whenever somebody tells you, looks you straight in the eye and says, "This is not a money problem," you can bet everything you've got they're talking about somebody else's problem, not theirs. [*Laughter*] It is partly a money problem.

Now, before we—so we have to find ways for you to do this. I think the Government has a role to play here. I think we have to do our part. And I thank the Members of Congress who are here. The first thing we have to do is to stay with the strategy that's gotten us this far. You know, this year—there are a lot of things that I wish I could be announcing more investment in, in the State of the Union. But we've got to keep the budget balanced to keep the interest rates low and the confidence high. We've got to keep investing in our people and target the money we do have to education, to training, to technology, to things that will develop their abilities. And we've got to show leadership and continue to expand trade and deal with this financial crisis around the world, because the global economy is either going to work for us or against us. Thirty percent of our growth has come from our relationships with other countries.

The second thing we have to do is to keep working to do what we can to revitalize communities, not by ignoring them or by trying to impose kind of one-size-fits-all programs, but by doing what we've been trying to do: being a partner with people who live in each community and being a catalyst to bring the spark of private enterprise. These partnerships work in interesting ways.

We put 100,000 police out there in the crime bill, and we've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest murder rate in 30 years. And we don't tell people who they must hire or how to train them or where to deploy them. But it makes a difference. In 1993, when I took office, the crime rate—the violent crime

rate had tripled in 30 years, and the number of police had only gone up 10 percent. It wasn't rocket science; people needed help. Local governments—the economy was down—they didn't have the money to hire the police and train them and deploy them properly.

When we offered tax cuts to clean up brownfields, all kinds of inner-city neighborhoods were able to be revitalized. We've got cities now that hadn't had a new factory in a month of Sundays getting actually new manufacturing facilities in their backyard and providing good jobs. That's what we try to do with the empowerment zones and the community development banks—just to give people tools to do what they want to do.

And I appreciated what Weldon said about affirmative action. I hope we can end it some day. But if you see what's happened in the examples where people have cut it out altogether, it seems to me the rest of us are disadvantaged. My daughter is in college. I want her to go to college with a bunch of students that look like Americans, because that's the America she's going to live in. So I ask you to think about that.

I want to thank Secretary Slater, who's here. The Department of Transportation will issue its new rules on disadvantaged business enterprises in the next few days and extend more opportunity to more people.

In the past 5 years—I'd like to say one thing about the banking community that I think is important—we've worked very hard to both streamline and strengthen the Community Reinvestment Act. It was also under fire, has been under fire, still is under fire by some. That Community Reinvestment Act has been on the books for more than 20 years, but 95 percent of all the financial commitments made under the law in the last 20 years have been made in the last 5 years. That's more than \$1 trillion in long-term commitments to invest in people.

And I might say, our banks are more profitable than they were 10 years ago. This is not bad for business; this is good for business. I guess the presence of the business leaders and the Wall Street people here among the previous speakers ought to make that general point. This is not a welfare program; it is not a charity program. We are not asking anybody to do anything we do not think they will make money out of. And if they can't make money out of it, we can't ask them to do it. What we're trying

to do is to create an environment and create the conditions in which it is more likely that more people will take a chance. We believe they will be rewarded by the chances they take.

Now, again I say, we know that we've got this booming economy, but we also know the overwhelming majority of the capital is bypassing our underserved areas. We know that in boardrooms all across America today, people are laying plans for new investments in emerging markets, and not all of them are in trouble today. We know that venture capitalists are planning new ventures, from Silicon Valley to the suburbs of Washington, DC. But especially with—especially with the problems in Asia and the uncertainties abroad, we need to ask ourselves, how are we going to keep growing the economy, keep the unemployment rate low, with inflation down? How are we going to do that? The answer is, we've got to find more places to invest and more customers. And the largest pool of untapped investment opportunities and new customers are not beyond our shores; they're in our backyard.

They're up the street in Harlem or the Bronx or across the river in Brooklyn or in any other countless number of cities around the country where, every morning, huge numbers of working mothers and fathers have to get up and find some way to get transportation—sometimes in cities that don't have public transportation—get all the way out to the suburbs to get a job, and then come home at night dead tired, leave their kids an hour, sometimes an hour and a half earlier, and lower their income dramatically by the cost of transportation. Why? Because no one is investing.

And there's a lot of other people that are still looking for work. I told you—you think about the fact that we have a 4.3 percent unemployment rate. It's the lowest peacetime rate in 41 years, and still within this city there are several neighborhoods where the unemployment rate is in double digits. Now, anybody who has ever spent time on the streets, who has ever had to struggle to get by, knows that most people there are not stupid. It takes some amount of skill to survive in the environment a lot of Americans have to survive in today. So to me, this is a self-evident case. The question is, how are we going to do it?

Recently—let's listen to this—recently, a Harvard business school professor found that families living in our most distressed communities

still control more than \$85 billion a year in purchasing power, more than the entire retail market in Mexico—just the people in the most distressed communities. Still, more than 25 percent of that market is going unmet. In Harlem, the number is more like 60 percent. How many places are there in America where a kid has to walk for blocks and blocks past abandoned storefronts just to buy a book for school or milk for the family? Now, that is what we're talking about.

And businesses that have recognized this potential have been rewarded. Two of Pathmark's most productive grocery stores are in Bed-Stuy and Newark Central Ward. These two stores do double the business of a typical grocery store. Of Rite-Aid's 148 stores in New York City, the Harlem branch ranks second in the number of prescriptions filled. People appreciate it if you make it easy for them to spend their money when they need it.

In a meeting with the Vice President this summer—by the way, both these companies announced that they would expand their investment in these areas. And that is good. But we've got a lot more to do. And we need help from the people that are here, from Congressman Rangel and the other Members of Congress here, from Maxine Waters and others who are trying to bring together stakeholders for capital formation for new growth in their areas. For all the people from the rural communities, from the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we need help from everybody. We need help from Republicans and Democrats. This ought to be an American issue. We all have an interest in this.

I want to thank again Reverend Jackson and Sandy Weill, who couldn't be here this afternoon, and all of you who have been part of the Wall Street Project. And what I'd like to do today—and I worked hard on this so I'm not going to do what Jim Harmon said I did before—I'm actually going to read some of this talk. Because I have been working with development experts, with business people, with the Members of Congress I mentioned, and others, to try to say, okay, if our role is to be a catalyst, if our role is to be a partner, what else can the Federal Government do to help get this jump-started, to provide a vehicle through which we can channel and attract more money? And here are the things that I want to announce:

First, in the balanced budget this year, we'll support a new market venture capital program to bring capital and technical assistance to small businesses in distressed areas. Thousands of entrepreneurs who only need a little capital and expert guidance to expand their businesses and create new jobs—these funds will give it to them.

Second, we'll expand our investment in the community development banks that provide inner-city and rural residents small amounts of credit to transform good business ideas into reality. And Emma has been great on this, and I thank you for your support of this.

When I was Governor, I heard about this guy named Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh—Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries in the world—who had set up these banks to make very small loans to rural village women to start small businesses. At the time I met him in the mid-eighties, they'd made 400,000 loans at market interest rates to groups of people. You had to get a group together; everybody got a loan, but the second person couldn't get the loan until the first person started to pay back and so forth. They had a higher repayment rate than the commercial banks did at commercial interest rates. Now the Grameen Bank has made about 2 million loans, and the same thing is true.

Last year your United States Government, under our administration, funded 2 million of those loans in poor countries, from Africa to Asia to Latin America. Our community development banks are designed to do the same thing at an American scale, with American financial costs, for people who need it. And I thank the Members of Congress who are supporting it. We are now establishing them all over America; we have to expand them.

Next, our SBA—Aida's SBA—[laughter]—has helped to transform companies such as America Online from small startups to household names. That's right, AOL started with an SBA loan. Last summer the Vice President challenged the SBA to do the same for businesses in underserved areas. In response, the SBA will strengthen its outreach efforts; offer new financing terms, such as delayed payment of interest on loans; and waive regulatory requirements to promote investments in targeted communities.

We're also going to expand the tax incentives for the SBA-licensed specialized small business investment companies. Their job is to channel capital to small businesses owned by economi-

cally disadvantaged citizens. So we're going to give people more tax incentives to invest in them. I want to say a special word of thanks to Congressman Bill Jefferson from Louisiana, who first brought this to my attention. This wouldn't have happened without him because I wouldn't have known about it, and I thank him.

Fourth, in the next balanced budget I will ask Congress to support the creation of new—this is when you can get some of these big guys to give you some money, so listen to this—[laughter]—American private investment companies to encourage even bigger businesses to enter these underserved markets. For years we've supported in America the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, OPIC. What it does is provide financing to promote growth abroad. We ought to have an "APIC", an "American Private Investment Company," to support private investment at home.

Now, here's how it will work: "APIC" will be administered jointly by HUD and the Small Business Administration. It will offer loan guarantees to investors who help businesses expand or relocate in inner cities and rural areas. If one group of private investors puts up at least \$100 million, then the Government will guarantee another \$200 million in loans. Now, if five groups of investors do the same thing, that's \$1.5 billion in equity for investment in underserved America.

Finally, to encourage as many individuals and companies to put together more funds to invest in underserved areas, we will propose new tax credits worth 25 percent of the amount of equity placed in investment funds, community development banks, and a host of other investment vehicles targeted for these untapped markets.

Now, this is a good beginning. This will provide incentives and a vehicle. But we can't do this alone. And Congressman Rangel and the other Members of Congress here, the CBC, the HBC, the groups in Congress who will care about this, they need your help. We cannot pass this without bipartisan support and people who see that this is bringing free enterprise to places that haven't felt it in ways that will help the whole American economy.

Now, you think about it. If our exports drop this year because of continuing low growth in Latin America, in Asia, in other places, how are we going to keep the American economy growing? How's everybody else going to get a

pay raise? How are we going to do this? We should do this not just for those folks but because they can help us build a better America and better lives for everybody.

And so I say to you, we've got to pass these laws. And we have to make it an American issue. It can't be a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. It shouldn't be the Black Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus, or Bill Clinton's idea. I don't care—I would gladly put any label on this you want if I thought it would pass it. I would be glad to call it the "Herbert Hoover-Warren Harding-Calvin Coolidge Economic Development Act." I will do anything to pass it. *[Laughter]* There is plenty of credit to go around. And I ask you to do everything you can to try to make this an American issue.

And I ask all my friends in the business community to go down to Washington, call your Members in Congress, without regard to party, and say, "Hey, you know, the President made a pretty good point there. If our markets are going to keep dropping next year, we've got problems. We need some new markets. We need someplace to put the money that has been made so it can make some more money." So I implore you to do that.

Let me just say one final thing. I don't want to make another point and make a whole other speech, but don't ever forget that we're not going to be able to get business to go into or to stay in areas where people don't have the education and skills to do the jobs that are needed. And we need the business community to keep supporting our schools, to help people who need help with adult literacy or to go back and finish high school, to mentor those kids in middle school so they'll go on to college. We can't forget that, because if we do, there will be a limit to how successful we can be.

Now, a lot of things have been said about Dr. King today. And nearly everybody has committed some portion of his "I Have A Dream" speech to memory. But I found a sentence in there that applies uniquely to us here, that I don't ever hear anybody quote, but it's very important. He said in 1963, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, that he challenged America, quote, "to refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity in this Nation." Now today, those vaults of opportunity are richer and fuller than they ever have been. Wall Street has helped to make that so. Now what we need to do is to open those vaults up so they'll fill up even more for all of you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. at Windows on the World Restaurant in the World Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Jesse Jackson, founder and president, Rainbow/PUSH Coalition; former HUD Secretary and 1996 Vice Presidential candidate Jack Kemp; John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; Percy Sutton, founder, Inner City Broadcasting; Ron Burkle, owner, Yucaipa Cos., Los Angeles, CA; Richard Grasso, chairman and chief executive officer, New York Stock Exchange; H. Carl McCall, State comptroller; Weldon Latham, Jr., partner, Pittman, Potts, and Trobridge; Sanford I. Weill, chairman and co-chief executive officer, Citigroup; Emma Chappell, founder and chief executive officer, United Bank of Philadelphia; and development economist Muhammad Yunus, managing director, Grameen Bank, Bangladesh. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner *January 15, 1999*

Thank you very much. Robert left his cards up here, so I'm going to take them home and put them in my keepsake album. *[Laughter]* If he ever gets mad at me, I'll call him on the phone and read this speech back to him. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank all of you for being here and for being there for Hillary, for me, for Al and Tipper, for our administration over all these last years and especially during the last year. I'm going to miss Steve Grossman and his team at the DNC. I thank Len Barrack. I thank Carol

Pensky; this is her last event. And I thank Steve. They took the helm of a party that was troubled and made it far from troubled in 2 years.

I want to thank all the staff members who have been here. I have in some ways the most sympathy for this group of people because they have to hear me give the same speech over and over and over again. *[Laughter]* And I want to thank the members of the administration who are here, and Congressman Dingell and Debbie, thank you for being here; Governor Ann Richards, who made some of my campaign stops in the '98 campaign even more memorable than normal. *[Laughter]*

I want to say a special word of thanks, as Hillary did, to Sheryl Crow, who is a good friend, a good Democrat, and an unbelievable artist. And she's getting better every single year—unbelievable.

Hillary said that we met Robert and Lynda in 1983, actually just before they got married, at the Kentucky Derby. It was an amazing event. I'd never been before and actually have never gotten a chance to go back since. But it was the last year in office of Governor John Y. Brown; all of you will remember how sort of staid and laid back John Y. Brown is. *[Laughter]* He had Al Hirt playing at the breakfast before the—"My Old Kentucky Home." And all I remember about the Kentucky Derby is that I was perfectly sure what horse would win, and the only person in this vast party John Y. Brown had assembled who would bet on the horse I recommended was Lynda Carter. And I have been for them ever since, whatever the issue is. *[Laughter]* Oh, and the horse won by three lengths.

I really admire them both for so many reasons. It's not easy to do this—to sort of get out front, get your friends here. Some of you came all the way across the country to be here because they asked you. And I appreciate that and hope the weather is not so bad you can't get back. Those of us who are in Washington don't want anybody to be trapped here who doesn't want to be. *[Laughter]* We all came here voluntarily, but we want you to be able to leave and come, to go as you please. *[Laughter]*

Finally, let me say, you can't imagine—you know, Al and Tipper and Hillary and I, we've done a lot of campaigning together. We did in '92; we did in '96; we do a few events together now, even though our lives are consider-

ably busier, and often with conflicting schedules. But I think that one of the real secrets of whatever success that we've had for the American people has been that we have really tried to be a team; we've tried to be friends; we've tried to be family; and we've tried to be frank with each other. And each person has made a unique contribution. And then we've tried to model that in dealing with the Democratic Party and the House and the Senate groups and all of our friends around the country that are involved in whatever initiative we're involved in. It seems to me that's the way people ought to live, but it turns out it's a fairly effective way to do business.

And I think it's fair to say that Tipper Gore has given the mental health issue more visibility than it's ever had on the national stage, and it will have an enduring, positive impact. I think it's clear to anybody who has looked at it that whatever even my harshest critics would have to say, that the Vice President has been far and away—not even close—the most influential person in his position over more issues, achieving more for the American people than anyone who has ever held his position in the entire history of the Republic. Not only that, as you will hear me say increasingly in the months ahead, and any mistakes we made were my fault. *[Laughter]*

Of course, I don't even know how to talk about what I believe Hillary has meant to the success of our endeavors. She's been on every continent. She's gone to places most people in her position don't go, both in America and beyond our borders, into little villages in Africa and Asia and Latin America and the Indian subcontinent, to talk to women and their children, especially their daughters, about what their lives can be and what we should do to help them. She's gone all over America to save the Star-Spangled Banner and Thomas Edison's lab and Harriet Tubman's home and the national treasures that we believe we should hold close to our hearts as we move toward the millennium. And just a thousand other things. And she has done it under circumstances I think are probably more difficult than anyone who has ever done it before. I love her for it, but our country should love her for it as well. It's been remarkable.

You know, I keep hearing that books and books and books will be written on how we won seats in the midterm election in 1998. Since

the Civil War, the President's party has only won midterm elections under Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, each in their first midterm election—and, as you heard, not since 1822, in the sixth year. And I can save you a lot of reading—it is not complicated. We showed up for work every day, and we remembered who we were working for. And we wanted power not to just have it and exercise it against anybody but just to use it for a little while to advance the American people's dreams.

It is not complicated. And we had people like you who helped us raise enough money that even though we were outspent by \$100 million, we at least had enough to get our message out. And we said, "Look, we work for you. Here's where our country is; here's where we're going; here's what we'd like to do." It was not complicated.

We're proud to be members of our party, but we believe progress should take precedence over partisanship. We believe unity should take precedence over division. We believe political power should be used with purpose to advance the lives of people only. And if you give us a little help, we will, now that the country is working again—and the economy is perhaps the best in history and the welfare rolls are the lowest in 29 years, and the crime rate is the lowest in 28 years, and we've got the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957—now that the country is working again, we would like to look to the long-term challenges of America.

We would like to deal with the aging of America by saving Social Security and Medicare and thinking about other things so that we baby boomers don't have to burden our children and our grandchildren when we retire. We would like to look to the flowering of our children, the largest and most diverse group of school-children we've ever had, and make sure that every one of them has a chance to have a world-class education.

We would like to look to the strength of our families and make sure that they have health care that is adequate, affordable, and quality health care, which is why we want this Patients' Bill of Rights. We would like to continue to grow the economy under increasingly competitive and difficult conditions. We would like to remain the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And we think we have the obligation to do that, which is what our efforts in the Middle East and Northern Ireland

and Bosnia and Kosovo and other places in the world are all about.

And if that's what you want us to do, we're ready to try harder, but we need a little help. That's what we said.

Now, on Tuesday night I will be given the great honor that comes to the President once a year to report on the State of the Union and then to amplify in greater detail what this agenda means and what I hope we can accomplish in a bipartisan manner in the Congress in the coming years. But when you go home tonight and you ask yourselves why you came and what you believe in, I hope—whether it was worth your time and your money—I hope you will be proud of what has happened in these last 6 years. But I hope you'll also be determined to make the most of the days ahead.

This 6-year thing is arbitrary. It gets in people's minds, gets in administrations' minds, and they think, "Oh, well, I'm 75 percent through." I think there's still 25 percent of the time left. Just a question of how you look at it. And in the rhythm of life, it seems to me that you get hired to show up every day. And I get the same daily wage now I did on the first day I was President, so it seems to me I ought to put in the same level of effort.

But if I could say in a more serious vein in closing, there are many reasons that I am a member of this party, besides the fact that my granddaddy would turn over in his grave if I weren't. [Laughter] And we could talk about that all night. But on the eve of the new millennium, when we're living in a new world economy and an increasingly new world society, when you are communicating with each other in different ways and people are living and working in different ways, when there are vast prospects for us coming together with different kinds of people, and also new threats because of our increasing openness and interconnection with the rest of the world, there are three basic things I'd like for you to remember, because I hope it says what we're about.

One is, we honestly believe that no person is better than any other and that every child in this country, without regard to race or religion or station in life or circumstance, ought to have the chance to live up to his or her God-given abilities. And the role of government should be to create the conditions and give them the tools, and give their parents the support, so that they have a chance to do it.

Two is, we honestly believe that none of those individuals can make the most of their lives alone and that our membership in a community will enrich our own lives as it enriches others.

Today was Martin Luther King's 70th birthday. Some of the most brilliant things he ever said were about the importance of community; about how, no matter how brilliant you are, no matter how strong you are, no matter how rich you are, no matter how whatever you are, your life can only take on full meaning and texture if you are part of a community. And that's why I have worked so hard against all the divisions of the country, to make us one America.

And number three is that the essence of our democracy is that the people rule, and those of us who are elected are literally representatives of them. Whether in a representative branch of Congress or in the executive branch of the President, the power we exercise every day is not ours. We exercise it on behalf of the country as a whole. And its only legitimate

purpose is to advance all those little children out there and living up to their God-given abilities, and advance our efforts to come together as one America, and to advance our efforts to meeting the challenges and seize the opportunities of our time.

Our administration has been about that. Every day has been a joy. Even the bad days have been an honor. And I believe America is better off. And Tuesday night I'm going to ask the country to go back to work, because we've still got a lot to do.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. in the foyer at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. In his remarks, he referred to event hosts Robert Altman and his wife, Lynda Carter; Steve Grossman, national chair, Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, and Carol Pensky, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; Deborah Dingell, wife of Congressman John D. Dingell; former Gov. Ann Richards of Texas; and musician Sheryl Crow.

The President's Radio Address *January 16, 1999*

Good morning. On Monday America will celebrate the birth of one of our greatest heroes, Dr. Martin Luther King. This morning I'd like to talk to you about how we can honor his legacy on that day, and all throughout the year, by rising to the call of citizen service.

This morning I'm joined by Harris Wofford, the CEO of our Corporation for National Service, a former United States Senator and, long before that, a close friend and adviser to Dr. King. Five years ago, then-Senator Wofford and Congressman John Lewis of Georgia cosponsored a bill to encourage Americans to devote Martin Luther King Day to serving in their communities. And I was proud to sign it into law. We believe that this national holiday should be a day on, not a day off, for as Dr. King once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you going to do for others?"

On Monday more than 100,000 Americans, including students, soldiers, ministers, seniors, and members of the AmeriCorps national service program, will fan out all across their commu-

nities to paint schools, clean neighborhoods, read to children. There's still time for you to sign up. You can do so at www.AmeriCorps.org.

Now, in 1993 we created AmeriCorps to give young people a chance to serve in their communities and, in the process, to earn some money for college. We gave them a chance to serve not just for a day but all year round. And since then, 100,000 young people have taken the AmeriCorps pledge. They've done remarkable things. Since Dr. King's last birthday, they've rehabilitated thousands of homes, immunized tens of thousands of children, tutored hundreds of thousands of students, performed millions of hours of service.

Just as important, our diverse AmeriCorps members are learning lessons that will last a lifetime. In the words of one member, "It's unity, people working together. You don't see color. You see people who have come together with just one purpose." For all these reasons, I will ask Congress to increase its support for AmeriCorps this year.

There are many other ways citizens can honor Dr. King. For one thing, you can give the gift of life by donating blood. America's blood supplies are now critically low because severe winter weather has hindered blood drives in several regions. I urge every American to find out where you can donate blood by calling 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

We can also honor Dr. King by working in our own neighborhoods to promote racial reconciliation. Today I am proud to release a report growing out of our Presidential Initiative on Race. It's called, "Pathways To One America in the 21st Century," and it's a guide to some of our communities' best ways of building that elusive one America, one neighborhood, one school system, one workplace at a time.

For example, thanks to a creative initiative in greater Philadelphia, students from different parts of town have formed teams to design and then conduct projects such as food drives or after-school programs for younger kids. In the beginning, suburban students and city students tended to stick to themselves. But gradually, the students discovered the things they had in

common, and by the end, the barriers had broken down. It has been a stunning success.

To learn more about this promising practice and more than 100 others, please visit the White House website. We want every community in America to get involved in projects such as these.

Until all children of all backgrounds have the chance to live up to their God-given potential, free from want, in a world at peace, Dr. King's work, and our work, will not be complete. To honor what would have been Dr. King's 70th birthday, I urge all Americans to rise to the highest calling in our land: the calling of active citizenship. For if we work together as true neighbors, we can realize Dr. King's most enduring dream.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. The Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday proclamation of January 15 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Situation in Kosovo *January 16, 1999*

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the massacre of civilians by Serb security forces that took place last night in the village of Racak in Kosovo. This was a deliberate and indiscriminate act of murder designed to sow fear among the people of Kosovo. It is a clear violation of the commitments Serbian authorities have made to NATO. There can be no justification for it.

The perpetrators must be brought to justice. The Serb authorities must act immediately to identify those responsible. They must cooperate with the Kosovo Verification Mission and the International War Crime Tribunal. They must

withdraw security forces, carry out all the commitments they have made to NATO, and cease their repression.

We are in close contact with Secretary-General Solana and our NATO allies. Together, we will work to stop the repression and prevent an escalation of fighting.

It is urgent that these murders not trigger a spiral of reprisals. Both sides have a responsibility to work towards a peaceful resolution of this crisis and for a settlement that allows the people of Kosovo the self-government they so clearly deserve.

Remarks to AmeriCorps Volunteers January 18, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Good afternoon, everyone.

Audience members. Good afternoon.

The President. First of all, I'd like to say that I am very grateful to be here at Regency House with all of you. I want to thank the residency council for making us feel welcome—Sarah Beaner, Kenneth Brown, and others.

I want to say to the members of the press here—you know, the press, they all think that we're all on automatic, because they give us little notes here to read about every place we go. But I think it would be interesting for you to know the note I got on Regency House here: Sarah Beaner is the president of the residency council; Kenneth Brown is the past president and is now serving as the vice president—not such a bad idea. *[Laughter]* Regency House has 157 tenants. The tenant population is made up of seniors and the disabled. They are all current in their rent. *[Laughter]* Good for you; that's great.

Let me say to the mayor and Councilmember Patterson and Delegate Norton, I am honored to be here to participate in Martin Luther King Day as a day of service, as provided by law and in the spirit of what Dr. King said. And I am proud that I now live in a city with truly outstanding leadership. Eleanor Holmes Norton has been my friend for a very long time and is one of the most remarkable women in any leadership capacity of any kind in the United States. DC is fortunate to have her.

The mayor, in his former life, was actually a member of our administration in the Agriculture Department. And you know, it didn't really offend me that we'd already torn the wall down by the time he showed up today—*[laughter]*—because he's working hard, and he's got a lot of things to do. And I feel good about what he's going to achieve. And Mr. Mayor, you just stay on the job, and I'll tear a wall down for you any day you want, any time, any way, and I thank you.

I want to thank David Gilmore of the DC Housing Authority; and my great member of the White House staff Ben Johnson, who did used to be a former director of DC Public Housing; the others whom the Vice President

mentioned with AmeriCorps, Deb Jospin, John Gomperts. But mostly I want to thank these young volunteers behind me.

Near the end of Dr. King's life, he envisioned a partnership in America across racial lines. He could never have imagined that America would become so diverse as it is today. But AmeriCorps, it seems to me, is the living, breathing embodiment of the way Martin Luther King thought all of America ought to work. And that's what I wanted to do when we established it.

You might be interested to know that in only 4 years, since we set AmeriCorps up and got it going, more than 100,000 volunteers have joined AmeriCorps. It took the Peace Corps 20 years to reach that milestone. And they have done unbelievable things to make America a better place, helping to deal with natural emergencies, helping to build houses, helping to tutor children, helping to immunize children, working in 1,000 communities across this country.

And if you just look at these young people standing behind me, you know they come from all different parts of America; they come from all different backgrounds; they had different kind of reasons for joining AmeriCorps; they came here after different points of experience in their lives. And I'm very, very proud of them, and I thank them.

You should know that today more than 100,000 volunteers are out there keeping Dr. King's dream alive. AmeriCorps members, seniors, students, soldiers are rehabilitating buildings, painting schools, cleaning neighborhoods, reading to children. They are doing what Dr. King would want us to do.

I also want to mention one other thing. The Vice President talked about the need to continue to fight discrimination. Dr. King believed that every American, regardless of race, religion, or background, should be able to live in a home without discrimination. Today, on this Martin Luther King Day, I am pleased to announce the largest settlement in history in a lending discrimination—for home lending.

Let me tell you about it; it will affect a lot of people's lives. Thanks to the efforts of the

Department of Housing and Urban Development under the leadership of Secretary Cuomo, the Columbia National Mortgage Company will offer—listen to this—\$6.5 billion in home mortgages and extra effort to help 78,000 minority and low and moderate income families unlock the door to homeownership. This settlement was made under the Fair Housing Act, which Congress passed just 6 days—just 6 days—after Dr. King was killed. He had worked for years to outlaw discrimination in housing, and many who voted for the measure said they did it in tribute to him. So here all these years later—31 years later, to be exact—we're proud that it's happened on Dr. King's national holiday.

Now let me just say one final thing. Yesterday, in the church that Hillary and I attend, they observed Dr. King's birthday with some special music. They had a wonderful singer from the Army Chorus. They did a lot, but one of the songs they sang that I love so well was one of Martin Luther King's favorite hymns, and it embodies what we are doing here today. The first line of the hymn is, "If I can help somebody," and the last line is, "then my living will not be in vain."

All these people are here not only because they want to help you but because their lives are richer because of it. And we're all learning and growing. And besides that, as the press pointed out, it did the Vice President and me a lot of good to pick up those hammers and crowbars and tear something down. *[Laughter]* You know, we do this desk work all the time and we do this word work all the time, and

there's not always a beginning, a middle, and an end. There was a beginning to that wall, a middle, and it is no longer; it is over. *[Laughter]* So we are very grateful that you gave us the chance to be part of this today, and we thank you.

Again I want to say, I hope all across America people will hear this. Look at these young people; they're here with you. They're getting something out of this, too. Their lives will be richer and better. They will be wiser sooner. They will be more sensitive and more understanding more quickly in their lives because of the experience they've had here and the other experiences in AmeriCorps. Every American needs to serve. And remember what Dr. King said: Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Now, I know we're done, but I want to say a special word of recognition to Melody Scales and Beth McCarthy of AmeriCorps who worked with me, and to Donald Stokes, who is a resident here. I'd like for them to come up and be recognized, since they worked with the Vice President and me. Come on up here. *[Applause]* This is our crew, and if you need a wall torn down, you couldn't do better than this.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:53 p.m. at Regency House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony A. Williams and Ward 3 Councilmember Kathy Patterson of Washington, DC. The Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday proclamation of January 15 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Address on the Observance of Id al-Fitr *January 19, 1999*

On behalf of Muslim Americans and, indeed, all Americans, I would like to send my best wishes to the Islamic world as the holy month of Ramadan draws to a close, and you celebrate the festival of Id al-Fitr. The month of fasting you have completed demands sacrifice and discipline. But it delivers a profound reward, the chance to teach people of every faith what is precious about Islam: its charity, its generosity, its essential humanity. All people in the world are moved by the observance of Ramadan, by

the devotion and dignity that makes Islam one of the world's great religions.

I fervently hope that the new Moon will stand for a rising tide of peace on Earth, in the Middle East, Asia, Iran, Afghanistan, Africa, every place where devoted people aspire and deserve to lead lives of fulfillment and self-respect. I especially hope we will see the lives of the Iraqi people improve. They have suffered for too long from oppression and war.

Jan. 19 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

One of the central challenges of our time is to build greater understanding among people who practice different forms of worship. As the leader of a nation of many, many faiths, I pledge that we will do all we can to strengthen relations with the Islamic community around the world in the year ahead. In the United States, we deeply respect the Muslim Americans who observe Ramadan. And we look forward to working with Muslims everywhere, everywhere in the

world, to build a world where faith and friendship can truly flourish.

As-salaamu alaykum.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 5:10 p.m. on January 12 in Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 19.

Message on the Observance of Id al-Fitr *January 19, 1999*

Warm greetings to Muslims across America and around the world as you mark the end of the holy month of Ramadan and celebrate the festival of Id al-Fitr.

The month of fasting that you have just completed demands discipline and a spirit of sacrifice. But it also delivers a profound reward: the opportunity to show people of every faith what is precious about Islam—its charity, its generosity, and its essential humanity. All people

in the world are moved by your observance of Ramadan and by the devotion and dignity that make Islam one of the world's great religions.

As you welcome the appearance of the new moon and the close of Ramadan, Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a memorable celebration and for peace, health, and prosperity in the year to come.

BILL CLINTON

Statement on Proposed Child Care Legislation *January 19, 1999*

Tonight, in my State of the Union Address, I will outline my agenda to help parents struggling to meet their responsibilities at work and at home. This agenda includes an ambitious initiative to make child care safer, better, and more affordable for America's working families. Today Senator Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT) and many of his Democratic colleagues in the Senate have taken an important step toward reaching that goal by introducing the "Affordable Child Care for Early Success and Security Act (ACCESS)."

This proposal, like mine, significantly increases child care subsidies for poor children, provides greater tax relief to help low and middle income families pay for child care and to support parents who chose to stay at home to

care for their young children. This plan dramatically increases after-school opportunities, encourages businesses to provide child care for their employees, promotes early learning and school readiness, and improves child care quality.

The "Child Care ACCESS Act" builds on the longstanding commitment of Senator Dodd and the cosponsors of this legislation to improving child care for our Nation's children. I look forward to working with Members of Congress in both parties to enact child care legislation this year that will help Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers and, even more importantly, as parents.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of Military Forces for Stabilization of Areas of the Former Yugoslavia
January 19, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In my report to the Congress of June 19, 1998, I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to Bosnia and other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), which began its mission and assumed authority from the NATO-led Implementation Force on December 20, 1996. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

The U.N. Security Council authorized member states to continue SFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1174 of June 15, 1998. The mission of SFOR is to provide a continued military presence in order to deter renewed hostilities, stabilize and consolidate the peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and contribute to a secure environment to facilitate the civilian implementation process to which SFOR provides broad support within its means and capabilities.

The U.S. force contribution to SFOR in Bosnia is approximately 6,900. In the last half of 1998, all NATO nations and 19 others, including Russia and Ukraine, have provided military personnel or other support to SFOR. Most U.S. military personnel are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered around the city of Tuzla. In addition, approximately 2,300 U.S. military personnel are deployed to Hungary, Croatia, Italy, and other states in the region in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR. The U.S. forces continue to support SFOR in efforts to apprehend persons indicted for war crimes. In the last 6 months, U.S. forces have sustained no fatalities.

A U.S. Army contingent remains deployed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

(FYROM) as part of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). This U.N. peacekeeping force, which includes some 350 U.S. military personnel, observes and monitors conditions along the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The UNPREDEP continues to play a key role in preventing the spillover of ethnic conflict from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) into FYROM and the region. In doing so, it has helped FYROM become a bulwark against the southward spread of the conflict in the FRY. Several U.S. Army support helicopters and approximately 24 personnel are also deployed to provide support to U.S. forces and may provide emergency support to UNPREDEP as required. The U.N. Security Council voted July 21, 1998, to authorize an extension of the UNPREDEP mandate through February 28, 1999. To help maintain stability in the region in light of the situation in Kosovo, we are currently considering the extension of UNPREDEP's mandate.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive, and in accordance with various statutory authorities. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in Bosnia and other states in the region. I will continue to consult closely with the Congress regarding our efforts to foster peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraqi
Democratic Opposition Organizations**
January 19, 1999

Dear _____:

Pursuant to section 5(a) of the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–338; October 31, 1998), the enclosed report notifies the Congress of Iraqi democratic opposition organizations I intend to designate under the Act.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union
January 19, 1999

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, honored guests, my fellow Americans: Tonight I have the honor of reporting to you on the State of the Union.

Let me begin by saluting the new Speaker of the House and thanking him especially tonight for extending an invitation to two guests sitting in the gallery with Mrs. Hastert: Lyn Gibson and Wenling Chestnut are the widows of the two brave Capitol Hill police officers who gave their lives to defend freedom's house.

Mr. Speaker, at your swearing-in, you asked us all to work together in a spirit of civility and bipartisanship. Mr. Speaker, let's do exactly that.

Tonight I stand before you to report that America has created the longest peacetime economic expansion in our history with nearly 18 million new jobs, wages rising at more than twice the rate of inflation, the highest homeownership in history, the smallest welfare rolls in 30 years, and the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957.

For the first time in three decades, the budget is balanced. From a deficit of \$290 billion in 1992, we had a surplus of \$70 billion last year. And now we are on course for budget surpluses for the next 25 years.

Thanks to the pioneering leadership of all of you, we have the lowest violent crime rate in a quarter century and the cleanest environment

in a quarter century. America is a strong force for peace from Northern Ireland to Bosnia to the Middle East.

Thanks to the leadership of Vice President Gore, we have a Government for the information age, once again, a Government that is a progressive instrument of the common good—rooted in our oldest values of opportunity, responsibility, and community; devoted to fiscal responsibility; determined to give our people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives in the 21st century—a 21st century Government for 21st century America.

My fellow Americans, I stand before you tonight to report that the state of our Union is strong.

Now, America is working again. The promise of our future is limitless. But we cannot realize that promise if we allow the hum of our prosperity to lull us into complacency. How we fare as a nation far into the 21st century depends upon what we do as a nation today. So with our budget surplus growing, our economy expanding, our confidence rising, now is the moment for this generation to meet our historic responsibility to the 21st century.

Our fiscal discipline gives us an unsurpassed opportunity to address a remarkable new challenge, the aging of America. With the number of elderly Americans set to double by 2030, the baby boom will become a senior boom. So

first, and above all, we must save Social Security for the 21st century.

Early in this century, being old meant being poor. When President Roosevelt created Social Security, thousands wrote to thank him for eliminating what one woman called “the stark terror of penniless, helpless old age.” Even today, without Social Security, half our Nation’s elderly would be forced into poverty.

Today, Social Security is strong. But by 2013, payroll taxes will no longer be sufficient to cover monthly payments. By 2032, the Trust Fund will be exhausted and Social Security will be unable to pay the full benefits older Americans have been promised.

The best way to keep Social Security a rock-solid guarantee is not to make drastic cuts in benefits, not to raise payroll tax rates, not to drain resources from Social Security in the name of saving it. Instead, I propose that we make the historic decision to invest the surplus to save Social Security.

Specifically, I propose that we commit 60 percent of the budget surplus for the next 15 years to Social Security, investing a small portion in the private sector, just as any private or State Government pension would do. This will earn a higher return and keep Social Security sound for 55 years.

But we must aim higher. We should put Social Security on a sound footing for the next 75 years. We should reduce poverty among elderly women, who are nearly twice as likely to be poor as our other seniors. And we should eliminate the limits on what seniors on Social Security can earn.

Now, these changes will require difficult but fully achievable choices, over and above the dedication of the surplus. They must be made on a bipartisan basis. They should be made this year. So let me say to you tonight, I reach out my hand to all of you in both Houses, in both parties, and ask that we join together in saying to the American people: We will save Social Security now.

Now, last year we wisely reserved all of the surplus until we knew what it would take to save Social Security. Again, I say, we shouldn’t spend any of it, not any of it, until after Social Security is truly saved. First things first.

Second, once we have saved Social Security, we must fulfill our obligation to save and improve Medicare. Already, we have extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by 10 years,

but we should extend it for at least another decade. Tonight I propose that we use one out of every \$6 in the surplus for the next 15 years to guarantee the soundness of Medicare until the year 2020.

But again, we should aim higher. We must be willing to work in a bipartisan way and look at new ideas, including the upcoming report of the bipartisan Medicare Commission. If we work together, we can secure Medicare for the next two decades and cover the greatest growing need of seniors, affordable prescription drugs.

Third, we must help all Americans, from their first day on the job, to save, to invest, to create wealth. From its beginning, Americans have supplemented Social Security with private pensions and savings. Yet today, millions of people retire with little to live on other than Social Security. Americans living longer than ever simply must save more than ever.

Therefore, in addition to saving Social Security and Medicare, I propose a new pension initiative for retirement security in the 21st century. I propose that we use a little over 11 percent of the surplus to establish universal savings accounts—USA accounts—to give all Americans the means to save. With these new accounts, Americans can invest as they choose and receive funds to match a portion of their savings, with extra help for those least able to save. USA accounts will help all Americans to share in our Nation’s wealth and to enjoy a more secure retirement. I ask you to support them.

Fourth, we must invest in long-term care. I propose a tax credit of \$1,000 for the aged, ailing or disabled, and the families who care for them. Long-term care will become a bigger and bigger challenge with the aging of America, and we must do more to help our families deal with it.

I was born in 1946, the first year of the baby boom. I can tell you that one of the greatest concerns of our generation is our absolute determination not to let our growing old place an intolerable burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. Our economic success and our fiscal discipline now give us an opportunity to lift that burden from their shoulders, and we should take it.

Saving Social Security, Medicare, creating USA accounts, this is the right way to use the surplus. If we do so—if we do so—we will still have resources to meet critical needs in education and defense. And I want to point out

that this proposal is fiscally sound. Listen to this: If we set aside 60 percent of the surplus for Social Security and 16 percent for Medicare, over the next 15 years, that saving will achieve the lowest level of publicly held debt since right before World War I, in 1917.

So with these four measures—saving Social Security, strengthening Medicare, establishing the USA accounts, supporting long-term care—we can begin to meet our generation's historic responsibility to establish true security for 21st century seniors.

Now, there are more children from more diverse backgrounds in our public schools than at any time in our history. Their education must provide the knowledge and nurture the creativity that will allow our entire Nation to thrive in the new economy.

Today we can say something we couldn't say 6 years ago: With tax credits and more affordable student loans, with more work-study grants and more Pell grants, with education IRA's and the new HOPE scholarship tax cut that more than 5 million Americans will receive this year, we have finally opened the doors of college to all Americans.

With our support, nearly every State has set higher academic standards for public schools, and a voluntary national test is being developed to measure the progress of our students. With over \$1 billion in discounts available this year, we are well on our way to our goal of connecting every classroom and library to the Internet.

Last fall, you passed our proposal to start hiring 100,000 new teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. Now I ask you to finish the job.

You know, our children are doing better. SAT scores are up; math scores have risen in nearly all grades. But there's a problem. While our fourth graders outperform their peers in other countries in math and science, our eighth graders are around average, and our twelfth graders rank near the bottom. We must do better. Now, each year the National Government invests more than \$15 billion in our public schools. I believe we must change the way we invest that money, to support what works and to stop supporting what does not work.

First, later this year, I will send to Congress a plan that, for the first time, holds States and school districts accountable for progress and rewards them for results. My "Education Account-

ability Act" will require every school district receiving Federal help to take the following five steps.

First, all schools must end social promotion. No child should graduate from high school with a diploma he or she can't read. We do our children no favors when we allow them to pass from grade to grade without mastering the material. But we can't just hold students back because the system fails them. So my balanced budget triples the funding for summer school and after-school programs, to keep a million children learning.

Now, if you doubt this will work, just look at Chicago, which ended social promotion and made summer school mandatory for those who don't master the basics. Math and reading scores are up 3 years running, with some of the biggest gains in some of the poorest neighborhoods. It will work, and we should do it.

Second, all States and school districts must turn around their worst performing schools or shut them down. That's the policy established in North Carolina by Governor Jim Hunt. North Carolina made the biggest gains in test scores in the Nation last year. Our budget includes \$200 million to help States turn around their own failing schools.

Third, all States and school districts must be held responsible for the quality of their teachers. The great majority of our teachers do a fine job. But in too many schools, teachers don't have college majors or even minors in the subjects they teach. New teachers should be required to pass performance exams, and all teachers should know the subjects they're teaching. This year's balanced budget contains resources to help them reach higher standards.

And to attract talented young teachers to the toughest assignments, I recommend a sixfold increase in our program for college scholarships for students who commit to teach in the inner cities and isolated rural areas and in Indian communities. Let us bring excellence to every part of America.

Fourth, we must empower parents with more information and more choices. In too many communities, it's easier to get information on the quality of the local restaurants than on the quality of the local schools. Every school district should issue report cards on every school. And parents should be given more choices in selecting their public school. When I became President, there was just one independent public

charter school in all America. With our support, on a bipartisan basis, today there are 1,100. My budget assures that early in the next century, there will be 3,000.

Fifth, to assure that our classrooms are truly places of learning and to respond to what teachers have been asking us to do for years, we should say that all States and school districts must both adopt and implement sensible discipline policies.

Now, let's do one more thing for our children. Today, too many schools are so old they're falling apart, or so over-crowded students are learning in trailers. Last fall, Congress missed the opportunity to change that. This year, with 53 million children in our schools, Congress must not miss that opportunity again. I ask you to help our communities build or modernize 5,000 schools.

If we do these things—end social promotion; turn around failing schools; build modern ones; support qualified teachers; promote innovation, competition and discipline—then we will begin to meet our generation's historic responsibility to create 21st century schools.

Now, we also have to do more to support the millions of parents who give their all every day at home and at work. The most basic tool of all is a decent income. So let's raise the minimum wage by a dollar an hour over the next 2 years. And let's make sure that women and men get equal pay for equal work by strengthening enforcement of equal pay laws. [Applause] That was encouraging, you know. [Laughter] There was more balance on the seesaw. I like that. Let's give them a hand. That's great. [Applause]

Working parents also need quality child care. So again this year, I ask Congress to support our plan for tax credits and subsidies for working families, for improved safety and quality, for expanded after-school programs. And our plan also includes a new tax credit for stay-at-home parents, too. They need support, as well.

Parents should never have to worry about choosing between their children and their work. Now, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the very first bill I signed into law, has now, since 1993, helped millions and millions of Americans to care for a newborn baby or an ailing relative without risking their jobs. I think it's time, with all the evidence that it has been so little burdensome to employers, to extend family leave to

10 million more Americans working for smaller companies. And I hope you will support it.

Finally on the matter of work, parents should never have to face discrimination in the workplace. So I want to ask Congress to prohibit companies from refusing to hire or promote workers simply because they have children. That is not right.

America's families deserve the world's best medical care. Thanks to bipartisan Federal support for medical research, we are now on the verge of new treatments to prevent or delay diseases, from Parkinson's to Alzheimer's to arthritis to cancer. But as we continue our advances in medical science, we can't let our medical system lag behind. Managed care has literally transformed medicine in America, driving down costs but threatening to drive down quality as well.

I think we ought to say to every American: You should have the right to know all your medical options, not just the cheapest. If you need a specialist, you should have a right to see one. You have a right to the nearest emergency care if you're in an accident. These are things that we ought to say. And I think we ought to say: You should have a right to keep your doctor during a period of treatment, whether it's a pregnancy or a chemotherapy treatment, or anything else. I believe this.

Now, I've ordered these rights to be extended to the 85 million Americans served by Medicare, Medicaid, and other Federal health programs. But only Congress can pass a Patients' Bill of Rights for all Americans. Now, last year, Congress missed that opportunity, and we must not miss that opportunity again. For the sake of our families, I ask us to join together across party lines and pass a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights.

As more of our medical records are stored electronically, the threats to all our privacy increase. Because Congress has given me the authority to act if it does not do so by August, one way or another, we can all say to the American people, "We will protect the privacy of medical records, and we will do it this year."

Now 2 years ago, the Congress extended health coverage to up to 5 million children. Now we should go beyond that. We should make it easier for small businesses to offer health insurance. We should give people between the ages of 55 and 65 who lose their health insurance the chance to buy into Medicare. And we

should continue to ensure access to family planning.

No one should have to choose between keeping health care and taking a job. And therefore, I especially ask you tonight to join hands to pass the landmark bipartisan legislation proposed by Senators Kennedy and Jeffords, Roth, and Moynihan to allow people with disabilities to keep their health insurance when they go to work.

We need to enable our public hospitals, our community, our university health centers to provide basic, affordable care for all the millions of working families who don't have any insurance. They do a lot of that today, but much more can be done. And my balanced budget makes a good downpayment toward that goal. I hope you will think about them and support that provision.

Let me say we must step up our efforts to treat and prevent mental illness. No American should ever be afraid—ever—to address this disease. This year we will host a White House Conference on Mental Health. With sensitivity, commitment, and passion, Tipper Gore is leading our efforts here, and I'd like to thank her for what she's done. Thank you. *[Applause]* Thank you.

As everyone knows, our children are targets of a massive media campaign to hook them on cigarettes. Now, I ask this Congress to resist the tobacco lobby, to reaffirm the FDA's authority to protect our children from tobacco, and to hold tobacco companies accountable while protecting tobacco farmers.

Smoking has cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars under Medicare and other programs. You know, the States have been right about this: Taxpayers shouldn't pay for the cost of lung cancer, emphysema, and other smoking-related illnesses; the tobacco companies should. So tonight I announce that the Justice Department is preparing a litigation plan to take the tobacco companies to court and, with the funds we recover, to strengthen Medicare.

Now, if we act in these areas—minimum wage, family leave, child care, health care, the safety of our children—then we will begin to meet our generation's historic responsibility to strengthen our families for the 21st century.

Today, America is the most dynamic, competitive, job-creating economy in history. But we can do even better in building a 21st century economy that embraces all Americans.

Today's income gap is largely a skills gap. Last year, the Congress passed a law enabling workers to get a skills grant to choose the training they need. And I applaud all of you here who were part of that. This year, I recommend a 5-year commitment to the new system so that we can provide, over the next 5 years, appropriate training opportunities for all Americans who lose their jobs and expand rapid response teams to help all towns which have been really hurt when businesses close. I hope you will support this.

Also, I ask your support for a dramatic increase in Federal support for adult literacy, to mount a national campaign aimed at helping the millions and millions of working people who still read at less than a fifth grade level. We need to do this.

Here's some good news: In the past 6 years, we have cut the welfare rolls nearly in half. You can all be proud of that. Two years ago, from this podium, I asked five companies to lead a national effort to hire people off welfare. Tonight, our Welfare to Work Partnership includes 10,000 companies who have hired hundreds of thousands of people. And our balanced budget will help another 200,000 people move to the dignity and pride of work. I hope you will support it.

We must do more to bring the spark of private enterprise to every corner of America, to build a bridge from Wall Street to Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta to our Native American communities, with more support for community development banks, for empowerment zones, for 100,000 more vouchers for affordable housing. And I ask Congress to support our bold new plan to help businesses raise up to \$15 billion in private sector capital to bring jobs and opportunities to our inner cities and rural areas with tax credits, loan guarantees, including the new "American Private Investment Company" modeled on the Overseas Private Investment Company. For years and years and years, we've had this OPIC, this Overseas Private Investment Corporation, because we knew we had untapped markets overseas. But our greatest untapped markets are not overseas; they are right here at home. And we should go after them.

We must work hard to help bring prosperity back to the family farm. As this Congress knows very well, dropping prices and the loss of foreign markets have devastated too many family farms.

Last year, the Congress provided substantial assistance to help stave off a disaster in American agriculture. And I am ready to work with lawmakers of both parties to create a farm safety net that will include crop insurance reform and farm income assistance. I ask you to join with me and do this. This should not be a political issue. Everyone knows what an economic problem is going on out there in rural America today, and we need an appropriate means to address it.

We must strengthen our lead in technology. It was Government investment that led to the creation of the Internet. I propose a 28-percent increase in long-term computing research. We also must be ready for the 21st century from its very first moment, by solving the so-called Y2K computer problem.

We had one Member of Congress stand up and applaud. [Laughter] And we may have about that ratio out there applauding at home, in front of their television sets. But remember, this is a big, big problem. And we've been working hard on it. Already, we've made sure that the Social Security checks will come on time. But I want all the folks at home listening to this to know that we need every State and local government, every business, large and small, to work with us to make sure that this Y2K computer bug will be remembered as the last headache of the 20th century, not the first crisis of the 21st.

For our own prosperity, we must support economic growth abroad. You know, until recently, a third of our economic growth came from exports. But over the past year and a half, financial turmoil overseas has put that growth at risk. Today, much of the world is in recession, with Asia hit especially hard. This is the most serious financial crisis in half a century. To meet it, the United States and other nations have reduced interest rates and strengthened the International Monetary Fund. And while the turmoil is not over, we have worked very hard with other nations to contain it.

At the same time, we have to continue to work on the long-term project, building a global financial system for the 21st century that promotes prosperity and tames the cycle of boom and bust that has engulfed so much of Asia. This June I will meet with other world leaders to advance this historic purpose, and I ask all of you to support our endeavors.

I also ask you to support creating a freer and fairer trading system for 21st century America. I'd like to say something really serious to everyone in this Chamber in both parties. I think trade has divided us, and divided Americans outside this Chamber, for too long. Somehow we have to find a common ground on which business and workers and environmentalists and farmers and Government can stand together. I believe these are the things we ought to all agree on. So let me try.

First, we ought to tear down barriers, open markets, and expand trade. But at the same time, we must ensure that ordinary citizens in all countries actually benefit from trade, a trade that promotes the dignity of work and the rights of workers and protects the environment. We must insist that international trade organizations be more open to public scrutiny, instead of mysterious, secret things subject to wild criticism. When you come right down to it, now that the world economy is becoming more and more integrated, we have to do in the world what we spent the better part of this century doing here at home. We have got to put a human face on the global economy.

We must enforce our trade laws when imports unlawfully flood our Nation. I have already informed the Government of Japan that if that nation's sudden surge of steel imports into our country is not reversed, America will respond.

We must help all manufacturers hit hard by the present crisis with loan guarantees and other incentives to increase American exports by nearly \$2 billion.

I'd like to believe we can achieve a new consensus on trade, based on these principles. And I ask the Congress again to join me in this common approach and to give the President the trade authority long used and now overdue and necessary to advance our prosperity in the 21st century.

Tonight I issue a call to the nations of the world to join the United States in a new round of global trade negotiations to expand exports of services, manufactures, and farm products. Tonight I say we will work with the International Labor Organization on a new initiative to raise labor standards around the world. And this year, we will lead the international community to conclude a treaty to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world.

If we do these things—invest in our people, our communities, our technology, and lead in

the global economy—then we will begin to meet our historic responsibility to build a 21st century prosperity for America.

You know, no nation in history has had the opportunity and the responsibility we now have to shape a world that is more peaceful, more secure, more free. All Americans can be proud that our leadership helped to bring peace in Northern Ireland. All Americans can be proud that our leadership has put Bosnia on the path to peace. And with our NATO allies, we are pressing the Serbian Government to stop its brutal repression in Kosovo, to bring those responsible to justice, and to give the people of Kosovo the self-government they deserve.

All Americans can be proud that our leadership renewed hope for lasting peace in the Middle East. Some of you were with me last December as we watched the Palestinian National Council completely renounce its call for the destruction of Israel. Now I ask Congress to provide resources so that all parties can implement the Wye agreement to protect Israel's security, to stimulate the Palestinian economy, to support our friends in Jordan. We must not—we dare not—let them down. I hope you will help.

As we work for peace, we must also meet threats to our Nation's security, including increased dangers from outlaw nations and terrorism. We will defend our security wherever we are threatened, as we did this summer when we struck at Usama bin Ladin's network of terror. The bombing of our Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania reminds us again of the risks faced every day by those who represent America to the world. So let's give them the support they need, the safest possible workplaces, and the resources they must have so America can continue to lead.

We must work to keep terrorists from disrupting computer networks. We must work to prepare local communities for biological and chemical emergencies, to support research into vaccines and treatments.

We must increase our efforts to restrain the spread of nuclear weapons and missiles, from Korea to India and Pakistan. We must expand our work with Russia, Ukraine, and other former Soviet nations to safeguard nuclear materials and technology so they never fall into the wrong hands. Our balanced budget will increase funding for these critical efforts by almost two-thirds over the next 5 years.

With Russia, we must continue to reduce our nuclear arsenals. The START II treaty and the framework we have already agreed to for START III could cut them by 80 percent from their cold war height.

It's been 2 years since I signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. If we don't do the right thing, other nations won't either. I ask the Senate to take this vital step: Approve the treaty now, to make it harder for other nations to develop nuclear arms, and to make sure we can end nuclear testing forever.

For nearly a decade, Iraq has defied its obligations to destroy its weapons of terror and the missiles to deliver them. America will continue to contain Saddam, and we will work for the day when Iraq has a Government worthy of its people.

Now, last month in our action over Iraq, our troops were superb. Their mission was so flawlessly executed that we risk taking for granted the bravery and the skill it required. Captain Jeff Taliaferro, a 10-year veteran of the Air Force, flew a B-1B bomber over Iraq as we attacked Saddam's war machine. He's here with us tonight. I'd like to ask you to honor him and all the 33,000 men and women of Operation Desert Fox.

Captain Taliaferro. *[Applause]*

It is time to reverse the decline in defense spending that began in 1985. Since April, together we have added nearly \$6 billion to maintain our military readiness. My balanced budget calls for a sustained increase over the next 6 years for readiness, for modernization, and for pay and benefits for our troops and their families. We are the heirs of a legacy of bravery represented in every community in America by millions of our veterans. America's defenders today still stand ready at a moment's notice to go where comforts are few and dangers are many, to do what needs to be done as no one else can. They always come through for America. We must come through for them.

The new century demands new partnerships for peace and security. The United Nations plays a crucial role, with allies sharing burdens America might otherwise bear alone. America needs a strong and effective U.N. I want to work with this new Congress to pay our dues and our debts.

We must continue to support security and stability in Europe and Asia, expanding NATO and defining its new missions, maintaining our

alliance with Japan, with Korea, with our other Asian allies, and engaging China.

In China, last year, I said to the leaders and the people what I'd like to say again tonight: Stability can no longer be bought at the expense of liberty. But I'd also like to say again to the American people: It's important not to isolate China. The more we bring China into the world, the more the world will bring change and freedom to China.

Last spring, with some of you, I traveled to Africa, where I saw democracy and reform rising but still held back by violence and disease. We must fortify African democracy and peace by launching Radio Democracy for Africa, supporting the transition to democracy now beginning to take place in Nigeria, and passing the "African Trade and Development Act."

We must continue to deepen our ties to the Americas and the Caribbean, our common work to educate children, fight drugs, strengthen democracy and increase trade. In this hemisphere, every government but one is freely chosen by its people. We are determined that Cuba, too, will know the blessings of liberty.

The American people have opened their hearts and their arms to our Central American and Caribbean neighbors who have been so devastated by the recent hurricanes. Working with Congress, I am committed to help them rebuild. When the First Lady and Tipper Gore visited the region, they saw thousands of our troops and thousands of American volunteers.

In the Dominican Republic, Hillary helped to rededicate a hospital that had been rebuilt by Dominicans and Americans working side by side. With her was someone else who has been very important to the relief efforts. You know, sports records are made, and sooner or later they're broken. But making other people's lives better and showing our children the true meaning of brotherhood, that lasts forever. So, for far more than baseball, Sammy Sosa, you're a hero in two countries tonight. *[Applause]* Thank you.

So I say to all of you, if we do these things—if we pursue peace, fight terrorism, increase our strength, renew our alliances—we will begin to meet our generation's historic responsibility to build a stronger 21st century America in a freer, more peaceful world.

As the world has changed, so have our own communities. We must make them safer, more livable, and more united. This year, we will

reach our goal of 100,000 community police officers ahead of schedule and under budget. The Brady bill has stopped a quarter million felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns. And now, the murder rate is the lowest in 30 years and the crime rate has dropped for 6 straight years.

Tonight I propose a 21st century crime bill to deploy the latest technologies and tactics to make our communities even safer. Our balanced budget will help put up to 50,000 more police on the street in the areas hardest hit by crime and then to equip them with new tools, from crime-mapping computers to digital mug shots.

We must break the deadly cycle of drugs and crime. Our budget expands support for drug testing and treatment, saying to prisoners: If you stay on drugs, you have to stay behind bars; and to those on parole: If you want to keep your freedom, you must stay free of drugs.

I ask Congress to restore the 5-day waiting period for buying a handgun and extend the Brady bill to prevent juveniles who commit violent crimes from buying a gun.

We must do more to keep our schools the safest places in our communities. Last year, every American was horrified and heartbroken by the tragic killings in Jonesboro, Paducah, Pearl, Edinboro, Springfield. We were deeply moved by the courageous parents now working to keep guns out of the hands of children and to make other efforts so that other parents don't have to live through their loss.

After she lost her daughter, Suzann Wilson of Jonesboro, Arkansas, came here to the White House with a powerful plea. She said, "Please, please, for the sake of your children, lock up your guns. Don't let what happened in Jonesboro happen in your town." It's a message she is passionately advocating every day. Suzann is here with us tonight, with the First Lady. I'd like to thank her for her courage and her commitment. *[Applause]* Thank you.

In memory of all the children who lost their lives to school violence, I ask you to strengthen the Safe and Drug-Free School Act, to pass legislation to require child trigger locks, to do everything possible to keep our children safe.

A century ago, President Theodore Roosevelt defined our "great, central task" as "leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us." Today, we're restoring the Florida Everglades, saving Yellowstone, preserving the red rock canyons of Utah, protecting

California's redwoods and our precious coasts. But our most fateful new challenge is the threat of global warming; 1998 was the warmest year ever recorded. Last year's heat waves, floods, and storms are but a hint of what future generations may endure if we do not act now.

Tonight I propose a new clean air fund to help communities reduce greenhouse and other pollution, and tax incentives and investments to spur clean energy technology. And I want to work with Members of Congress in both parties to reward companies that take early, voluntary action to reduce greenhouse gases.

All our communities face a preservation challenge, as they grow and green space shrinks. Seven thousand acres of farmland and open space are lost every day. In response, I propose two major initiatives: First, a \$1-billion livability agenda to help communities save open space, ease traffic congestion, and grow in ways that enhance every citizen's quality of life; and second, a \$1-billion lands legacy initiative to preserve places of natural beauty all across America, from the most remote wilderness to the nearest city park.

These are truly landmark initiatives, which could not have been developed without the visionary leadership of the Vice President, and I want to thank him very much for his commitment here.

Now, to get the most out of your community, you have to give something back. That's why we created AmeriCorps, our national service program that gives today's generation a chance to serve their communities and earn money for college.

So far, in just 4 years, 100,000 young Americans have built low-income homes with Habitat for Humanity, helped to tutor children with churches, worked with FEMA to ease the burden of natural disasters, and performed countless other acts of service that have made America better. I ask Congress to give more young Americans the chance to follow their lead and serve America in AmeriCorps.

Now, we must work to renew our national community as well for the 21st century. Last year the House passed the bipartisan campaign finance reform legislation sponsored by Representatives Shays and Meehan and Senators McCain and Feingold. But a partisan minority in the Senate blocked reform. So I'd like to say to the House: Pass it again, quickly. And I'd like to say to the Senate: I hope you will

say yes to a stronger American democracy in the year 2000.

Since 1997, our initiative on race has sought to bridge the divides between and among our people. In its report last fall, the initiative's advisory board found that Americans really do want to bring our people together across racial lines.

We know it's been a long journey. For some, it goes back to before the beginning of our Republic; for others, back since the Civil War; for others, throughout the 20th century. But for most of us alive today, in a very real sense, this journey began 43 years ago, when a woman named Rosa Parks sat down on a bus in Alabama and wouldn't get up. She's sitting down with the First Lady tonight, and she may get up or not, as she chooses. We thank her. [*Applause*] Thank you, Rosa.

We know that our continuing racial problems are aggravated, as the Presidential initiative said, by opportunity gaps. The initiative I've outlined tonight will help to close them. But we know that the discrimination gap has not been fully closed either. Discrimination or violence because of race or religion, ancestry or gender, disability or sexual orientation, is wrong, and it ought to be illegal. Therefore, I ask Congress to make the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" and the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act" the law of the land.

Now, since every person in America counts, every American ought to be counted. We need a census that uses modern scientific methods to do that.

Our new immigrants must be part of our One America. After all, they're revitalizing our cities; they're energizing our culture; they're building up our economy. We have a responsibility to make them welcome here, and they have a responsibility to enter the mainstream of American life. That means learning English and learning about our democratic system of government. There are now long waiting lines of immigrants that are trying to do just that. Therefore, our budget significantly expands our efforts to help them meet their responsibility. I hope you will support it.

Whether our ancestors came here on the *Mayflower*, on slave ships, whether they came to Ellis Island or LAX in Los Angeles, whether they came yesterday or walked this land a thousand years ago, our great challenge for the 21st century is to find a way to be one America.

We can meet all the other challenges if we can go forward as one America.

You know, barely more than 300 days from now, we will cross that bridge into the new millennium. This is a moment, as the First Lady has said, “to honor the past and imagine the future.”

I’d like to take just a minute to honor her. For leading our Millennium Project, for all she’s done for our children, for all she has done in her historic role to serve our Nation and our best ideals at home and abroad, I honor her. *[Applause]*

Last year, I called on Congress and every citizen to mark the millennium by saving America’s treasures. Hillary has traveled all across the country to inspire recognition and support for saving places like Thomas Edison’s invention factory or Harriet Tubman’s home. Now we have to preserve our treasures in every community. And tonight, before I close, I want to invite every town, every city, every community to become a nationally recognized “millennium community” by launching projects that save our history, promote our arts and humanities, prepare our children for the 21st century.

Already, the response has been remarkable. And I want to say a special word of thanks to our private sector partners and to Members in Congress of both parties for their support. Just one example: Because of you, the Star-Spangled Banner will be preserved for the ages. In ways large and small, as we look to the millennium we are keeping alive what George Washington called “the sacred fire of liberty.”

Six years ago, I came to office in a time of doubt for America, with our economy troubled, our deficit high, our people divided. Some even wondered whether our best days were behind us. But across this country, in a thousand neighborhoods, I have seen, even amidst the pain and uncertainty of recession, the real heart and character of America. I knew then that we Americans could renew this country.

Tonight, as I deliver the last State of the Union Address of the 20th century, no one anywhere in the world can doubt the enduring resolve and boundless capacity of the American people to work toward that “more perfect Union” of our Founders’ dream.

We’re now at the end of a century when generation after generation of Americans answered the call to greatness, overcoming depression, lifting up the disposed, bringing down barriers to racial prejudice, building the largest middle class in history, winning two World Wars and the long twilight struggle of the cold war. We must all be profoundly grateful for the magnificent achievement of our forebears in this century. Yet perhaps, in the daily press of events, in the clash of controversy, we don’t see our own time for what it truly is, a new dawn for America.

A hundred years from tonight, another American President will stand in this place and report on the state of the Union. He—or she—he or she will look back on a 21st century shaped in so many ways by the decisions we make here and now. So let it be said of us then that we were thinking not only of our time but of their time, that we reached as high as our ideals, that we put aside our divisions and found a new hour of healing and hopefulness, that we joined together to serve and strengthen the land we love.

My fellow Americans, this is our moment. Let us lift our eyes as one Nation, and from the mountaintop of this American Century, look ahead to the next one, asking God’s blessing on our endeavors and on our beloved country.

Thank you, and good evening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in the House Chamber of the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Jean Hastert, wife of Speaker J. Dennis Hastert; Evelyn M. (Lyn) Gibson, widow of Detective John M. Gibson, and Wenling Chestnut, widow of Officer Jacob J. Chestnut, whose husbands died as a result of gunshot wounds suffered during an attack at the Capitol on July 24, 1998; terrorist Usama bin Ladin, who allegedly sponsored bombing attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Capt. Jeffrey B. Taliaferro, USAF, Chief, Wing Weapons, 28th Operations Support Squadron, 28th Bomb Wing; and Sammy Sosa, National League Most Valuable Player in 1998.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd in Buffalo, New York January 20, 1999

Thank you. Wow! Good morning. Good afternoon. *[Laughter]* I want to say, first of all, how very grateful that Hillary and Al and Tipper and I are that you all came out to see us today to make us feel so welcome. I want to thank your mayor, your county executive, Mrs. Eve, and especially Congressman John LaFalce for being here with us. He is a great man.

You know, we don't want to put you through the speeches and everything because you have the monitors here, and you're going to see them. But let me say that Buffalo has been wonderful to me and to Hillary, to Al and Tipper. We are so grateful. We remember when we came here together in 1992. And I'm always glad to come back, even in the snow. Yes, that's right. This guy says, "This ain't nothing." *[Laughter]* And we had some buffalo wings in the holding room.

And we just want you to know how much we appreciate you, how much we appreciate

the support that you've given us in two elections, how grateful we are for the chance to serve, and how committed we are to the agenda that I outlined last night. Let me also—we want you to be committed to it, too.

We want to get out here and shake a few hands, and we don't want to keep those other 20,000 people waiting. And you'll see the movie. And thank you very much. We're glad to be here.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon in the Harbor Room at the Marine Midland Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony M. Masiello of Buffalo; Erie County Executive Dennis T. Gorski; and Constance B. Eve, chairperson and founder, Women for Human Rights and Dignity, Inc. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Remarks to the Western New York Community in Buffalo January 20, 1999

Thank you very much. I think you got so excited that you melted the snow for a mile around this arena. Let me ask you, have you ever seen the Vice President so fired up in your life? *[Laughter]* I want you to know that just before we came in here, we went off into a little room, and he had a quick hit of buffalo wings and Flutie Flakes; that's what he did.

I want to thank the Mayor and Dennis Gorski and Connie Eve and the whole Eve family. Eric worked for us for a long time, then decided to go out and get rich. We forgive him. I want to thank all the community heroes who are here. I want to thank Reverend Smith for that magnificent invocation which I will remember all my life. I want to thank our wonderful friend Congressman John LaFalce, one of the most outstanding Members in the House of Representatives, a truly wonderful human being. And I am delighted that Pat and his son, Martin, are here with us today.

I think you could see that Tipper and Al and Hillary and I, we're sort of like a big family. We like going places together. And I love it, because now I don't have to talk about 90 percent of the issues anymore because they already covered them, which was really good. We work together, and we have tried to model what we want America to do.

You know, no one has ever spoken as passionately and consistently for the cause of mental health as well as Tipper Gore has done. I think it's fair to say that at least no one since Eleanor Roosevelt has done as much with the Office of First Lady as Hillary has done. And I am grateful for that. And I am quite confident that in the entire history of the United States no Vice President has had remotely the responsibility and had the positive impact on the people of the United States that Al Gore has had. And I am very grateful to him.

Now, we are here today in this magnificent arena—and I've just got to say one thing about that Vice President. He compared me to the goalie for the Sabres. I was flattered, but I thought—you know, he kept talking about how I was swatting away those flying hockey pucks in Washington. I was flattered, but I thought, I just wish one day they would give me a mask and a few pads when I dodge that stuff.

Anyway, we're delighted to be here. We're here because we are grateful to New York, to western New York, to Erie County, to Buffalo, grateful for the support we received in 1992, grateful for the support we received in 1996, and even more grateful for the fact that this community every day is trying to live and work in the way we want America to live and work in the 21st century.

I know that many of you heard my speech last night. I know that you have listened to the previous speakers. I only want to speak to you about one of the issues, and that is how we're going to meet the challenge of the aging of America, because that affects all of us, not just the old but the very young as well. And I want everyone to understand exactly what I was trying to say last night and why.

But let me make the bigger point. It was, as has already been said, 6 years ago today at noon that I took the oath of office as President. And it seems impossible to me that those 6 years have flown by. They have been, to put it mildly, quite eventful. But I am very, very grateful that we had the chance to serve, grateful for your support, grateful the state of the Union is strong.

But I want you to focus on this: You know as well as I do the world is changing rapidly. You know this community and its economic base and the nature of its society bears not all that much resemblance to the way it looked 30 years ago in terms of how people make a living, what the diversity of the population is, how we relate to each other, and where we imagine we're going in the future.

So I believe that we can't afford just to sit around and pat ourselves on the back and say, "Isn't it great? We've got the longest peacetime expansion in history. Isn't it great? We've got the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957. Isn't it great that we've got the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, that all the social problems, all of them, virtually, are getting better?" That's fine.

But the real issue is, what are we going to do with this? Do we seriously believe the crime rate is low enough? Do we believe the schools are good enough? Do we believe all our kids are getting an education? Do we really believe that the rate of drug use among our young people is low enough? Do we believe all these things? I don't think so.

So what I want to say to you is, we ought to be focused on two big things: number one, bringing the opportunities that the last 3 years have brought to most of America to the rest of America. Just like, last night, I said—we put before the American people last night a plan to develop more communities by putting more private capital in the neighborhoods that haven't received it.

Now, let me ask you something. If we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years and the lowest in peacetime in 41 years, how are we supposed to keep growing the economy without inflation? We have to find new markets. Now, if a lot of the world beyond our borders is in recession, where are we going to find the new markets? I'll tell you where: in the urban neighborhoods and the rural counties where the unemployment rate is still twice the national average.

And I want to emphasize just one of the suggestions I made last night, that we ought to have an American private investment company, or a series of them, that would provide guarantees from the National Government to get private capital into urban and rural areas where there has been underinvestment—\$15 billion of it. You know we have today—we have an Overseas Private Investment Corporation. Why shouldn't we have an "American Private Investment Corporation" when our most important markets are here at home?

I want to say just this one thing about Senator Schumer. The Vice President mentioned him, but before I came here he reminded me, he said, "When you go to Buffalo, you have got to tell the people that I pledged to them I would bring more jobs and more opportunity to western New York. And you tell them I'm going to be your very best partner." So I have kept my word to Senator Schumer.

Now, let me give you some other examples, though. There are people in our midst who have not fully participated, even in areas which are doing well. And I'll just give you a couple of

examples; one of them has been mentioned already. We have millions of Americans in the work force that do not read very well. Many of them are first-generation immigrants, and their first language is not English. I know Mrs. LaFalce has been very involved in the adult literacy program. I asked last night for a huge increase in Federal support to have a national campaign for adult literacy, to make sure all of our workers can read well enough to keep the jobs they've got, get better jobs, and if they lose their jobs, get new jobs. And I think that's very, very important.

Now, your other Senator, Senator Moynihan, is the cosponsor of a bill that is very important to me because I have worked hard, since I was a young Governor, to try to give people with disabilities the ability to live up to the maximum amount of independence and self-fulfillment that was possible. And one of the problems we have today is that people with disabilities that have high medical bills cannot afford to go to work, even if they are capable of working, because under the present law you lose the Government support for your medical insurance if you take a job. So Senator Moynihan is one of the cosponsors of a bill that says, if a disabled person is able to go to work, we will let them keep their health insurance so they can be healthy and at work. And that's good for us. So that's the first thing we need to do.

The second thing we need to do is to deal with the large long-term challenges of America. The previous members of our team have talked about the long-term environmental challenges, the long-term health care challenges, the long-term education challenges, the long-term community development challenges. I want to talk about the aging of America. And I was pleased when I read a lot of the stories today about my speech last night. I thought they were very good stories, but the implication was that I was speaking to the seniors. That's not true. The aging of America affects everybody.

Why? First of all, the seniors today, by and large, have no sweat unless they live to be 120 years, because—old—because Social Security is fine now, and we have the system that we need. But when we baby boomers retire, there will be a senior boom. In 30 years, the number of senior citizens, people over 65, in America is going to double. Now, that just doesn't affect those of us who hope to live that long. That

affects all of our children and all of our grandchildren and society at large.

How will we manage this? We have a lot of responsibilities. We've got to work harder to stay in better shape and be healthier so we try to minimize the burden of our health care bills on the rest of you. It will be very important. There are a lot of implications to this.

But I want you to know that—I grew up in a middle class home in a middle class community where half of my high school classmates, or more, didn't go on to college. And I still keep up with a lot of them, and most of them have very modest incomes. But every single one of us, without regard to our income or background, are obsessed with the notion that our aging should not put an unbearable burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. This is an issue for all Americans.

Now, here's the problem. Social Security alone keeps half the seniors in America today out of poverty. So it's real important. But Social Security is not enough for the vast majority of our seniors to have a comfortable life and maintain the lifestyle they had before they started drawing Social Security.

Medicare is subject to the same pressures that Social Security is in its cost as more and more people retire, live longer, and use more medical care. So the trick is, how do you preserve Social Security; how do you preserve Medicare; how do you give seniors the ability to have other sources of income; and how do you do it in a way that's fair to their kids and their grandkids; and how do we get it done by the time the baby boomers start retiring? That is the issue. So, you see, it's not just a seniors issue. It's an issue for all Americans.

Now, we're going to have a big argument about this. And we should, and I hope it will be a good debate. But I believe, since we have—as the Vice President said—this \$70 billion surplus from last year and a bigger one coming this year, since it's projected that over a 25-year period we will average substantial surpluses on an annual basis—now, they'll go up and down with the economy, but the point is we have no permanent deficit anymore, the natural condition is a surplus, okay—so the question is, what do we do with it?

We could give it all back to you and hope you spend it right. But I think—here's the problem. If you don't spend it right, here's what's going to happen. In 2013—that's just 14 years

away—the taxes people pay on their payroll for Social Security will no longer cover the monthly checks. So we have to get into the Social Security Trust Fund, the savings account. By 2032, it will be gone. After that, if we haven't done something, we can only pay a little over 70 percent of the benefits. By then, the cost of living will be higher, and it will be devastating.

Even before that, by 2010, the Medicare fund will run out of money. Why? Because the fastest growing group of people—this is a high-class problem; this is a high-class problem; we should be so lucky to have only problems like this—the fastest growing group of people in America are people over 80. And I hope to be one some day, and so do you, right? And so does—I hope every child in this audience will live to be over 80. The kids in this audience actually will have a life expectancy of about 85 years if medical science keeps advancing.

But the older you get, the more you need a doctor, or the more you need drugs, or the more you need something just to kind of get through the day. I'm finding that out already. [Laughter] Everything kind of hurts when it's cold, and you've got to stretch your legs more. So that's going to happen by 2010.

So what I said last night is not as popular as what others can tell you. Others can say, "We've got this surplus now. I just want a big tax cut. I'll give it back to you. You'll figure out what to do with it." But I believe if we save 60 percent of this surplus for Social Security, here's what we can do. We can make the Trust Fund all right to 2055. We can protect Social Security for 55 years. We have a list of other options that are all a little controversial, but if we can get the Republicans and Democrats to hold hands, we could do it. It wouldn't hurt anybody very much. They're really good things for the program over the long run.

And if we did that, we could protect Social Security for 75 years, and we could reduce the poverty rate among elderly women on Social Security. They're twice as likely to be poor. And we could remove the earnings test which now limits what seniors on Social Security can earn for themselves. So I think that's a good use of the surplus that will help our parents, our children, our grandchildren.

Now, same thing with Medicare. If we just save one-sixth—one in every \$6—of this surplus for 15 years and set it aside for Medicare, then we save Medicare to 2020. Then if we can get

the Republicans and Democrats together—and in March we're going to have a report from a bipartisan commission that will start the debate—we can make a few other changes, save it till 2020, and begin to provide for prescription drugs. It's the single biggest need that senior citizens on Medicare have.

Now, let me tell you what else you'll get. You're going to have everybody say that Government doesn't know how to spend this money. Look, folks, Social Security and Medicare work. I'm not talking about spending this money; I'm talking about saving it.

Now, here's what I think about it. This is the other thing I want you to understand. If we save three-quarters of this surplus for 15 years only, to solve Social Security and solve Medicare well into the 21st century, what else will happen? We will, by holding this money—we've got to do something with it. What do you do with this money? You buy back the privately held debt. We will be reducing the debt of the country. We will take the debt of America in relationship to the size of our economy, the level of debt held by the public, to its lowest level since before World War I in 1917.

Now, why should that matter to you? You say, "Fine, Mr. President, give me the money. I'd rather have a new car. I don't care about World War I. Why does that matter?" Here's why it should matter to you. If we keep driving the debt down, then you will keep interest rates down; you will keep home mortgage rates low; you will keep credit card interest rates low; you will keep the interest rates that you pay on your car payments low; you will keep more investment coming in to Buffalo and Erie County; you will have more jobs here. And that's something we have to do together. It will protect us.

You see all this financial upheaval around the world. That's because these countries, their budgets are out of balance, and if people run off with their money, they have to put their interest rates through the roof just to get the money to come back. If we start paying down on our debt a little bit—which I remind you, we quadrupled the debt, quadrupled the debt between 1981 and 1993—if we just started paying down on it a little bit, saving this money, protecting Social Security and Medicare, then you would be somewhat more protected from these global economic events, and long after I'm gone from the White House, you would

have stable interest rates, affordable lives, and the knowledge that investment would come into Buffalo and Erie County to build a better future. So I hope you will support what I have advocated last night.

Now, let me just say two other things I think we ought to do to deal with the aging of America that help not just the elderly but the rest of us. Number one, Social Security was never intended to be the sole source of income. Even when President Roosevelt signed it, he said we need more pensions; we need more private savings. But a lot of people retire today and don't have any.

And a lot of you young people today—I don't know how many people—young people I talk to, in their twenties or late teens or even up to their early thirties, who say, "You know, this is not going to be enough." Last night I proposed setting aside more than 10 percent of the surplus to actually give people an incentive to save, a targeted tax cut to say, if you will set up this universal savings account, a USA account, the Government will give you, in effect, a tax cut; we will match the money in your savings account; and you can invest it however you want for your own retirement.

And if you have—now, this is very important. And very low income working people who have great difficulty saving, it takes every penny they've got to put clothes on their kids' back and pay the utility bills and the rent and make the car payment. We have a provision in our plan to give extra help for those least able to save. I want every American to have a savings account and to have a part of this country's wealth. If everybody was a part of the wealth, you would see the income gap shrinking instead of growing, and that's what this is about. This is a good way to have a tax cut, because it's a tax cut that benefits you today and tomorrow and 10 years from now and 30 years from now.

So let me also say, when you hear the tax cut debate, remember, we've got tax cuts in our plan, a \$1,000 tax credit—that's a \$1,000 tax cut for long-term care for seniors, for disabled people, for ailing people, or the families that care for them. That's one of the biggest problems families have today. And with the aging of America, it will get bigger and bigger. We ought to support and give people a tax cut for long-term care.

We ought to have tax cuts for child care including, as was said earlier, for people who pro-

vide care by being stay-at-home parents for very young children. We ought to have these tax cuts. We ought to give people tax incentives to deal with our environmental problems. Every one of the tax cuts that are in my budget we have paid for so we can keep the budget balanced, keep the surplus coming, and deal with the long-term problems.

So I'm sorry if I made the atmosphere too serious. We've had a lot of fun today. But I want you to think about this. We cannot afford to squander this moment. When have we ever had this many resources, this many things going right at one time in this country? It has been a long, long time. We have to make the most of it. We have to look at the long-term challenges facing America.

So I ask you to think about this. I ask you to talk to your friends and neighbors about it. When people come out and disagree with my approach, listen to them and sit down and have a discussion about it. But you just remember this: We've been in debt for 30 years. And for the 12 years before I became President, we were so deep in debt, we couldn't even think about the kind of money we've invested in Buffalo for police on the streets, to help more housing projects, people have houses, to deal—all the things that have been done. And we are out of debt now, but we have a big responsibility now to think about the long-term challenges.

This country is going to change in a breathtaking way. We're on the verge of finding cures or preventions for diseases from Alzheimer's to Parkinson's to arthritis to all kinds of cancers. I think it will happen, probably in my lifetime. There are children here in this audience who, either they or their contemporaries, will be walking not on the Moon but on Mars. This world is going to change.

And we have to do our very best to prepare. So I will say again, it may sound good if somebody says, "This is your surplus, and we ought to give it back to you." But you ought to ask yourself, what's America going to look like 10, 20, 30 years from now? How are all the families going to deal with the retirement of the baby boom generation? How are we going to deal with our responsibilities for the medical care of our parents through Medicare? And can we keep interest rates low and the economy going?

If you like this improving economy, what I'm trying to do is to give you a way that will maximize the chances that we will have a strong

economy for the next 10 to 15 to 20 years and prepare for the aging of the baby boomers. I hope you will support it.

I thank you for one of the great days of my Presidency here. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:04 p.m. at the Marine Midland Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony M. Masiello of Buffalo;

Erie County Executive Dennis T. Gorski; Constance Eve, chairperson and founder, Women for Human Rights and Dignity, Inc., and her son, Eric; Rev. Bennett W. Smith, who delivered the invocation; and Patricia LaFalce, wife of Representative John J. LaFalce, and their son, Martin. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency Regarding Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 20, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 1999, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 1998.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration on January 23, 1995, of a national emergency has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage

in activities with the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process, and which are hostile to United States interests in the region.

Such actions threaten vital interests of the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. On August 20, 1998, I identified four additional persons, including Usama bin Ladin, that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to deny any financial support from the United States for foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Jan. 20 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Russia-United States Fisheries Agreement Extension

January 20, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation extending the Agreement on Mutual Fisheries Relations of May 31, 1988, with annex, as amended and extended (the "Mutual Fisheries Agreement"). The present Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes in Moscow on July 28 and November

23, 1998, extends the Mutual Fisheries Agreement to December 31, 2003.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Russian Federation, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks to the Montgomery County Community in Norristown, Pennsylvania

January 20, 1999

Thank you very much. First, let me say to all of you that when we came in here tonight, I think it's fair to say that Hillary and Al and Tipper and I were literally overwhelmed by this reception. And I knew that this was a wonderful community; I knew this was a wonderful school. I knew there was a lot of enthusiasm, but it didn't all quite add up until I realized that we had caused your exams to be delayed. And I want you to know that we're having such a good time, we'd be delighted to come back about this time next term if you want. We can make this a regular thing. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Dr. Williams for his magnificent invocation. I thank Dr. Woodall for the remarks he made, for making us welcome here, and for the example that he and Mr. Spencer, the principal here, all the teachers here, and all the students and teachers from this school and the other schools here represented. I thank you for what you're doing and for the example you're setting for America.

I'd like to thank all of our musicians and the choir for playing and singing for us. I thought they were great. And I want to thank Melissa for speaking so well. Weren't you proud of her? Did she do a great job, or what? *[Ap-*

plause] I'm glad I never had to run against her for anything. *[Laughter]*

I also want to thank all these wonderful people from Pennsylvania who have come here, all the officials and citizens from this area and from Philadelphia and nearby areas. Let me say, there was a lot of talk tonight keying off Reverend Williams' invocation about vision.

I'd like to say something else, if I might, out of respect to others. It is a good thing to have a vision, because otherwise you never know where you're going. So you have to have one. I ran for President, beginning in 1991, because I thought our country was drifting and because I believed that if you look at these young people here—one elementary school in this area has kids from 50 countries speaking 13 languages—and if you look at all these young people and their parents and everybody in this room, and you imagine what the world is going to be like, and you know it's going to get smaller and smaller, and we're going to have more and more relationships, and the borders will become more and more open, it's hard to imagine any country in the world that is remotely as well positioned as America to give people the chance to make the most of their own lives.

But we had to have a vision. My vision for the 21st century was pretty simple. I wanted us to have a country for the children of the Gores and the Clintons and all the other kids in our country where every person who was a responsible citizen would have a genuine opportunity to live out their dreams. I wanted us to have a country where over all the differences between us—we would relish those differences, our racial, our religious, our cultural differences; our serious differences we would debate seriously. But we would honor our common humanity and our shared values as Americans enough to say, what unites us is so much more important than what divides us; we will build one America in the 21st century.

And I wanted us to continue to be the country, as we grew more diverse and, therefore, had deeper and deeper ties with more and more other people around the world. I wanted America to recognize that because of our wealth and position, we have not only the opportunity but a responsibility to continue to be the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity for others. It is good for ourselves to do the right thing in trying to build the rest of the world and build closer ties.

Now, it is a good thing to have a vision; you can't get started without it. Otherwise you don't know where you're going. The Vice President talked about Tommy Lasorda and Mike Piazza. My favorite baseball player of all time, because he was such a wonderful speaker, was Yogi Berra. You know, Yogi Berra said, "We don't know where we're going, but we're making good time." [Laughter] So you have to have a vision. But you have to have something else, too. You have to have people who are willing to act on it.

I hope you could see with the four of us up here, we like being together. We've worked closely together. We see ourselves as a family, and we see our allies as a family. When I came to Washington, I wanted to do something about homelessness, but Tipper Gore helped me do it. I wanted to raise the consciousness of America about all kinds of things that we sort of kept hidden under the rug but were hurting people. Mental health was one of the most important. Tipper Gore helped me do it.

I wanted to prove that we could have a smaller Government—we now have the smallest Federal Government since 1962—but I wanted to do it in a way that wouldn't just throw good

Federal employees in the street and that would enable us to do more. The Vice President made it possible for us to do that; he led that effort.

I wanted to prove that we could grow the economy and improve the environment by doing things like building new cars that would triple gas mileage. The Vice President has led our efforts there, and in dealing with all the promise of new technology in trying to hook up all our schools and libraries to the Internet, and in managing a big portion of our relations with Russia, South Africa, and other countries. I can say without qualification that no Vice President in history has had so much responsibility or done so much good. So the vision requires an action.

And if it hadn't been for Hillary, for all the good intentions in the world, we wouldn't have done nearly as much to advance the cause of health care or child care or education or to observe the millennium. We wouldn't have been able to do it.

When I see Joe Hoeffel standing up here talking—and I know he's going to be a strong force on the committees that he's gotten; I see another new Congressman out there, my long-time friend Bob Brady from Philadelphia. I know that they will be implementers of a vision. Or Chaka Fattah, who got you all worked up, up there, when he stood up; do you know what he did? He passed a bill in the Congress last year that I was for, but I could not have passed it. I'll tell you the truth: I could not have done it. But he went around to Republicans and Democrats alike and said, "You know, I come from Philadelphia. There are a lot of poor kids there that have never had a real chance. They come from poor families. They live in tough neighborhoods, but they've got good minds. Will you help me pass a bill that will provide the necessary financial support for college students to come in and mentor these kids in middle schools so they'll go on to college?" And we did it because of that.

Now, I'll give you one other example. Last time I came here as President was in 1993, to a conference on entitlement reform. Entitlement reform is a fancy way of saying with everybody living longer and the baby boomers about to retire, all the rest of you aren't going to be able to afford to pay our medical and retirement bills unless we do something. That's what entitlement reform means.

And I knew the first thing we had to do was to get the economy going. And I said, "You know, I've got this economic plan, and it's not going to be very popular with a lot of people because it has a lot of tough decisions. We're asking people who are the wealthiest people in America to pay a little more in income taxes, sometimes a lot more if they were really well off. We're asking people who are used to getting Government programs to do without a few hundred of them until we get this budget in balance. But if we do it, we'll lower interest rates, cutting home mortgages and the interest rates on car payments and credit cards, and we'll get investment back in the country. We'll have jobs coming back in the country. And the money you will save on the stock market going up and the interest rates going down will be far greater than the money those of us who are well off had to pay in a little more taxes." It was very controversial, and people said, "Oh, it will bring an end to the economy. It will end the American economy as we know it. It will drive us into recession."

Well, you heard what the Vice President said about the country with the longest peacetime expansion in history, the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957, and all of that. What you should know is that this county, this county has had, since that economic program passed and the interest rates started going down, 1,800 new businesses and 44,000 new jobs, the highest growth in the State of Pennsylvania.

The decisive vote that made all that possible was cast in Congress by Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky. We won by one vote in the House, and it was tied in the Senate. The decisive vote in the Senate was cast by Al Gore. And as he says, since he gets to vote whenever there's a tie, whenever he votes, we win. [*Laughter*]

Now, the point I'm trying to make is we had a good vision, but somebody has got to carry the water; somebody has to make the decisions; somebody has to push the rocks up the hill; somebody has to take that step and jump off the diving board; someone has to move. People have to act on their vision. That's why I said last night and that's why that sign says, "Let's get to work." We have a good vision, but we must act.

And for all of you, I thank you. I wanted to come here to this school because this school district represents what I think America ought to do. I know not every school district has the

resources. So if we want everybody to end social promotion but have summer school and after-school programs, we have to provide the funds from Washington to help the school districts do it. If we want to turn around schools that aren't working, we have to provide help from Washington. And we're doing that.

But I want people to see this school district all over America, on the news tonight, in the articles tomorrow. I want people to know we came here to a place that has done important things, to give kids who need it extra help, to have high standards, to do things that will create a vision that people will want to act on. I think to have a motto like "learn and live to serve" is a stunning thing, and I hope you will live by it all your lives.

Most of you here know this, but for the benefit of the press, I want to say this: Every high school graduate in this school district gets a license, a driver's license-sized copy of the diploma, and on the back it has the computer skills the graduate has mastered. That's a driver's license to the future. I would like to see that modeled in other places all across America, as well.

So you've already heard what we have to say, but it's plain that America is working again. But every one of you knows—if we had time to do it, I'd give everybody a piece of paper, and I'd ask you to write down—you might do this when you go home tonight. I'd ask you to write down somewhere between three and six things—no more than six—that you believe are the long-term challenges that will face you young people in the 21st century and what is it that we could do now that would pave the way to a better future for you.

I can tell you that I did my best in the State of the Union last night to say, "Okay, we've got America working again, but what are the long-term challenges?" And you've heard them talked about tonight, and I won't belabor them. But let me say, we have to build strong communities in the 21st century that gives everyone a chance at opportunity. That means we have to do more to have the kind of economic opportunity in places where unemployment is high and people make low wages that you have here. That means putting more money in there. It means teaching adults better skills. It means teaching those who are first-generation Americans to read better, if that is what it takes. It means doing whatever is necessary to get

these economies going. It means continuing to drive the crime rate down. It means making all communities livable communities, to set aside the land that we need to set aside, to have the green space, to manage the traffic, to do the things that will make people free and happy if they live anywhere in America.

These are the kinds of things we have to do. It means reconciling work and family. One of the best things that the Gores have done is, for the last 7 years, they have had a conference in Tennessee every year on the challenges modern families face. And most all of them relate somehow or other to the need to balance work and family, a challenge that faces Americans in all income groups. I'll bet there is not a family here that has not at some point in the last couple of years faced some sort of challenge of balancing your responsibilities to your children to your responsibilities to your work.

That's why we want a child care plan that includes help for stay-at-home parents when the children are very young, but real help for working people that can't afford quality child care on their own. Because in America, when I look at all of you, I want you to be free and confident, when you start your families, that you can do what you want in your work life, but you know that your first responsibility is to raise your children, and you're going to be able to succeed at that responsibility.

The Vice President told you that rather gripping story about the HMO's. The truth is we have to manage the health care system; it's like any other system. We have to keep the costs as low as possible. But the quality of our people's health counts most. That's why we say you ought to be able to see a specialist if you need one. You ought to be able to go to the nearest emergency room. You ought to be able to have your medical records private and all of the other things in our Patients' Bill of Rights, because we've got to balance the need to save money with the fundamental necessity of providing quality health care to all Americans.

And I'd just like to say one other thing. We've said a lot about education tonight, but I would like to say something about the very first subject I talked about last night in the State of the Union, and that is the aging of America. And again I want to say, this is an issue that should be of primary importance not to today's retirees but to tomorrow's retirees, their children, and

their grandchildren yet unborn. Because when the baby boomers retire—and that includes the parents of just about all of the students here; people between the ages of 34 and 52 were the people born in the generation after World War II, the largest group of people in history in America, young people, until the present class of students which numbers over 53 million. Now, when we retire, we're going to double the number of seniors by the year 2030. There will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. And what we've got—and the average life expectancy is already 76 years old plus; for the young people here, it's probably about 83 years. This is a high-class problem. The older you get, the more you'll be glad that that's going up. *[Laughter]* This is a high-class problem. But we do not want to get into a position where our retirement is a financial burden to our children and undermines our children's ability to raise our grandchildren.

So when I tell you that we ought to set aside roughly 75 percent of this surplus we've got for the next 15 years to save Social Security and to save Medicare, and in the process, since we'll be saving the money, we'll be paying down the national debt, giving us the lowest level of debt we've had as a nation since before World War I in 1917, keeping interest rates down, investment high, jobs creation going, and incomes rising—I say that not just for those of us who will be older but for our kids and our grandkids. And I hope you will see it that way.

This is a big test for us. We haven't had this kind of situation in a long, long time. And very rarely do societies have the luxury of being financially strong enough, militarily secure enough, and having enough information about the future to make the kind of decisions that I asked the American people to make last night. Yes, we ought to give some tax cuts, but they ought to be the right kind. They ought to be for child care. They ought to be for helping us to deal with our environmental challenges. They ought to be for people saving for their own retirement, because Social Security will never be enough for that. They ought to be for raising children.

But we can save this money now and lift a burden from the young people here. I want every parent here to look at the young people here and ask yourselves: Do you really want to run the risk of squandering this surplus that

we have worked so hard for until we know for sure that our retirement will not compromise the integrity of their lives and their ability to raise their children as we have tried to raise them?

Now, the young people here are going to have a fascinating time. The Internet is already growing by, you know, millions and millions of new pages every week. It's the fastest growing communication mechanism in human history. People are able to move around as never before, and even if you can't leave town now, you've got people from all over the world right next door.

We are learning things that we have never imagined before. We are on the verge of not only unlocking the mysteries of the human gene but actually finding medical treatments to cure or even prevent things from Alzheimer's to arthritis to all kinds of cancers. This is a stunning time.

I went to the auto show in Detroit the other day, and one thing I'm looking forward to—I love this job, and I'm not looking forward to 2 years from now being barred from being President by the Constitution's two-term limit. But one thing I am looking forward to, now that I've been to the Detroit auto show, is getting back in those cars, because the cars of the future are going to be environmentally sound and hilariously fun to drive and safer.

This is going to be an interesting time for you to live in. But we have to do our best in this time to, first of all, make it safe, dealing with the challenges of nuclear and chemical and biological weapons, to give you the strongest communities possible, to build one America across our lines of diversity, and to think about the future.

When I ran for President in 1992, before I ever made the decision to run, a young man

who is now not quite so young, he's a graduate student, named Sean Landris was driving me around Los Angeles. I was an anonymous, virtually anonymous Governor of Arkansas. But Sean Landris knew something about me and the speeches I had made and the things I was interested in, and he said, "Are you going to run for President?" And I said, "Well, I haven't decided yet, but I might." He said, "Well, if you do, here's what I think your theme song ought to be." And he had a little tape deck in his car, and he put this tape deck in and this old Fleetwood Mac song, "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow," which was made before he was born. So we made it our theme song.

And I believe that those of us in positions of responsibility have no higher responsibility than to think about your tomorrows. And when you reach our age, you will want more and more to think about the tomorrows of your children and your grandchildren.

What I tried to say last night is, there's never been a time when we had brighter tomorrows. All we have to do is act on our vision. Let's get to work.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. in the gymnasium at Norristown Area High School. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Charles D. Williams, pastor, Mt. Zion AME Church, who gave the invocation; Michael V. Woodall, superintendent, Norristown Area School District; Barry E. Spencer, principal, and Melissa Ghoston, student council president, Norristown Area High School; Tommy Lasorda and Yogi Berra, members of the Baseball Hall of Fame; and Mike Piazza, catcher, New York Mets. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd in Norristown

January 20, 1999

Thank you very much. You know, I felt, even when I thought there were just a couple of hundred people here, I felt so badly for you having to wait and wait and wait.

But let me tell you, you should know at least it is a lot cooler in here than it is in there. We have had a wonderful, wonderful time here. We are very grateful to all of you for coming out, for supporting your schools, supporting your

communities, supporting your country, and we thank you so much. And of course, just personally, it's meant a great deal to Al and Tipper and to Hillary and me to see you here and see you so enthusiastic about the future.

I want you to remember how you feel tonight, and I want you to keep it with you all year long. We've got a lot to do, and it's going to be good for America.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:58 p.m. in the auditorium at the Norristown Area High School. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore and Representative Joseph M. Hoeffel.

Remarks on the Initiative To Provide a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom

January 21, 1999

Well, Sergeant, I don't think I need to say anything else. [Laughter]

Let me thank all of you for coming today and welcome you here. This is the 21st year of a partnership in education that involves Hillary and me and Secretary Riley. We all started working together in 1979, and we've been at it a good while now. Few things that I have ever been a part of have given—sort of thrilled me more than just listening to Arthur Moore talk. And I'm sure all of you felt the same way.

I thank the Members of Congress who are here and all the other distinguished guests. I would like to recognize just three: first, we have here the President of the Navajo Nation, Kelsey Begaye; and Samuel Penney, the chairman of the Nez Percé Tribal Executive Committee; and Arthur Moore's daughter, Andrea, is here, and she must have been awful proud of her father today, and I know he's proud of her. So we welcome all of them.

After the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik* in October of 1957, President Eisenhower asked the Congress to rise to the challenge of the times and proposed a new Federal program to help public school teachers improve their math and science instruction. He understood that teaching is an important part of our national security. And I think, therefore, that President Eisenhower—and General Eisenhower—would have been very pleased to see Arthur Moore as a soldier-turned-teacher.

Two days ago, in the State of the Union Address, I asked Congress to rise to the demands of this time, to pass an "Education Accountability Act" that would offer more investment,

demand more accountability, and not—as some have implied—have the Federal Government try to run more of our day-to-day activities in our public schools but simply have the Federal Government respond to what the teachers of this country and the principals and the educators have been telling us, and invest in what works. We now have an opportunity to do that. With the strength of our economy and with the size of our surplus, we have an opportunity. We also have an obligation.

Research confirms what most of us know from our own experience: What most determines whether students learn is not family background or even dollars spent per pupil but the talent, the ability, and the dedication of their teachers.

Every adult in this room, I know, can recall the names of teachers who deeply affected our own lives and helped us to get where we are today. I was thinking this morning about my high school band teacher. And you say, you wouldn't think that the band teacher would have a lot to do with a person becoming President, but he instilled not only in me a love of music but also a reminder that I could never manifest that love unless I worked like crazy, that I had to learn to work in a team. I couldn't play too loud just because I liked the part. [Laughter] And because we ran the statewide music festival every year, he taught me how to organize and how to manage people and time, all kinds of things that teachers teach children that stay with them for a lifetime.

There are an awful lot of teachers like that in America. But we have to face the fact that

because our classrooms are bursting with 53 million children, because frankly we still don't pay our teachers as much as we should in most places, a quarter—listen to this—a quarter of all secondary school teachers don't have college majors or even minors in the subjects they are teaching. And the deficit is greatest where the need is greatest. Schools with the highest minority enrollment, for example, have less than a 50–50 chance—now, think about this—less than a 50–50 chance of having a math or science teacher with a license or degree in the field.

I don't know if you remember what I said in the State of the Union the other night about what the international test scores show, but basically our fourth graders rank near the top of all industrialized countries in performance in math and science. Our 8th graders drop to the middle; our 12th graders are near the bottom. No one can doubt, surely, that one reason is the absence of a pool of teachers who have been trained in the subjects they are teaching.

Now, we have a real opportunity to get more good teachers in general, more good education practice, and more properly, specifically trained teachers, in particular this year, because every 5 years the Federal Government revisits the terms on which it invests \$15 billion in our Nation's schools; 1999 is the fifth year. We have to do it again. It gives us a golden opportunity and a solemn responsibility to change the way we invest the money to invest in what works and to stop investing in what doesn't.

So I intend to send Congress a plan that will, among other things, require States receiving Federal funds to end social promotion but will also provide them the funds for summer school, after-school, and other support for children who need it—if you look at what I just said about the progression of the test, it is not the students who are failing, it is the system that is failing the students, and we need to respond accordingly; second, to adopt and enforce strict discipline codes, something teachers in the teachers' organizations have asked us to support more vigorously; third, to give parents report cards on their children's school; fourth, to turn around the worst performing schools or close them, and we will provide funds to help States do that; and finally, to be accountable for the quality of their teachers, with new teachers passing performance exams, all teachers knowing the subjects they're teaching, and we will provide support for that.

We also should build or modernize 5,000 schools, continue our work to hook every classroom and library up to the Internet. But I want to focus for a moment on the teaching. How can we get more Arthur Moores out there? And I'd like to mention just four things that will be in the balanced budget I will submit to Congress early next month.

First, I will call on Congress to invest \$1.4 billion to hire new, better trained teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. This is the next big installment on our goal to hire 100,000 new teachers, and it's a 17 percent increase over the very large downpayment we made last year.

Second, I will ask Congress to invest \$35 million to provide 7,000 college scholarships for our brightest young people who commit to teaching where they can do the most good, in the poorest inner-city and rural schools. This is over 5 times the investment Congress made last year, and I think it is a wonderful idea. We came up with this idea because it's modeled, basically, on the National Medical Service Corps. Some of you may have once lived in rural America. When I was Governor, sometimes the only way we could get doctors to go into rural areas is that they had taken funds to go to medical school, and they realized in return for which they would need to go out into rural areas and practice medicine, and they got to pay off a certain amount of their loan every year.

It's also the way the national defense loans worked. I actually had one of them in law school. If you taught school for a certain number of years, a certain percentage of your loan would be forgiven. And I can't think of a better way to give some of the most gifted young people in this country a chance to do something they might like to do anyway, in ways that would, in effect, work out to supplement the salary they would otherwise be earning.

Third, I will ask Congress to invest \$10 million to train 1,000 Native Americans to teach on Indian reservations and in other public schools with large Native American populations.

Fourth, I will call on Congress to invest \$18 million to recruit and train retired members of the military to become teachers. Since 1994—you heard Arthur say this is his fifth year of teaching—our Troops for Teachers Program has helped 3,000 active-duty soldiers who were planning to leave the military and find rewarding

second careers in teaching. That experience has shown that people like Mr. Moore make great teachers and great role models.

I again want to thank all the Members of Congress—Secretary Riley mentioned them; one of them, Chet Edwards, is here—for the work that they have done in this regard. Congresswoman Mink and I were recently together in Korea visiting our troops. And I met a senior master sergeant who was about to retire after 29 years in the military. He was 49 years old; he could still run a 6-minute mile. *[Laughter]* And he was going home to Kentucky to teach children. He said, “I think I can do those kids some good.”

There are a lot of people like this. You go out into—if you visit with the people in the military, that make the military their career, you just can’t fail to be impressed with the accumulated weight of experience. They’ve dealt with every kind of human problem you can imagine. They understand, increasingly—and I must say, in the last several years, more and more—the importance of balancing discipline and creativity, letting people think for themselves but also reminding that they have to play on the team and with certain rules. And they understand how to manage people and resources—and limited resources—to do a job of limitless importance. They tend to have math and science backgrounds. And they have shown a remarkable willingness to teach in inner-city and rural schools that have difficulty recruiting teachers. So these 25 million veterans—and there will be more as time goes on, obviously, more and more every year—are an incredible pool of potential teacher talent.

The Secretary of Education always tells me that we’re going to have to hire 2 million more teachers in the next few years, because of the growth of the student population and the retirement of the existing teacher corps. So I think we should do more, and this is a big downpayment on it. And I must say, Members of Congress, if you think that we ought to spend even more money on it, I’ll support you. *[Laughter]* I think we should make it easier for people who have kept our Nation strong to provide for a strong American future in the 21st century.

Now let me just mention one other program that is very important to me, and that’s the master teacher program. The National Board for Professional Teacher Certification has received almost unanimous support from teachers and other educators throughout our country. We are trying to get 100,000 certified master teachers, enough so that we’ll have at least one in every school building in America. And when we do that, we know they will have a dramatic impact on improving the quality of the existing teacher corps. So I hope we will have support for that.

And if we do these things, in addition to the other proposals, I think that we will be doing our part to ensure that we’ll have the kind of schools our children need and our country needs in the 21st century, because it all starts with a teacher like Mr. Moore.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. in the Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Sgt. Arthur Moore, USA (Ret.), teacher, Harlem Park Community School, Baltimore, MD, who introduced the President.

Remarks at the National Academy of Sciences *January 22, 1999*

Thank you very much. Jamie, Dr. Lederberg, I’d like to thank you for your service in this and so many other ways. I would like to thank Sandy Berger for many things, including indulging my nagging on this subject for the better part of 6 years now. I was so relieved that Dr. Lederberg, not very long ago—well, last year—brought a distinguished panel of experts

together to discuss this bioterrorism threat, because I then had experts to cite for my concern and nobody thought I was just reading too many novels late at night. *[Laughter]*

Madam Attorney General, Secretary Shalala, Secretary Richardson, Director Witt, Deputy Secretary Hamre, Commandant of the Coast Guard and our other military leaders who are

here, Mr. Clarke, ladies and gentlemen. I'm delighted to be here to discuss this subject—with some trepidation. Sandy Berger noted that Dr. Lederberg won a Nobel Prize at 33, and I was Governor; you can infer from that that I was not very good at chemistry and biology. [*Laughter*]

But any democracy is imbued with the responsibility of ordinary citizens who do not have extraordinary expertise to meet the challenges of each new age. And that is what we are all trying to do. Our country has always met the challenges of those who would do us harm. At the heart of our national defense, I have always believed, is our attempt to live by our values, democracy, freedom, equal opportunity. We are working hard to fulfill these values at home. And we are working with nations around the world to advance them, to build a new era of interdependence where nations work together not simply for peace and security but also for better schools and health care, broader prosperity, a cleaner environment, and a greater involvement by citizens everywhere in shaping their own future.

In the struggle to defend our people and values and to advance them wherever possible, we confront threats both old and new: Open borders and revolutions in technology have spread the message and the gifts of freedom, but have also given new opportunities to freedom's enemies. Scientific advances have opened the possibility of longer, better lives; they have also given the enemies of freedom new opportunities.

Last August, at Andrews Air Force Base, I grieved with the families of the brave Americans who lost their lives at our Embassy in Kenya. They were in Africa to promote the values America shares with friends of freedom everywhere, and for that they were murdered by terrorists. So, too, were men and women in Oklahoma City, at the World Trade Center, Khobar Towers, on Pan Am 103.

The United States has mounted an aggressive response to terrorism, tightening security for our diplomats, our troops, our air travelers; improving our ability to track terrorist activity; enhancing cooperation with other countries; strengthening sanctions on nations that support terrorists.

Since 1993, we have tripled funding for FBI antiterrorist efforts. Our agents and prosecutors, with excellent support from our intelligence

agencies, have done extraordinary work in tracking down perpetrators of terrorist acts and bringing them to justice. And as our airstrikes against Afghanistan—or against the terrorist camps in Afghanistan last summer showed, we are prepared to use military force against terrorists who harm our citizens. But all of you know the fight against terrorism is far from over. And now, terrorists seek new tools of destruction.

Last May, at the Naval Academy commencement, I said terrorist and outlaw states are extending the world's fields of battle from physical space to cyberspace, from our Earth's vast bodies of water to the complex workings of our own human bodies. The enemies of peace realize they cannot defeat us with traditional military means, so they are working on two new forms of assault, which you've heard about today: cyber attacks on our critical computer systems, and attacks with weapons of mass destruction, chemical, biological, potentially even nuclear weapons.

We must be ready—ready if our adversaries try to use computers to disable power grids, banking, communications and transportation networks, police, fire, and health services, or military assets. More and more, these critical systems are driven by and linked together with computers, making them more vulnerable to disruption. Last spring, we saw the enormous impact of a single failed electronic link when a satellite malfunctioned: disabled pagers, ATM's, credit card systems, and television networks all around the world. And we already are seeing the first wave of deliberate cyber attacks, hackers break into Government and business computers, stealing and destroying information, raiding bank accounts, running up credit card charges, extorting money by threats to unleash computer viruses.

The potential for harm is clear. Earlier this month, an ice storm in this area crippled power systems, plunging whole communities into darkness and disrupting daily lives. We have to be ready for adversaries to launch attacks that could paralyze utilities and services across entire regions.

We must be ready if adversaries seek to attack with weapons of mass destruction, as well. Armed with these weapons, which can be compact and inexpensive, a small band of terrorists could inflict tremendous harm. Four years ago, the world received a wake-up call when a group unleashed a deadly chemical weapon, nerve gas,

in the Tokyo subway. We have to be ready for the possibility that such a group will obtain biological weapons. We have to be ready to detect and address a biological attack promptly, before the disease spreads.

If we prepare to defend against these emerging threats, we will show terrorists that assaults on America will accomplish nothing but their own downfall.

Let me say first what we have done so far to meet this challenge. We've been working to create and strengthen the agreement to keep nations from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, because this can help keep these weapons away from terrorists, as well. We're working to ensure the effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, to obtain an accord that will strengthen compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention, to end production of nuclear weapons material. We must ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to end nuclear tests once and for all.

As I proposed Tuesday in the State of the Union Address, we should substantially increase our efforts to help Russia and other former Soviet nations prevent weapons material and knowledge from falling into the hands of terrorists and outlaw states. In no small measure we should do this by continuing to expand our cooperative work with the thousands of Russian scientists who can be used to advance the causes of world peace and health and well-being but who, if they are not paid, remain a fertile field for the designs of terrorists.

But we cannot rely solely on our efforts to keep weapons from spreading. We have to be ready to act if they do spread. Last year, I obtained from Congress a 39 percent budget increase for chemical and biological weapons preparedness. This is helping to accelerate our ongoing effort to train and equip fire, police, and public health personnel all across our country to deal with chemical and biological emergencies. It is helping us to ready Armed Forces and National Guard units in every region to meet this challenge and to improve our capacity to detect an outbreak of disease and save lives, to create the first-ever civilian stockpile of medicines to treat people exposed to biological and chemical hazards, to increase research and development on new medicines and vaccines to deal with new threats.

Our commitment to give local communities the necessary tools already goes beyond paper

and plans. For example, parked just outside this building is a newly designed truck we have provided to the Arlington, Virginia, Fire Department. It can rapidly assist and prevent harm to people exposed to chemical and biological dangers.

Our commitment on the cyber front has been strong, as well. We've created special offices within the FBI and the Commerce Department to protect critical systems against cyber attack. We're building partnerships with the private sector to find and reduce vulnerabilities, to improve warning systems, to rapidly recover if attacks occur. We have an outstanding public servant in Richard Clarke, who is coordinating all these efforts across our Government.

Today I want to announce the new initiatives we will take to take us to the next level in preparing for these emerging threats. In my budget, I will ask Congress for \$10 billion to address terrorism and terrorist-emerging tools. This will include nearly \$1.4 billion to protect citizens against chemical and biological terror, more than double what we spent on such programs only 2 years ago.

We will speed and broaden our efforts, creating new local emergency medical teams, deploying in the field portable detection units the size of a shoebox to rapidly identify hazards, tying regional laboratories together for prompt analysis of biological threats. We will greatly accelerate research and development, centered in the Department of Health and Human Services, for new vaccines, medicines, and diagnostic tools.

I should say here that I know everybody in this crowd understands this, but everyone in America must understand this: The Government has got to fund this. There is no market for the kinds of things we need to develop, and if we are successful, there never will be a market for them. But we have got to do our best to develop them. These cutting-edge efforts will address not only the threat of weapons of mass destruction but also the equally serious danger of emerging infectious diseases. So we will benefit even if we are successful in avoiding these attacks.

The budget proposal will also include \$1.46 billion to protect critical systems from cyber and other attacks. That's 40 percent more than we were spending 2 years ago. Among other things, it will help to fund four new initiatives: first, an intensive research effort to detect intruders

trying to break into critical computer systems; second, crime—excuse me—detection networks, first for our Defense Department, and later for other key agencies so when one critical computer system is invaded, others will be alerted instantly, and we will urge the private sector to create similar structures; third, the creation of information centers in the private sector so that our industries can work together and with Government to address cyber threats; finally, we'll ask for funding to bolster the Government's ranks of highly skilled computer experts, people capable of preventing and responding to computer crises.

To implement this proposal, the Cyber Corps program, we will encourage Federal agencies to train and retrain computer specialists, as well as recruiting gifted young people out of college.

In all our battles, we will be aggressive. At the same time I want you to know that we will remain committed to uphold privacy rights and other constitutional protections, as well as the proprietary rights of American businesses. It is essential that we do not undermine liberty in the name of liberty. We can prevail over terrorism by drawing on the very best in our free society: the skill and courage of our troops, the genius of our scientists and engineers, the strength of our factory workers, the determination and talent of our public servants, the vision of leaders in every vital sector.

I have tried as hard as I can to create the right frame of mind in America for dealing with this. For too long the problem has been that not enough has been done to recognize the threat and deal with it. And we in Government, frankly, weren't as well organized as we should have been for too long. I do not want the pendulum to swing the other way now and for people to believe that every incident they read about in a novel or every incident they see in a thrilling movie is about to happen to them within the next 24 hours.

What we are seeing here, as any military person in the audience can tell you, is nothing

more than a repetition of weapons systems that goes back to the beginning of time. An offensive weapons system is developed, and it takes time to develop the defense; and then another offensive weapon is developed that overcomes that defense, and then another defense is built up—as surely as castles and moats held off people with spears and bows and arrows and riding horses, and the catapult was developed to overcome the castle and the moat.

But because of the speed with which change is occurring in our society, in computing technology, and particularly in the biological sciences, we have got to do everything we can to make sure that we close the gap between offense and defense to nothing, if possible. That is the challenge here.

We are doing everything we can, in ways that I can and in ways that I cannot discuss, to try to stop people who would misuse chemical and biological capacity from getting that capacity. This is not a cause for panic. It is a cause for serious, deliberate, disciplined, long-term concern. And I am absolutely convinced that if we maintain our clear purpose and our strength of will, we will prevail here.

And thanks to so many of you in this audience and your colleagues throughout the United States and like-minded people throughout the world, we have better than a good chance of success. But we must be deliberate, and we must be aggressive.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. at the National Academy of Sciences. In his remarks, he referred to Jamie Gorelick, vice chair, Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae), and former Cochair, Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection, who introduced the President; Dr. Joshua Lederberg, Nobel laureate and Sackler Foundation scholar; and Richard A. Clarke, National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counterterrorism.

Remarks on the Arkansas Tornado Damage *January 22, 1999*

Good morning. I was very sad to learn of the terrible losses suffered by the people of Arkansas as tornadoes swept through Little Rock, North Little Rock, and 16 other counties in my home State last night.

As you know, there has been considerable loss of life, and we are still getting reports. The fact that the Governor's Mansion, where Hillary and I raised Chelsea for 12 years, was actually in the path of the storm made it all the more real to me.

Director Witt has just briefed me on the damage. He and I have faced challenges like this before at home because Arkansas gets so very many tornadoes. And we are deeply committed to doing everything we can to help the people there recover.

I have been in touch with the mayor of Little Rock this morning and expect to talk to more of the officials as the day goes on. We will be working with them to get whatever appropriate assistance is required. And our thoughts and prayers are with them. And I expect to get further briefing from Mr. Witt to determine what, if anything else, we should do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, upon returning from the National Academy of Sciences. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jim Dailey of Little Rock, AR.

Statement on the Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Conflict *January 22, 1999*

The United States remains deeply concerned about the risk of armed conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia and strongly committed to help find a peaceful resolution to their border dispute.

As part of this effort, I asked former National Security Adviser Anthony Lake to return to Eritrea and Ethiopia during the last week. This was his fourth visit since October. During his visit, Mr. Lake met with Organization of African Unity (OAU) Secretary Salim Ahmed Salim, Eritrean President Isaias Afworki, and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

In their meetings with Mr. Lake, the leaders of Eritrea and Ethiopia reaffirmed their engagement with the OAU's peace process, which the United States strongly supports. In this context, the United States urges both parties to accept the OAU's Framework Agreement and its agreed implementation in order to achieve a peaceful resolution of the dispute. Ethiopia has

accepted the OAU Framework, and Eritrea awaits certain clarifications from the OAU.

The United States remains deeply concerned, however, about the continuing military buildup along the common border between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and about the implications of this buildup for renewed hostilities. We call on both parties to exercise reason and restraint and to maintain their commitment to the peaceful solution that we are convinced is within reach.

Ethiopia and Eritrea have made remarkable strides in the last few years in overcoming a past of repression, famine, and war. Both nations have promising futures. Both are good friends of the United States. We ask them not to risk what they have gained in a conflict that cannot possibly benefit the people of either side. We pledge our own best efforts, in partnership with Ethiopia and Eritrea, to avert a tragedy and to advance the interests that continue to unite the people of both nations.

Interview With Judith Miller and William J. Broad of the New York Times January 21, 1999

Terrorist Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction

The President. Before you ask questions, I just want to say that I really have appreciated the stories you've done, because I think it's so important that—it's sort of a balance thing, but I want to raise public awareness of this and awareness also with people with influence who can influence decisionmaking without throwing people into an unnecessary panic. And I think these stories have been exceedingly valuable.

Sandy was making fun of me today before you came in—Sandy Berger was. He said, "When you started talking about this 6 years ago, nobody around here—people just didn't—they hadn't thought about it."

Q. Six years ago.

The President. I've been asking them to think about this for a long, long time. And of course, we had it more or less in the context of terrorism because we had the World Trade Center and all the other things to worry about. But anyway.

Q. But actually, one of my first questions—because we've heard so many rumors about how you got interested, and none of what has happened would have happened without your interest. But what was it?

The President. Well, it was—first of all, I spend a lot of time thinking about 5 years from now, 10 years from now, 15 years from now. I think that's one of the things that Presidents are supposed to do and especially when things are changing so much. But we had—keep in mind, we had the World Trade Center issue; we had the CIA killer; and then later you had the incident in the Tokyo subway and then Oklahoma City. We've had a lot of terrorist incidents, culminating in the bombing of our Embassies in Africa and what happened in Khobar, other things.

One of the things that I have worried about from the beginning, with the breakdown of the Soviet Union before my time here, was how to help them deal with the aftermath of the massive nuclear system they have, and starting with the Nunn-Lugar funds, going all the way up to our threat reduction proposals in this year's budget—you know, we tried to hire—keep the scientists and the labs working and

do joint projects of all kinds that would be constructive. But it was pretty obvious to me that, given the size of the Soviet biological and chemical programs and the fact that we know a lot of other nations are trying to develop chemical capacity and some biological capacity, that we had not only nuclear problems but we have a chemical and biological problem.

And of course, the Vice President and others sort of sensitized me to this whole computer problem. We had the incident with the defense computers just a few months ago. But before that, I kept reading about all these non—in the line of national security—all these computer hackers. You know, I'm technologically challenged. I can do E-mail and a few other things, you know. But it struck me that we were going to have to find some way to try to deal with that, too, because of the defense implications, as well as the other possibilities.

And I've had all kinds of—I also find that reading novels, futuristic novels—sometimes people with an imagination are not wrong—Preston's novel about biological warfare, which is very much based on—

Q. "Hot Zone" or "Cobra Event"? Which one impressed you?

The President. "The Cobra Event."

Q. That's the one.

The President. Well, "The Hot Zone" was interesting to me because of the Ebola thing, because that was a fact book. But I thought "The Cobra Event" was interesting, especially when he said what his sources were, which seemed fairly credible to me. And then I read another book about a group of terrorists shutting down the telephone networks in the Northeast and the Midwest.

Q. What was that? Do you remember?

The President. I can't remember. I read so many things. I can't remember. A couple years ago. But anyway, when I—and a lot of times it's just for thrills, but a lot of times these people are not far off. You know, they sell books by imagining the future, and sometimes they're right; sometimes they're wrong.

So I've gotten—I don't want to sound—I've gotten a lot of sort of solid, scientific input. I've also solicited opinions from people working

on the genome project, for example, and about what the implications of that might be for dealing with biological warfare. And last year, we had a whole group of experts come in here and spend an extended amount of time with me and then follow up with the staff on biological issues in particular. So I've had a real interest in this, and I think we're about to get up to speed.

But we just have to be prepared for it. I mean, it's—if you look back through all of human history, people who are interested in gaining control or influence or advantage over others have brought to bear the force of arms. And what normally happens, from the beginning of history, is the arms work until a defense is erected, and then there's an equilibrium until there is a new offensive system developed, and then a defense comes up—going all the way back to—well, even before it, but castle moats which were overcome by catapults.

And so, basically, I think what has concerned me is that we, because we're moving from one big issue—will there be a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union—to now a whole lot of proliferation of issues, dealing with smaller scale nuclear issues, chemical and biological issues, missile technology, and of course, the related computer cyber-crime issue—is that I just don't want the lag time between offense and defense to be any longer than is absolutely necessary.

That, I think, is the challenge for us, is to try to—before anything really tragic happens not only in the United States but anywhere else. We've had enough warning signs out there now, enough concrete evidence, and we need to close the door of the gap between the offense and defense.

Q. How worried should we be, and how—we don't want to panic people. And research has seen some of these warning signs, and readers call, and they want to know, is this—how worried should we be? Is this serious today, and is the threat rising? Is it going to be more serious in the future?

The President. I would say that if the issue is how probable is it in the very near-term an American city or community would be affected, I'd say you probably shouldn't be too worried. But if the issue is, is it a near certainty that at some time in the future there will be some group, probably a terrorist group, that attempts to bring to bear either the use or the threat

of a chemical or biological operation, I would say that is highly likely to happen sometime in the next few years. And therefore, I would say the appropriate response is not worry or panic but taking this issue very seriously, expecting all elected officials with any responsibility in this area to know everything they can, and to do everything we can both to erect all possible defenses and then to try to make sure we are doing everything we can to stop this.

Now, we know right now—we know that a lot of what we've done already has delayed WMD programs, some of which I can't talk about, but slowed the development of WMD programs, of missile technology development that might deliver such weapons and other things. And we're doing everything we can to stop or slow down the ability of others, insofar as we know about it and can do something about it. And meanwhile, we're doing everything we can both to develop defenses and emergency responses. But I think we've got an enormous amount of work out there ahead of us, an enormous amount of work.

And a lot of this has to be done with great cooperation between the Federal Government—we need cooperation of the private sector on the cyber issues, the computer issues. We need cooperation with local government on public health response issues, exposure—if there appears to be an outbreak. We had all these sort of false alarms of anthrax in California—how many?—more than a dozen, I think, in the last month. So we need to be able to diagnose and to treat and also to manage those things.

Chemical and Biological Weapons

Q. Does one of these threats worry you more than another, and does any one in particular keep you awake at night?

The President. Well, I have spent some late nights thinking a lot about this and reading a lot about it. I think in terms of offense versus defense, if you go back to where we started, the thing that I'm most interested in—and you will see we've allocated several hundred million dollars basically to research and to applied research—the thing that I'm most interested in is developing the ability to quickly contain biological agents.

A chemical attack would be horrible, but it would be finite. You know, it's just like—for the people who went through Oklahoma City, nothing could be more horrible. But it didn't

spread. The thing that bothers people about biological agents is that, unless they're properly diagnosed, contained, and treated, that it could spread.

For example, we know that if all of us went to a rally on The Mall tomorrow with 10,000 people, and somebody flew a low-flying crop duster and sprayed us all with biological agents from, let's say 200 feet, that no matter how toxic it were, half of us would walk away, for reasons no one quite understands. You know, either we wouldn't breathe it, or we'd have some miraculous resistance to it. And the other half of us, somebody would have to diagnose in a hurry and then contain and treat. Otherwise, it would be kind of like the gift that keeps on giving, you know. [Laughter]

And I don't mean that—I'm not trying to be macabre, but you asked me what keeps me awake at night, and that bothers me. And that's why the thing that I thought was most important about what we did last year, and what we learned a little bit from our defense scare—even though it was on a computer issue, we had this defense issue, plus we were dealing with all this—we'd studied for a year all this—especially this biological issue—is we had this work going on in 12 different places in the Government. So we had to organize our efforts so that we could be accessible to local governments, so we could work with them to set up their own preventive mechanisms.

And I have to tell you, it may be—we may have to await—it's a note I made to myself that we may have to have a perfect defense, I mean, instantaneous. We may have to depend upon the genome project, interestingly enough, because once the human genes' secrets are unlocked, then if you and I think we've been infected, they could take a blood sample, and there would be a computer program which would show us if we had, let's say, we had a variant of anthrax. Let's suppose some terrorist hired a genius scientist and a laboratory to take basic anthrax and put some variant in it that would be resistant to all known anthrax antidotes.

Q. Okay. Or a Russian scientist.

The President. Yes. So let's just suppose that happened. And what you would want is to be able to take a blood sample, do an analysis, put it through a software program that had already been developed, and say, "Okay, here is—this is how the genes are different. This is the

difference." And then presumably, not too long after we've developed this, they will already know, well, therefore, this is how you should—how you should change the vaccine.

And we know now—I know this is kind of bewildering, but keep in mind this is actually good news because, if there were no genome project, if there were no rapid way to do quick analysis that would go right to the tiniest variant, we would be in trouble. And now these scientists are working on this, and we're actually a little bit ahead of the original predicted timetable on unlocking the secrets of the gene. And when that happens, one of the side benefits, I think, will be to be able to tell these things much more quickly.

But meanwhile, we've got this plan. We're stockpiling the vaccines, and we're doing all this research which the Government has to fund, because obviously there's no market for it, right? It's not like—there's no market for it, and I hope there never will be any market for it. But we have to pay, the Government has to pay for this research to develop new vaccines and to manage it along. And I think we will do—I think we've got a very good increase in the budget, and I really think it will have broad bipartisan support.

Q. There's a school of worrywarts out there that says this genome stuff is a double-edged sword, and at some point you can envision ethnic weapons, looking at racial differences and try to do selective—

Q. And targeting.

Q. Look at Kosovo. Look at how much of the blood that has spilled is just rooted in this ethnic—

The President. Yes, but I think to be fair, we're a good ways away from that. I think we need to worry far more about the fact that most of these groups—we know, for example—let's take something I can talk about because it's public record. We know Usama bin Ladin's network has made an effort to get chemical weapons.

Q. Biological or just chemical?

The President. Well, we know they've made an effort to get chemical weapons; they may have made an effort to get biological weapons. We do not know that they have them. It is true—if you take this thing out to sort of the science fiction conclusion, obviously the genome project itself carries the seeds of its own misuse.

But right now I'm absolutely convinced that the advantages dwarf the disadvantages in this area.

Plus, which all the other advantages of it—I mean, it's going to lead us to—we will save countless lives because we'll know in advance what predisposition people have, what problems they have—the genome project would be the seminal event—you know, when it's done, of the first part of the 21st century, there's no doubt about that.

But to come back to your point, the only point I would make, whenever you ask me a question like that, I think it's best for you to remember the formulation that I started with, and it's interesting to think about the moat and the catapult, the spear and the shield—anything. It's all a question of people who have money, organization, and an interest, whether it's political or financial or religious or whatever, in oppressing other people or holding them down, will always be looking for new offensive weapons.

Our goal should always be, for the sake of the world as well as the security of the American people, to make sure not only that we can defend ourselves and counter-punch, if you will, but to develop with each new wave of technology to close the gap between offense and defense. And if we do that, I think that's the strategy that I hope will become at least an integral part of our national security strategy in the WMD area.

Anthrax Vaccinations

Q. Mr. President, in the interim we have a lot of Americans, more than 2 million Americans in uniform, being vaccinated against anthrax. Are you vaccinated?

The President. The Secret Service told me I couldn't discuss that, and they have good reasons for not wanting me to do it. But let me say, I'm convinced that like any other vaccination, there may be some small rejection, but I think on balance it's a safe procedure. I've looked at the reports, and I think on balance, given the fact that we send so many of our men and women in uniform into places where they could be exposed, I think that they're better off being vaccinated. I do not believe that the threat in the United States is sufficient that I could recommend that to people, to the public at large.

Q. What about first responders or people in hospitals who might be exposed to smallpox, anthrax, plague, and things like that?

The President. The real answer there is, we haven't reached a conclusion, but we're considering that. Because we have to work with the first responders, we've got the public health people looking into this and other people, and I think that that's a judgment that ought to be made primarily by people who are in the best position to make a professional judgment about it. So that's something that's being considered.

Response to the Terrorist Threat

Q. We've heard about something else that's being considered that I think Bill wants to ask you about.

Q. As you may be aware, Secretary Cohen and people at the Pentagon are talking about trying to create a new position of commander in chief for the continental United States because of the terror threat. And it's moving through the system, and at some point it's going to come to you, probably sometime this summer. Are you inclined to create that kind of position for the military?

The President. Let me say, I think that we need to have an organized response, if you will, to what you might call "homeland defense" on CBW and cyber or computer terrorism issues. And now we've established a national coordinator on these issues in the White House. We've got this national domestic preparation office at the Justice Department. We've got a National Infrastructure Protection Center. We've got a joint task force on cyber defense already at DOD in response to what they went through before.

So I want them to look at where we are and make some recommendations to me. I'm not sure that that is what they're going to recommend, and I think that I shouldn't give an answer to the question you ask until I see what the range of options are and what the range of recommendations is.

Q. Do you have a leaning one way or another?

The President. No, just except to say that it is very important that we outline every single responsibility that we have as a nation at the national level and that someone be responsible for it. I want to know—as I said, one of the things that we learned last year that I think was a legitimate criticism of what we have done

in our administration is that we had 12 different places where these activities were going on, and they weren't being properly coordinated and driven in the proper fashion. And we've tried to resolve this. And this is sort of the last big kind of organizational piece, as far as I know, that is yet to be resolved. So the military is going to make me a recommendation, and I will respond accordingly.

Again, the American people—this shouldn't be a cause for alarm; this should be a cause for reassurance. They should want us to be well-organized on these things because—remember, for years and years, when I was a boy, we used to do all those—they had all these fallout shelters, and every school had its drills and all that. I mean, I'm older than you, so you wouldn't remember this, but—

Q. No, we did it.

The President. But you know, and we—it was a sensible thing to do under the circumstances. Thank God we never experienced it. But it was the sensible thing to do. And so what I want us to do is everything, within reason, we can to minimize our exposure and risks here, and that's how I'm going to evaluate this Pentagon recommendation.

Secretary Cohen, I think, is also real focused on this now. I've been very pleased with the priority he's given it. And I think that all these guys know that after their experience with the computer issue that all this—tomorrow's threats may be very different from yesterday's, and we've got to be ready.

Q. What do you say to people, to skeptics who say all this is just Pentagon maneuvering, creating new bogeymen to scare us so they can whip up new budget authority? And it's—and that's a large crowd.

The President. Even though we're talking about hundreds of millions of dollars and in the aggregate a few billion dollars, it's nowhere near as expensive as maintaining this sort of basic infrastructure of defense; the case of public health, the basic infrastructure of public health.

I say to them, they should understand that we have intelligence—and a lot of it is in the public arena, you all write about it—about all the countries that are trying—the countries and the groups that want chemical weapons, that want biological weapons, that are trying to get agents, precursor agents that you can use to develop chemicals or basic agents you can use

to develop biological weapons. And everybody knows now the world is full of hackers that seek to intrude on networks, that seek to insert bogus codes into programs, and all this sort of stuff. And it would be completely irresponsible for us not to allocate a substantial investment in trying to protect America from threats that will be, in all probability, as likely or more likely in the future than the threats we think we face today.

That's why we started this conversation by saying, I don't want to say anything that will overly alarm anybody. I'm not trying to stir up a lot of false threats. But if you look at just what the UNSCOM people in Iraq—they say that they don't believe that the reporting in Iraq is consistent with what they believe the chemical capacity there is.

If you look at the fact with regard to chemicals, with the Chemical Weapons Convention, if we can get it properly implemented, at least we will be able to track probably, that plus intelligence, large volumes of chemical stocks. But with biological stocks, a very small laboratory with the right materials to work with, you could develop supplies that could kill a large number of people. It simply is irresponsible for us not to both do the best we can with public health protections, do the best research we can on vaccines, stockpile what we know works, and then get out there and try to build a defense and an ability to interrupt and stop, with export controls and any other way we can, these developments. And it costs money. But to me, it's money well spent.

And if there is never an incident, nobody would be happier than me 20 years from now if the same critics would be able to say, "Oh, see, Clinton was a kook; nothing happened." I would be the happiest man on Earth. I would be the happiest man on Earth. If they could say, "He overexaggerated it; nothing happened; all he did was make a bunch of jobs for scientists and build the Pentagon budget," I would be elated 20 years from now to be subject to that criticism because it would mean that nothing happened, and in no small measure because of the efforts we've made.

Russia

Q. Since we have so little time left, Mr. President, Russia. How can you be sure—since they violated the treaty that they signed banning biological weapons for 20 years, does it make sense

to work with them now on biological projects? Are you certain that they are not doing biological research? And what do you do?

The President. Let me say this. I think that the more we work with them and the more their scientists are working with us and the more successful we are in building a common endeavor, the more it will be in their interest to comply.

The real danger in Russia, I think—dangers—are two. One is—I'll take one that is outside the CBW area so it doesn't look like I'm waving the red flag here. When we started the space station—you know, John Glenn went up and then we sent the first two components of the space station up—it had been months since a lot of those Russian scientists had been paid. That's why it is very, very important, I think, to say we value this enormous infrastructure of scientific expertise they have in the space area, in the CBW area, and we want to work with them. This budget of mine would enable us to do joint work with 8,000 Russian scientists. Now, there are, I think, 40,000 total—we think. But that's important. That bothers me.

The second thing that concerns me is that when Russia shed communism, they adopted a strategy which was widely lauded at the time in the United States and elsewhere, but they were actually—when I went to Russia, and you remember right after my mother died I got on the plane, and I went to the Czech Republic and Russia—that was, what, January of '94. Actually, at that time the Czech Republic was doing very well and was sort of the poster child of the new economy in the former Communist countries. But when I was there, Russia had actually privatized more property than the Czech Republic had. And this relates partly to the economic crisis, but when they did it, they did it without having had the benefit of an effective central bank, a securities and exchange commission, all these other things, so that you had money coming in and money flying out now.

And one of the problems they have now is that it's not a totalitarian Government anymore; there are a lot of private companies—all the private companies there by definition used to be part of the state, unless they're new businesses. And so one of the problems we're having is, even when they're trying to help us, is keeping up with what all these companies and their subsidiaries do.

And that's been the tension that you've written a lot about and there's been a lot in the press about—was there missile cooperation with Iran or not, and does that violate our understanding, and does that call for some action vis-a-vis Russia? And part of the problem is just keeping up with this proliferation of companies and people that used to have some connection to the Soviet State, some connection to the defense apparatus.

It's not a simple process, and it's not a perfect process, but I am absolutely convinced that this threat reduction initiative we've got can kind of intensify our efforts to work with them, as well as to really implement the Chemical Weapons Treaty and get some teeth in the Biological Weapons Convention. That's very, very important. I think that is the best strategy. It may not be perfect, but it is better than the alternative.

Response to an Attack

Q. What do you do if the nightmare comes to pass, and some country hits us, hits us hard, with a biological weapon? What kind of response would you do?

The President. Well, first of all, if some country were thinking about doing that, I would certainly hope that they wouldn't have the capacity to do it before we could stop them or interrupt them, if it was a—that is, if you're talking about somebody lobbing a missile over here or something like that.

I think if it happened, it would be an act of war, and there would be a very strong response. But I think we've demonstrated that. But I think the far more likely thing is somebody representing some interest—maybe it could be a rogue state; maybe it could be a terrorist network—walking around a city with a briefcase full of vials or in spray cans, you know.

So what we have to do—any country with any sense, if they wanted to attack us, would try to do it through a terrorist network, because if they did it with a missile we'd know who did it, and then they'd be sunk. It would be—that's a deal where they're bound to lose, big time.

Q. Would you respond with nuclear weapons to a biological attack?

The President. Well, I never discuss the nuclear issue. I don't think that's appropriate. But

I think that we would have at least a proportionate, if not a disproportionate, response if someone committed an act of war against the United States. That's what we would do. And if somebody willfully murdered a lot of our civilians, there would be a very heavy price to pay.

Senate Impeachment Trial Presentation by Senator Dale Bumpers

Q. Mr. President, you have time for one more—

Q. We're about to go. Did you have a chance to watch any of Senator Bumpers' presentation today?

The President. I did. It's the only thing I've watched. I watched that.

Q. He said—he criticized the House managers for lacking compassion for your family. He described your family as a family that has been “about as decimated as a family can get. The relationship between husband and wife, father and child, has been incredibly strained if not destroyed.” Is that an accurate representation?

The President. Well, it's been—I would say it has been a strain for my family. But we have worked very hard, and I think we have come through the worst. We love each other very much, and we've worked on it very hard. But I think he was showing—you know, he knows me and Hillary and Chelsea, and we've all been friends, as he said, for 25 years. I think he was just trying to inject a human element into what he was saying.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A brief excerpt of this interview was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 22, and the full transcript was released on January 23. In his remarks, the President referred to author Richard Preston; and Usama bin Ladin, who allegedly sponsored the 1998 bombing attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's Radio Address January 23, 1999

Good morning. Last Tuesday night in my State of the Union Address, I was honored to report to the American people that our families, our communities, and our country are stronger, healthier, and more prosperous than ever. But I warned that we cannot let the hum of our prosperity lull us into complacency. Instead, we must use this moment of promise to meet the long-term challenges we face as a nation, to meet our historic responsibility to the 21st century.

Over the last 6 years, our hard-won fiscal discipline has given us the chance to meet those long-term challenges. Six years ago our budget deficit was \$290 billion. Last year we had a budget surplus of \$70 billion. We expect another one a little larger than that this year, and we're on course for budget surpluses for the next 25 years.

So now we face a new choice: what to do with the surplus. I believe we should use it to plan and save for retirement, to strengthen the readiness of our military, to get our children

ready for the 21st century. Very simply, I believe we should use the first surplus in three decades and the projected ones in the future to meet America's great challenges. Above all, that means saving Social Security and Medicare.

We all know that the baby boom will soon become a senior boom. The number of seniors will double by 2030; average life expectancy is rising rapidly, and that means rising costs for Social Security and Medicare.

I propose to keep Social Security strong for 55 years by committing 60 percent of the surplus for the next 15 years and investing a small portion in the private sector just as any private or State pension would do. We should make further tough choices to put Social Security on a sound footing for the next 75 years, to lift the limits on what seniors on Social Security can earn, and to provide support to reduce the poverty rate among elderly women, which is twice the poverty rate among seniors as a whole. We can do that with a good bipartisan effort.

Once we've accomplished this, I propose we use one of every six dollars of the surplus over the next 15 years to double the life of the Medicare Trust Fund.

Then I believe we should dedicate \$500 billion of the surplus to give working families tax relief for retirement savings, by creating new Universal Savings Accounts—USA accounts—to help all Americans build a nest egg for their retirement. Under my plan, families will receive a tax credit to contribute to their USA account and an additional tax credit to match a portion of their savings, with a choice in how they invest the funds and more help for those who will have the hardest time saving.

Let me give you an example of how USA accounts could work. With the help of USA account tax credits, working people who save and invest wisely from the time they enter the work force until the time they retire could have more than \$100,000 in their USA account, and a more secure retirement. That's the kind of tax relief America needs. By providing this new

tax credit for retirement savings, we can make it possible for all Americans to have a stake in the remarkable economic growth they have worked so hard to create.

Social Security first, then saving Medicare and giving tax relief to help all Americans save in the new USA accounts, investing in defense and education—that's the right way to use America's surplus. If we squander the surplus, we'll waste a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build a stronger nation for our children and our grandchildren. Instead, let's work together to prepare our Nation for the great challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3 p.m. on January 22 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 22 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks to the Community in Little Rock, Arkansas *January 24, 1999*

Thank you very much, James Lee. Ladies and gentlemen, let me thank you for coming out today. I want to thank Governor Huckabee for his response to this terrible, terrible tornado—and Mrs. Huckabee—I thank them for joining us on this walking tour today and welcoming me back to the Governor's Mansion. It's still—it's very beautiful inside, and it's had a little radical surgery in the backyard, as I'm sure that a lot of you have seen.

I thank Secretary Slater, the Secretary of Transportation, also obviously our native Arkansan, for coming down here with me. And they will be helping us on the rebuilding. I thank Congressman Snyder and Congressman Marion Berry from east Arkansas, who has had some communities hit, and representatives of our other congressional offices who are here today. And Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller, Attorney General Pryor, Secretary of State Priest, Treasurer Jimmie Lou Fisher, I thank all of them for being here. And I want to thank Mayor Pat Hays for coming across the river and lending

a friendly, neighborly hand. James Lee Witt's regional director here is Buddy Young, who lives in Texas and who, as many of you know, was in the Arkansas State Police for many years before that.

This is a tragedy we all take very personally. When I was—I got out this morning at 25th and Gaines and sort of wended my way down Arch and Spring toward the Governor's Mansion, and I thought about how many hundreds of times I had run on those streets. And all these folks kept coming out and said, "The last time I saw you, you were running by here. And I had a roof on my house." And then we went over—we crossed Roosevelt and went down toward Martin Luther King Drive and saw a lot of those homes; large numbers of homes have been completely destroyed there.

And I just wanted to say to you, because Arkansas always had a lot of tornadoes and two huge floods when I was Governor, I asked James Lee Witt to run the national Federal Emergency Management Agency so that it would not be

political and so that it would be competent, professional, and highly personal. And we've dealt with everything from a 500-year flood along the Mississippi River to a massive earthquake in California and all kinds of other natural disasters. This is a trip, I'm sure—I know I, and I'm sure both James Lee and Rodney, never wanted to have to make.

I'd like to give a word of personal encouragement to my former neighbors up here in the Quapaw Quarter not to give up on it. I hope everyone who possibly can will rebuild those homes—will rebuild the homes, fix the roofs, replant the trees, and keep the spirit of the place alive.

And I want to say to the folks in all the counties in the State—and I've got a list that includes not only Pulaski but also Independence, St. Francis, Saline, and White Counties; we've already declared individual and local governments eligible for assistance there. The State has been declared a disaster area as more counties may become specifically eligible. I want to encourage all of them, as well.

These things happen, as Governor Huckabee reminded me, that Arkansas had the largest number of tornadoes in one day, moving through here the other day, that have ever been recorded. And we grieve for the loss of life.

I'd like to say especially that this is a landmark for me, this store here. And I'm so glad that the people who own it are going to rebuild it, because it used to be our family store. And Hillary and Chelsea and I used to come down here. We think of the fine pharmacist here who lost his life, and the others here in Arkansas. And when we survey the scope of the devastation, I think we can all be grateful to God that the loss has not been greater.

And so this is a day when the Sun is out, and a lot of people have offered their helping hands. I want to thank these young people from the AmeriCorps program, our national service program, for being here. They've come in to help. We're glad to see them.

And so I ask you to redouble your resolve and help your neighbors. And we'll do everything we can to be good neighbors.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the parking lot of a Harvest Foods store. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee, Lt. Gov. Winthrop P. Rockefeller, Attorney General Mark L. Pryor, Secretary of State Sharon Priest, and State Treasurer Jimmie Lou Fisher of Arkansas; Governor Huckabee's wife, Janet; Mayor Patrick Henry Hays of North Little Rock; and Harvard Foods pharmacist Robert E. Howard.

Remarks to the Community in Beebe, Arkansas

January 24, 1999

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Good afternoon. Thank you for making me feel welcome. Let me say, first of all, that I brought my "Arkansas Cabinet"—Secretary Slater and Mr. Witt—down here today along with a number of Arkansans from the White House staff, including Missy Kincaid, who is from this community. I have been here many times. I have a lot of friends here, and I was very sad when I flew over Beebe and McRae today and I saw how much damage had been done. And I saw a lot of pain in a lot of faces up on the road there, but I also saw a lot of determination.

I want to thank your mayor for being—even with his bad foot, walking around with me in

some pretty lumpy places. He must think he has impeccable timing. He got himself installed just in time for the tornado. But he's a young man and a teacher, so he ought to be about rebuilding the schools—and that's a good thing.

And I thank your county judge. I thank your superintendent, Mr. Williams. I thank my good friend Senator Beebe and Mrs. Beebe and Representative Hinton. I'd also like to compliment your fire chief, Mr. Kennedy, and the National Guard people. I know they've worked very, very hard the last few days, and I know that we're all appreciative of them.

And you've had some young AmeriCorps volunteers who came down from St. Louis, and that's a program that was started after I became

President. I'm proud of these young people; they volunteer a year or 2 years of their lives to work in communities just doing what needs to be done. And I'm very grateful for that.

Let me say on the points that I've heard people talk about, as all of you know, we've got a relationship here with the State emergency folks. We are going to set up programs to provide whatever help we can to this community. I think the most immediate public need, obviously, is for some place for the children to go to school. And we've talked about how quickly we could get some of the portable classrooms in here in large numbers and with the best possible quality. And I assure you that we will—I will personally be involved in that, and so will Mr. Witt and Secretary Slater. We'll get on it, and we'll get the job done as quickly as it can physically be done.

We also want to make sure that both the community and individual families are clear about what the Federal Government can and cannot do and what kind of support is there. We don't want anybody to leave something on the table that we could contribute to rebuilding the lives of the families and the community.

And again, I just want to encourage you. You probably know, right before I came here I was walking through my old neighborhood in Little Rock, the Quapaw Quarter, where the Governor's Mansion is and where I lived for 12 years. I saw a lot of people whom Hillary and Chelsea and I spent a lot of time with, with their homes down around their ears today too. They'll have to decide how to go forward, and many of you will. But I just want to encourage you. I want to tell you that as awful as it is,

I just thank God there weren't more people killed. And I hope we can all keep the right attitude, and I hope all the neighbors will keep helping their neighbors. And in the end, I think it will come out all right.

And again, let me thank you, Mayor; thank you, Judge; and I thank all the other local leaders, and thank you for giving a chance to be here—giving us a chance to be with you today.

God bless you. Thank you very much.

I also wanted to say just one other thing, just because I—there's one part of Arkansas I am not visiting today. In addition to Congressman Snyder, who has Pulaski and White County—Independence and St. Francis County and I think one other county have been declared disasters, and the east Arkansas counties are in Representative Marion Berry's district, and Congressman Berry is here with us today, too. And so our thoughts are with the people east of here who are suffering as well. And some of those folks lost everything they have, and I just wanted to mention them and say our thoughts and our prayers and our support are with them, too.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:47 p.m. in front of the Beebe School District Building. In his remarks, he referred to Katherine (Missy) Kincaid, Special Assistant to the First Lady; Mayor Donald Ward of Beebe; Judge Bob Parish of White County; Kieth Williams, Beebe superintendent of schools; State Senator Mike Beebe and his wife, Ginger; State Representative Randy Minton; and Doug Kennedy, chief, Beebe Fire Department.

Remarks on the Welfare to Work Initiative January 25, 1999

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. This is a good way to start the day, isn't it? [*Laughter*] We're all going to feel better when we leave here.

Let me thank the previous speakers. First, I want to thank Robert Higgins and his entire organization for setting an example for corporations throughout America. And I thank his employees for coming here today and for being

a vivid human illustration of how welfare reform can work at its best.

I thank my good friend of many years Governor Mel Carnahan, and Mrs. Carnahan, who is here with him. We made two of our major welfare reform announcements over the last several years in Missouri because no State has worked harder to do this right, in a both humane and effective way.

I want to thank Carlos—I was looking at him—I don't know how many—how many public speeches do you think Carlos has made in his life? [*Laughter*] Man, he stood up here; he had his head up, his shoulders back—I was thinking as I was watching him that after he does all that computer stuff and makes money for a few years, that we're always looking for a few good candidates in this business, and he looked awfully good. [*Laughter*]

I would like to thank Secretary Shalala, Secretary Herman, and Secretary Slater for their work on welfare reform. And there are two Members of the House of Representatives here today who represent very different districts, but who have a passionate interest in this whole subject: Representative Ben Cardin from Maryland and Representative Rubén Hinojosa from south Texas. And I thank them for being here and for what they've done for this cause; and my good friend Jane Campbell, county commissioner from Cuyahoga County, Cleveland, Ohio.

And I'd like to say a special word, if I might, before I get into my remarks, about Eli Segal, who started our Welfare to Work Partnership. You know, it takes a special—almost a genius to start something that didn't exist before. And a couple of years ago, when I announced in the State of the Union we were going to have this Welfare to Work Partnership, we had five companies. A couple of years later, we have 10,000 companies.

Yesterday, you may have seen in the press, I went home to Arkansas to look at some terrible tornado damage. At each place where I went, both these places, there was a team of our young AmeriCorps volunteers from all over America—and most of them had never been to Arkansas before. And Governor, one of the teams was from St. Louis, working on the tornado damage. These young Americans give a year, sometimes 2 years of their lives; they earn credit for college. In 4 years there have been over 100,000 AmeriCorps volunteers. It took the Peace Corps 20 years to get to 100,000 volunteers. Eli Segal also started AmeriCorps. So for two great contributions to the United States, we thank him for this remarkable, remarkable thing.

One of the reasons that I ran for President in 1992 was to change the welfare system as we then knew it, to move from a system that promoted independence and had no incentives for parents who are not custodial parents to

be responsible, and basically gave people a check that was almost always inadequate in the name of being humane, which assumed, more often than not, that they had no capacity to work and support their children.

All these things were done with the best of intentions. We either assumed people couldn't do the right thing, or we assumed that they wouldn't do the right thing. And so, well, we made the best of an imperfect world by at least cutting a check once a month and then making sure that—and I approve of this and kept it—there were nutritional and health benefits for the children.

And it seemed to me that we ought to, before we just continued to give up on this—we now had created a couple or three generations, in some places, of people who depended on welfare checks and repeated the pattern of the past—that we ought to try to develop a system that at least would try to create incentives and, where appropriate, requirements that would promote independence, work, and family responsibilities.

Now, everybody liked the idea and wanted to do it, but a lot of people, including a lot of very good people who had labored for years in this system, doubted that it could be done. And so we started working at it. And in the past 6 years, I think it's obvious that the American people have done a lot to change all that.

When I became President, I worked with 43 States—Governor Carnahan mentioned this—before we passed legislation, to just free them of Federal rules which undermined their ability to create a system that would promote work and family. There were many innovative programs that already were beginning to move large numbers of people from welfare to work, even before 1996. It was in that year that I was able to sign the landmark bipartisan welfare reform law. I said then that our Nation's answers to the problems of poverty will no longer be a never-ending cycle of welfare but, instead, the dignity, the power, the ethic of work.

Today, we can actually foresee a time when we can break the cycle of welfare for good, when welfare will literally be a support system given to people in hard economic times or when personal misfortune occurs, but that it will not be the rule of life for large numbers of our fellow citizens.

Already we now see welfare rolls in America are the lowest they've been in 30 years—for

the first time in 30 years—below 8 million people, down by 44 percent since I took office. And the same people—the number of people on welfare who are also working some, taking that first step toward responsibility, has tripled. Every State—every State—is now meeting the work participation standards required under the welfare reform law, something I confess that even I did not believe would happen. None of us believed that they would. Every single one of them so far is meeting the work participation standards of the welfare reform law.

America is working again, and this work is transforming lives and families. The welfare system is no longer holding people back; it is helping them to move ahead.

Since the goal here—and let's not forget what the goal is: it is to empower individuals and strengthen families. We've had to do more than simply put time limits on welfare. As I said a moment ago, those who lose their welfare checks continue to get health and nutritional support for their children, and they should. It was one of the big battles we fought here when we debated this, and it led to two vetoes before we finally got a bill that I felt that I could sign.

We also have increased our support for training, for transportation, for child care for those who move from welfare to work, recognizing that there are barriers and we shouldn't expect people to actually move from welfare to work and lower their standard of living and lower their ability to support their children. And there is more support for child care, substantially more, in this budget and for other things.

We have given more support for health care and child care for all low income working families. I think that our citizens should never forget that the largest number of poor people in America are the working poor, and we should be sensitive of that. And with the help of Congress, we have doubled the earned-income tax credit for families with children. That is a targeted tax cut that's especially generous to low income working families. And today it's worth about \$1,000 to every family of four with an income of under \$30,000; and for families of two and three, lower incomes, it's worth quite a lot of money. So this was a major contribution of the economic plan of 1993, and it alone, along with the increase in the minimum wage, has lifted over 2 million children out of poverty.

And finally let me say, as all of you know, I am trying to raise the minimum wage again because I don't think people should work so poor children can still be in poverty.

I think it is very important, however, that we recognize that much of the success of welfare reform has come because of the growth of the economy at large, nearly 18 million new jobs in the last 6 years. I also think we have to recognize that much of the success of welfare reform has come because of the commitment of people in the private sector to do the right thing. I think that if there were no companies willing to have the example that Fleet has offered us today, this would be much, much harder.

And as we look ahead to the future, we have to assume that reaching the next 8 million people—or just under 8 million people—on welfare will be even more challenging than reaching the 44 percent reduction that we have seen achieved already. Therefore, since it's not fair to require people to work unless they have a chance to work, we have to honor and build up and work with the private sector to make sure they have that chance.

As I said, we started 2 years ago with five companies in the Welfare to Work Partnership. Today there are 10,000. They have hired, retrained, and often promoted literally hundreds of thousands of people. And as you have heard, this is not charity. It's good for families, but it's also good for the bottom line and good for the communities.

Now, smaller caseloads, bigger paychecks are important signs of progress. But I think it's also important that we recognize this is about more than economics. And I think you can see that. There's something intangible, even beyond the money, involved here: the sense of security of these newly working members of our country, the sense of pride at being able to support a child and being able to be a fully participating member of society.

So we have to do more, and we now know what works. And we've seen examples of it today. We know that long-term welfare recipients can be turned into full-time workers. Now we must ensure that we go to the next step, that we deal with the remaining people on welfare, and that we do it recognizing that it is a challenge but also a phenomenal opportunity for the United States and a responsibility for those of us who can do something about it.

In my State of the Union Address last week, I said that we can help another 200,000 Americans move from welfare to work with extra support in the Federal budget. To achieve that, I propose first that we renew the welfare to work program, which is set to expire in the year 2000. My balanced budget includes \$1 billion to help States and communities build upon their record of success. It also dedicates \$150 million of those funds to low income fathers who fulfill their duty to work, to pay child support, to become part of their children's lives.

And I think all of us were thrilled by Carlos' statement. But I would like to make one point here that he made that I think ought to be made more explicit. There is a reason that welfare reform has worked. There is a reason that programs like this magnificent program in Minnesota, giving fathers the tools they need to support their children, has worked. And that is, most people are basically good people who want to do the right thing. You know, we have all these programs, we talk about all these policies, and we hardly ever say that. But I think that's worth stating. You saw a good person up here talking about a child he loved. And it's so easy to forget that. The reason all this stuff can be done is that human nature will rise to the level of possibility if given the opportunity and the guidance and the support. That's the reason these rolls have reduced so much.

You know, I hardly ever—when I was Governor for 12 years, I ran a welfare system in a poor State. I don't believe I ever met—and I went to welfare offices, and I sat and talked with caseworkers and welfare recipients, and went through the details of it. And I have never met a person who has said, "You know, I really love getting this welfare check, and I hope I never have to hit a lick." [Laughter] I never met a person who said, "Gosh, I'm proud that I never paid any child support to my child." You know, there may be a few, but to pretend that that is anything like more than a small minority is a foolish assumption.

So I say, this is very important. And this \$150 million to support people, so there can be more stories like Carlos Rosas', is very, very important. Many States are using some of their welfare-to-work funds, as you heard from Governor Carnahan already, to get fathers to sign personal responsibility contracts, to do the right thing by their children. And now this extra \$150 million will help to ensure that every State can

have this kind of effort, and that every community that has any substantial number of people who would fall under this category can do the kinds of things we've heard about in this Minnesota program.

But we have more to do. With the longest peacetime expansion in history, with a continually growing economy, businesses have to reach wider to get new talent. They have to bring more welfare recipients into the workplace if we're going to continue to grow.

So we have to see this as an opportunity to make permanent gains in dealing with the welfare challenge. And therefore, I think we have to do more to help those recipients who are still on the rolls. And as I said, they're often the greatest challenges to getting people into the work force.

Example number one—that's why Secretary Slater is here today—two-thirds of the new jobs in America are in the suburbs; three-quarters of the welfare recipients are in the cities or in isolated rural areas. So you've got the jobs in the middle, and the welfare recipients in the cities or in the rural areas. Our balanced budget will double funding to get workers to the workplace—for transportation support. It also has a 50 percent increase in housing vouchers, to help families find affordable homes closer to the jobs and avoid difficult and sometimes actually impossible commutes.

Now, these are the kinds of things that I think we ought to be doing. We don't have any excuse not to do it. We have the example of Fleet. We have the example of Missouri and Governor Carnahan. We have the example of Carlos Rosas. We have the example of these fine women who stood up when they were introduced as employees of Fleet. And we now know that it is not only the right thing to do for our country; it is the right thing to do for our companies.

So I hope that we will have enormous bipartisan support for this new advance in the welfare budget. And I hope all of you will do everything you can to spread the word across the country that it is good for America to do this, and it will work because most people are good people and they want to do the right thing.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. in the Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) of the Old

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

new lives, building housing for the elderly, including the new Pope John Paul II Apartments, and leading countless other efforts that lift our people's lives. All over our country, the Catholic faithful do this work for the sake of all Americans, and they are joined in their work by Americans of all faiths.

Your Holiness, every American welcomes you and hopes that you will come to see us again. I am nowhere near as gifted a linguist as you are, Holy Father, but as they say in your native Poland: *Sto lat i wiecej*—may you live 100 years and more. And may you keep working and teaching and lighting the way, for all of us and all the world.

Welcome to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at the Missouri Air National Guard Hangar at Lambert-St. Louis International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Justin Rigali of St. Louis; Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo of the Holy See; Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri; Mayor Clarence Harmon of St. Louis; St. Louis County Executive George Westfall; and U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See Corinne Claiborne (Lindy) Boggs. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Pope John Paul II.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Pope John Paul II in St. Louis

January 26, 1999

Q. Mr. President, are there any thoughts you'd care to share with us, now, as you sit down with the Holy Father?

The President. Well, we have a lot of things to discuss, so I'm looking forward to it. We're going to talk about many places in the world, and I'm anxious to hear his thoughts on his recent trip to Mexico. And then I expect we'll go through a lot of other hot spots in the world.

Q. How has his advice affected your decisions so far in your Presidency?

The President. He reminds us to think of the people, not just the governments of other countries but the people of other countries. And that's an important thing for an American President to keep in mind.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

The President. I think the Church should buy the company producing the film, and you could fund all the Catholic charities all over the world with it. We could sell all the film the photographers use. [Laughter]

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:28 p.m. at the Missouri Air National Guard Hangar at Lambert-St. Louis International Airport. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Social Security and Medicare

January 27, 1999

The President. Thank you, and good morning. The Vice President and I are delighted to welcome you here. We have an unusually large delegation from the United States Congress here today, and I believe I have all their names, and I would like to acknowledge Senator Thomas and Representatives Becerra, Bliley,

Borski, Cardin, Hill, Nadler, Pickering, Portman, Pomeroy, Markey, Smith, and Tauscher. I think I have got them all. And give them a hand. [Applause] I think that's amazing that they're here.

I would like to thank Secretary Shalala, Social Security Commissioner Apfel, and Gene

Sperling for their work on this meeting today. I'd like to thank our panelists, Laura Tyson, Uwe Reinhardt, Martha McSteen, Hans Riemer, and Stuart Altman, for their presence. And they will be introduced in a few moments.

In my State of the Union Address last week, I challenged Congress and the American people to meet the long-term challenges our country faces for the 21st century. Today you all know we are here to talk about perhaps the largest of those, the aging of America.

The number of elderly Americans will double by 2030. Thanks to medical advances, by the middle of the next century, the average American will live to be 82, 6 years longer than today. These extra years of life are a great gift, but they do present a problem for Social Security, for Medicare, for how we will manage the whole nature of our society.

As I have said repeatedly, this is a high-class problem, and the older I get the better it looks. [Laughter] But it is one, nonetheless, that we have to face. Fortunately, we are in a strong position to act because of our prosperity and our budget surplus.

It is well to remember that the current prosperity of this country was created not by rash actions in Washington but by facing boldly the challenge forced by the budget deficits, by getting the deficit down, getting into balance, bringing the interest rates down, and bringing the economy back. We also should face the challenge of the aging of America in the same way.

In the State of the Union, I laid out a three-part plan and asked Congress to consider it, to invest our surplus in ways that will both strengthen our economy today and in the future and meet the needs of the aging of America. First, I proposed that we devote 62 percent of the surplus for the next 15 years to saving Social Security, investing a small portion in the private sector, as private, State, and local government pensions do. The average position of the retirement fund in the stock market, of Social Security, would be under 2 percent of the market for the next 15 years, under 3 percent for the next 20 years, and always under 4 for the next 50 years.

Over the course of the last week, I have been gratified to see discussions of this proposal and, obviously, differences about the whole market investment issue, but substantial agreement in the idea of dedicating a large portion of the

surplus to saving Social Security across partisan lines. And for that I am very grateful.

I think we should build on this to extend the life of the Social Security Trust Fund further. If we do what I suggested, it will add 55—take us to 2055. I think we should have a 75-year life for the Social Security Trust Fund. We should also make some changes to reduce the poverty rate among elderly women, who have a poverty rate at twice, almost twice the general poverty rate among seniors in our country. And I believe we should eliminate the limits on what seniors on Social Security can earn.

To make the changes necessary to go to 75 years on the Trust Fund and deal with these other challenges, we will simply have to have a bipartisan process. There is no way to avoid it. But I'm confident that the changes, while somewhat difficult, are fully achievable. And if we work together, we can make them.

To prepare America for the senior boom will require more than saving Social Security. We also have to deal with the challenge to Medicare and our obligation to make sure that our seniors have access to quality health care. I want to say very clearly that we need to set aside enough of the surplus for Medicare and Social Security before we address new initiatives like tax cuts. That's why the second part of our proposal calls for devoting 15 percent of the surplus for 15 years to the Medicare Trust Fund. If we do this and nothing else, we can secure the Trust Fund until after the year 2020.

But I want to make something else clear. I believe that—some have suggested that by dedicating the surplus to Medicare, we won't need to make any decisions to reform the program. I disagree with that. Medicare needs revenues to increase its solvency, but it also needs reform to make sure that it is modern and competitive and to gain additional savings to help finance a long overdue prescription drug benefit. So, for me, reforming Medicare and committing the surplus go hand in hand.

I'd also like to say that, for me, there can be no better use of our surplus than assuring a secure retirement and health care to older Americans. And I believe that it is good not only for older Americans but for their children and grandchildren as well, and for the larger economy.

Why is that? Well, first of all, if we dedicate this portion of the surplus to Social Security and Medicare over the next 15 years, obviously,

in most of those years that money will not be needed. In all those years we will, in effect, be buying back the national debt. As we do that, we will bring the percent of our debt—I mean, our publicly held debt as a percentage of our economy—down to its lowest point since 1917, since before World War I. What will that do? That will drive interest rates down, and it will free private capital up to invest in the United States, to create jobs, to raise incomes. So I think that it's very important.

If you look around the world today at the troubles these countries are facing, when their budget deficits get out of hand, when their interest rates go through the roof and they can't get any money from anywhere, when we worry constantly about our trading partners, trying to keep them in good shape and help them to not only preserve our economic markets, to preserve partners for peace and democracy and freedom—if we in the United States could actually be doing something to pay down our debt while saving Social Security and Medicare, we would keep these interest rates down. And it would be an enormous hedge against whatever unforeseen future volatility occurs in the global economy.

So this is a strategy that will actually grow the American economy while preparing for the future. Of course, in an even more direct way it's good for the rest of America because when the baby boomers retire, as I said in the State of the Union, none of us want our children to be burdened with the costs of our retirement, nor do we want our grandchildren's childhoods to be lessened because our kids are having to pay so much for our retirement or our medical care. So, from my point of view, this is a very good thing for Americans of all ages, without regard to their political party, their income, their section of the country. I think this will benefit the country and help to bring us together and strengthen us over the next several decades.

Let me just say very briefly that the third part of our proposal is to dedicate \$500 billion of the surplus to give tax relief to working families through USA accounts, Universal Savings Accounts. Under my plan, working Americans would receive a tax credit to contribute to their own savings account and an additional tax credit to match a portion of their savings, with the choice theirs about how to invest the funds, and more help for those who are working harder on lower incomes and therefore would have a

harder time saving. This new tax credit would make it easier for Americans to save for their own retirement and long-term care needs. And obviously, this would be further helped by something that is already in our balanced budget, which is the \$1,000 long-term care tax credit.

So these are the things that I think together would not only help us to manage and deal with in a very good way the aging of America, I think it would help us to secure the long-term economic prosperity of the country and help to keep families together across the generations without seeing unbearable strains put on those families as so many of the baby boomers live longer and inevitably have more medical costs.

So I hope that we will have a good debate in Congress. There will be others with their own ideas. I welcome them. I look forward to it. Today we're going to focus on the programs that I mentioned at the beginning of my talk. And I'd like the Vice President, who has worked very hard on this with me, now to make a few remarks and to introduce our panelists so we can get on with the morning.

Thank you very much.

[At this point, Vice President Al Gore made brief remarks and introduced the panelists.]

The President. Well, I would like to begin by asking a question of Laura Tyson, who is, as has been said, on this bipartisan Medicare Commission. One of the things that I have seen—and I alluded to this in my remarks—one of the things that I've seen said in the press in the aftermath of the State of the Union is that by proposing to allocate 15 percent of the surplus for 15 years to the Medicare Trust Fund, I basically was killing any chance to reform the program because we can keep it just like it is until 2020.

I didn't see it that way, for the reasons I said. First of all, I think there are some substantive changes that ought to be made that would enrich the program, like the prescription drug program, and secondly, because I think the demographics and the costs are going to require reform anyway. I mean, if my numbers are right, I think that the Medicare spending would have to grow at like half the rate of economic growth for the next decade just to extend it for another 5 or 6 years.

So what I'd like for you to talk about is—what do you think—it's a good thing to dedicate

some of the surplus to Medicare, and whether you think it can be used as an excuse not to make any further changes in the program, or whether it would actually facilitate changes?

I think we need to get this out. And I really don't know what she's going to say, but I've been very concerned about that because when I made this suggestion, I did not intend to say that, whoop-de-do, now we don't have to make any changes in the program. What I was trying to do was to make it possible for us to change the program without pricing it out of the reach of Americans, millions of Americans.

So, Laura, you want to talk about that?

[Laura D'Andrea Tyson, member, Commission on Medicare, noted Medicare's complexity and said that despite efforts to improve it, additional funding would be required. She indicated the President's plan to dedicate a portion of the budget surplus to Medicare would secure the program. Vice President Gore asked Dr. Uwe Reinhardt, commissioner, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, for his analysis, and Dr. Reinhardt strongly supported the President's proposal. Vice President Gore then commented that Dr. Reinhardt had characterized those who disagreed as uncivilized sinners, and Dr. Reinhardt concurred.]

The President. Let me just say for the record, as someone who knows a little about such characterizations, I wouldn't do that, myself. *[Laughter]*

I'd like to ask Stuart Altman a question. Stuart has worked for Republican and for Democratic administrations. He's been through all the various generations of reforms we've had, trying to manage these health programs that we fund. And he's now also on the Medicare Commission. I'd like to just ask him to give us some idea from his point of view about—maybe be a little more specific, and I'm sure the Members of Congress here would like this—what are the type of structural reforms you think we should adopt to improve and modernize Medicare, even as we extend the life of the Trust Fund?

[Stuart Altman praised the Health Care Finance Administration's work in an increasingly complex situation and said Congress had hindered the agency's ability to contract with providers and bill more efficiently. He advocated restructuring the system to allow competition with the

private sector and altering the benefit package to include prescription drugs.]

The President. I don't want to interrupt the flow of the program; I think they're doing so well. But I just want to comment on one thing that Stuart said, because I think we ought to drive it home. Many of us have actually met people who choose between food and medicine. Nobody made a deeper impression on me when—in 1992 than this elderly couple I met in the Arel Senior Center in Nashua, New Hampshire, when they described this choice they made on a weekly basis.

But the point I want to make is, you know when we have partisan fights in Washington, they always get a lot of publicity. And when we do something together, almost nobody notices. But one of the things that I'd like to compliment all the Members of Congress here for is that there has been an enormous amount of bipartisan consensus to dramatically increase investment in medical research. And the NIH budget, for example, has grown exponentially as a result of that.

Now, what are we trying to do? Among other things, we're trying to find cures for everything from cancer to arthritis to Parkinson's to you name it. And we're also trying to develop preventions. A lot of those cures and preventions will be in the form of medicine, and a lot of what lengthens people's lives is in the form of medicine. We will be spending more and more and more money every year that we don't have to spend on hospital care and doctor care if we don't provide a prescription drug benefit.

And from the point of view of the Congress, I would ask you to think, if we were all serious about all this money we have put into the NIH, then we have to be equally serious about getting the benefits of that investment to all the American people, to the health care system in general, and to the economy in general. And I think it's very important because the problem Stuart mentioned is going to accelerate because of the breakthroughs that will occur as a result of the medical research that all of you have funded.

Go ahead.

[Vice President Gore asked Martha McSteen, president, National Committee To Preserve Social Security and Medicare, about the need to deal with Social Security and Medicare together and the projected doubling of eligible seniors

in the year 2030. Ms. McSteen noted the two programs were viewed as entwined, particularly with regard to the baby boomers for whom health care advances meant increased longevity and the opportunity for greater post-retirement productivity.]

The President. I'd like to close this section of the panel with Hans Riemer and ask him sort of what this looks like from his perspective. Let me remind you that the people that are now on Social Security don't have to worry about what we're talking about. The people that are now on Medicare, by and large, don't have to worry about what we're talking about, although, there's a more immediate time problem there. What we're trying to do for Social Security is to take it out to the time when it would even cover Hans' retirement, which it ought to as a retirement system that big, and also to try to at least have a framework which will enable us to not only secure Medicare for 2020 but make some changes that will enable us to manage the program far beyond that.

So I'd like for Hans to talk a little about his work and how he sees this and what advice he has.

[Mr. Riemer, 26-year-old founder and director, 2030 Center, advocated maintaining fiscal discipline by using the budget surplus for the Medicare and Social Security Trust Funds. He stated that because his generation would be living longer, it would need budget flexibility derived from paying down the debt, but should also address potential pension and health care problems.]

The President. You know, I doubt, given the global economy, at least in the foreseeable—and I mean probably the next 10 to 20 years—it will ever be possible for a country that wants to have a great economy to run permanent deficits again. Now, we all know, if there's a recession happens and you've got fewer taxpayers paying in and more money going out for unemployed people—and we know there will be good times and bad times; that's part of human nature. But the elimination of the structural deficit, I think, is pretty much going to be a requirement for every country that wants to run an advanced economy and have long-term stable conditions, because the control of the—the people that can decide where the money goes, and why, are going to pretty much demand it. And

I think that that's something that we have to be quite careful about, and we need to be very prudent in projecting this.

And everybody understands when we say we're going to have surpluses over 25 years, that they will vary in size depending on the condition of the economy. What we mean by that is that we have a structural surplus and that the projections are pretty good. And I think that we have to—my sense is that that's where Congress is, in both parties. There will be people who think that we ought to have a tax cut now instead of the retirement tax cut, so that it ought to be fungible now. There will be arguments about that. But my sense is, there's almost no one willing to do anything that would in any way run the risk of returning to a structural deficit. And I think that's a big step forward for our country.

Well, I thank all of you. We have here, in addition to Members of Congress, we've got a lot of health care providers and people who represent other folks. We've got a little time. I wonder if any Member of Congress who is here would like to ask a question of any member of our panel. This is not prepared. This is all—*[laughter]*.

Mr. Nadler? Mr. Pomeroy?

[Representative Jerrold Nadler noted that the assumptions used by Social Security actuaries were extremely conservative and asked why projections were being made on such conservative estimates of economic growth.]

The President. Ken, you want to answer that? *[Laughter]* He's just greedy and wants all the money he can get; that's all.

[Kenneth S. Apfel, Commissioner, Social Security Administration, stated that Office of Management and Budget had made prudent assumptions based on a smaller work force in the future and, therefore, slower economic growth. He said more optimistic assumptions would create a bigger problem if the economy did not grow as much as anticipated.]

The President. Let me say—I'm with you. I think they're wrong, but I don't think we can take the risk. But let me tell you why it looks like they're right. The reason it looks like they're right is that the number of people taking early retirement, for example, taking the early Social Security option, is going up still—people checking out at 62. And then they—if they're living

to 82, then that's—and by the way, even today people who live to be 62 have a life expectancy of nearly 80; a 76 average life expectancy is from birth. So somebody who lives to be 62 years old, unless they have some critical condition, their chances of living to be 80 or more are pretty good. So the assumptions are based on two things. Number one is the slowing of the growth of the work force, and number two is people drawing for a lot longer time.

Now, I'll make you a prediction—that's one of the reasons that I think it's imperative that we make this bipartisan agreement this year. The reason I—we can make it wrong—because I think you have to consider one thing. Number one, there's a record number of kids in school today. Now, they say they've factored that in, but that means you're going to have more workers in a few years. Number two, we've still got a fairly generous immigration policy, which I think, on balance, has served us well. But the third and the most important thing is, after you get a certain percentage of people who retire at 62 and they're going to live until 82 or 85 or whatever, if we take the earnings limit off you will have more and more people working.

The computer and the Internet are changing the nature of work. When I became President, there were only 3 million people making a living out of their homes. When I ran for reelection, the number was 12 million. I think, today, the number is almost 20 million. So I think what you are going to have is a dramatic change in the nature of work in the next 20 years and more people doing work in different places and different ways, especially older people.

So my guess is, they are low. But if you look at people drawing Social Security for a longer period of time and the sheer demographics and you were in charge of keeping the thing stable, you'd probably make the same call they did.

[Ms. Tyson concurred that caution in long-term projections was good because it was important to assure the public that predicted surpluses were realistic. Vice President Gore pointed out that in 1992, the transition team used the most conservative economic assumptions. He noted that the world economy was growing at a slower rate than the actuarial projection.]

The President. Mr. Pomeroy, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Cardin. Go ahead.

[Representative Earl Pomeroy said the President's plan would significantly advance the prospect of achieving Social Security reform. He also supported the President's debt reduction plan to ensure flexibility when facing future problems. Ms. Tyson noted the 30-year decline in the domestic savings rate and said the President's plan would reduce debt and increase savings.]

The President. Janet Yellen, our Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, nodded yes when she said it will add 2 points to the savings rates. That's good.

[Representative Nick Smith asked Ms. Tyson what was being done to ensure the country was on the cutting edge of productivity and competitiveness. Ms. Tyson pointed to the President's strategy of investment in education and technology, and trade liberalization.]

The Vice President. Well, the new Governor of California, Gray Davis, points out that if every retiree 30 years from now is going to have two workers financing his retirement, he says, "I don't want my two to have a C average and inadequate schools today." *[Laughter]* A pretty good way to put it.

The President. You talk about our long-term productivity. Let me just mention one thing that was a part of my State of the Union Address that didn't get a lot of attention, but I hope that it will get more, and I hope that there will be a real bipartisan effort here. And that is that I think we still have a lot of capacity for growth and productivity within the borders of the United States.

When you've got hundreds of thousands of high-tech computer jobs going begging and when you've got neighborhoods in this country where the unemployment rate is still in double digits, mostly in inner cities and rural areas, our trick in the next 10 years—if you want to think about how we can continue to grow this economy with no inflation—will be to try to find the right mix of incentives for private sector investment and then removing the barriers to employment investment in a lot of places, whether it's education and training or whatever else.

We've had some success with the empowerment zones. I proposed some new initiatives in my State of the Union. But for the last 2 years—Reverend Jackson is here—I've gone to this unusual meeting with Jesse Jackson, Jack

Kemp, and Wall Street to talk about how we can get Wall Street to try to invest more in our inner cities and our isolated rural areas. And I think that's something we should not dismiss the potential of.

If you think about it, if you go into a place where there is complete underinvestment and, therefore, underpurchasing of American goods and services, if it works when we invest in Central America or whatever, it would certainly work here. And I'd like to see some more careful attention given to that.

Mr. Cardin, and Mr. Markey.

[Representative Benjamin L. Cardin said he was intrigued by the savings incentives USA accounts would offer to young people and low wage workers. He asked Mr. Riemer how young people might be encouraged to save for retirement. Mr. Riemer stated that young people were receptive to the message and suggested a campaign to stir up excitement about the accounts.]

The President. Mr. Markey.

[Representative Edward J. Markey praised the President's recommendations but noted a concern about Government investment in and interference with the stock market. Ms. Tyson cited State and local retirement plans and the Federal Retirement Investment Board as models, listed elements necessary for success, and stated that investment decisions must be made on the basis of fiduciary responsibility and not political influence or concerns. Vice President Gore added that some investment opportunities could add an additional layer of insulation from political influences and pointed out that returns on equities were significantly higher than other alternatives.]

The President. I want to call on Mr. Portman, but Gene Sperling, did you want to say anything about the question here?

[National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling emphasized the importance of competitive bidding to ensure that the actual investments would take place by private managers using broad-based passive indexes. He said that such a system would be insulated from political interference and should get the highest return due to lower administrative costs.]

The President. Mr. Portman.

[Representative Rob Portman commended the President for raising this issue in the State of

the Union Address and encouraged him to keep the notion of private savings accounts on the table during the discussions with the Congress rather than relying solely on investment in the stock market. Ms. Tyson responded that having private savings accounts as a replacement for Social Security would undermine its social insurance value but that the USA accounts would function as a complement to Social Security.]

The President. We are getting down to the real details of this debate that will unfold. I wanted to make two points, if I might.

There are some proposals for savings accounts, private savings accounts, that say that they could ensure a floor, which would be a return no less than Social Security would otherwise give. That will all be part of this debate, and I'm looking forward to it. And I appreciate it.

Let me say one other thing to Mr. Portman, if you were to set aside this much money for Social Security and Medicare, then most of the Republican caucus would believe that there is not enough money left for a tax cut of the size you believe should flow. And then we would argue about the form of the tax cut. If you look at that negative savings rate, I think that's partly because people have great confidence—you know, the stock market went up again, and also interest rates are down, home mortgage payments are lower, and a lot of people may feel like they're more comfortable spending more money.

But one of the challenges that we have to face in this coming Congress is not only what the size but what the nature of the tax cut should be. And should it be in the nature of helping people develop a greater private savings plan, or should it just be a tax cut that people can dispose of?

The argument for the latter, frankly, which doesn't have all that much appeal to the young or to the old but might have a lot of appeal to the parents in the middle is, "Hey, I'm maxed out on my credit cards, and I need some help. You know, there's a negative savings rate, that means I can't go charge anything else."

But the argument for the long term of the country, it seems to me to be the stronger argument because that is one way we can have an increase in personal savings, as opposed to the aggregate savings rate. When we buy in the debt—which we'll do if we save this money,

we'll be buying back the debt—that will increase the national savings rate, and it will free up private money, and it will be invested privately. But if you want to increase the personal savings rate, it seems to me we need to really think about not only what the size but what the nature of the tax cut should be.

We've already gone 40 minutes over—that's a good sign—but I'll give Mr. Hill the last word, because he had his hand up, and then we'll go. Go ahead.

[Representative Rick Hill stated that public institutions investing privately produced substantially lower rates of return than private institutions investing in the market and asked if reasons for that had been identified.]

The President. Gene? *[Laughter]*

They're more risk-averse, I imagine, is one reason.

[Mr. Sperling concurred that public investors tend to be more risk-averse, but pointed out that investment in the market over a long period of time would provide a higher return than the Government bonds in which Social Security currently invested. He reiterated that using broad-based indexes would help ensure the highest possible return.]

The President. Thank you very much. This was terrific. And thank the participants, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, chairman, Wall Street Project; and former Representative Jack Kemp, who spoke at the second annual Wall Street Project conference.

Telephone Remarks Announcing a New Partnership To Restore Pacific Coastal Salmon

January 27, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. And I want to say to all of you on the phone and, obviously, our friends from Washington here in the Oval Office, that I am very, very grateful to all of you and to others in your States and in the tribes who have made a priority of preserving the salmon. And I'm grateful to you for making sure that those of us who do not hail from the Pacific Northwest understood the gravity and the urgency of the issue.

We want to help you bring the salmon back. And the Vice President and I today are announcing, as a part of my fiscal year 2000 budget, a new \$100 million fund to help States and tribes restore coastal salmon. The funds can be used up and down coastal rivers and streams to rebuild habitat, restore spawning grounds, give salmon a new lease on life. And if we work together, I'm sure that we can succeed in restoring this symbol of your region's heritage and ensure that for all time to come the salmon will still be thriving.

I want to thank again all of you for what you have done. We can't succeed here without your energy, your vision, your determination.

And I know how passionate folks out there are about their salmon, and I'm confident we can succeed, and I believe this \$100 million will help.

Governor Locke, I'd like to call on you first. And tell Mona I said hello and Hillary and I are thinking about her and you, and we look forward to another beautiful baby. I'd like for you to speak and then maybe Governor Knowles, Chairman Billy Frank, and Governor Kitzhaber.

[At this point, the teleconference continued.]

The President. Thank you very much. I know you're all busy and have many other things to do. I just want to thank you for what I said earlier. You brought this to our attention; you asked us to do something. We're committed to this; we have to pass this now. But this needs to be a long-term commitment to partnership on the part of the Federal Government. And I want you to help us pass it in Congress. I want you to help us work with you to implement it. And I want you to continue to make sure

that we are aware of exactly what's happening in your backyard.

I think this is very important to the future of the entire country, that we prove we can do this together. And this is something that every single one of you will always be proud of having taken a leadership role in.

Thank you very much, and goodbye.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:15 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press

Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore; Governors John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon, Gary Locke of Washington, and Tony Knowles of Alaska; Representative Norman D. Dicks; California State Secretary of Resources Mary D. Nichols; Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Chairman Billy Frank, Jr.; County Executive Ron Sims of King County, WA; and Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle, WA. In his remarks, the President referred to Governor Locke's wife, Mona Lee.

Statement on Assistance to Colombia in the Aftermath of the Earthquake *January 27, 1999*

On behalf of all the people of the United States, I want to express our deepest sympathies to the people of Colombia who have lost loved ones or suffered injuries in Monday's devastating earthquake. It appears that more than 1,000 people were killed and more than 3,000 were injured. Entire neighborhoods lie in ruins, leaving many homeless.

I have spoken by telephone to President Pastrana and assured him that the United States will do its part to support relief and recovery. Already, a 62-member U.S. search and rescue team has arrived in Colombia, at the request of the Colombian Government, to help find and assist survivors. Today we are making available through USAID \$2 million for immediate disaster relief, including airlifts of blankets and shelter materials and other emergency needs identified by our two Governments. We will deploy a new team of technical advisers to bolster Colombia's rescue efforts. And with the strong

support of the United States, the Inter-American Development Bank has already pledged \$10 million for rebuilding.

We will stay in close contact with the Colombian Government to determine how else we can help. As with the response to Hurricane Mitch in Central America, I know the people of the United States will want to assist in the wake of this tragedy. I say to Colombians what I said to Central Americans: *Ayudaremos a nuestros hermanos*—we will help our brothers and sisters. It is the right thing to do, and it supports our interest in a stable, democratic, and prosperous hemisphere.

As I said in October when President Pastrana visited the White House, his Presidency represents a new beginning for Colombia, a new opportunity that Monday's tragedy cannot and must not undermine. We will continue to work closely with him as he leads Colombia toward a more peaceful and prosperous future.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process *January 27, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section

204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report

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on the national emergency with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that was declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Lawton Chiles

January 28, 1999

Lawton would get a huge kick out of knowing that I have just been upstaged by his 10-year-old granddaughter. *[Laughter]* When both the grandkids were singing, I was thinking, you know this is what Lawton would like to have done if he had not been a politician, sort of the wandering minstrel for America. *[Laughter]* And in some ways, he was.

I looked through the Scripture to find something that referenced how he started his political campaign, and there's a verse in Genesis which says, "Arise, walk through the land and the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give it to thee." I think in so many ways God gave Florida to Lawton so that he could give himself to the people of his beloved State. And in so many ways, his homespun humor and his common sense became the glue that held Florida together as it exploded and diversified and changed in ways that make it almost unrecognizable to people who were there three decades ago.

Every one of us who knew Lawton Chiles feels blessed. If we knew him very well, we loved him. He gave something to all of us. He gave me a lot when we were serving together as Governors. I mean, I couldn't imagine—I was serving as Governor with someone who had been chairman of the Senate Budget Committee. And he made sure that I was always aware of what I should know before I voted however he wanted me to vote in the Governors conference on whatever it was. *[Laughter]*

I loved campaigning with him in Florida. I loved—it's almost a sad thing to say, but it was very moving for me—Florida had a lot of natural disasters during the period in which we served together. It was very moving to me to be in these places with Lawton Chiles, to see the pulse of the people beating in him and the

feeling he had for them. I loved all the opportunities he gave me to help Florida, with late-night phone calls about every conceivable subject, the recommendations he gave that Carol Browner and Janet Reno ought to be in the Cabinet.

And like everybody else, I loved the humor. I knew Lawton Chiles long before "he-coon" became a part of our political lexicon. And one of the most humbling nights of my life was a night at the Governors conference that I spent with Ann Richards and Lawton Chiles. *[Laughter]* I thought I was a good storyteller. I thought I knew every phrase that had ever been coined. I listened to them talk about how a stuck pig squealed, how a cut dog barks, how if you can't run with the big dogs, you ought to just stay on the porch. *[Laughter]* Listen, I lost that night. *[Laughter]* But I never forgot it.

You know, Lawton may have worn a coonskin cap and coat to his own inaugural ball in 1995, and he did a lot of that "aw, shucks" stuff with all of us, but we all know that he was really a visionary. He saw the possibilities and the challenges of the future, and he saw his own life as a sort of continuing obligation to push people toward them.

Long before most of the rest of us, as Senator Domenici and others have already said, he knew that we had to put our budgetary house in order if we wanted our children to have a future. And I'm very glad he got to live to see it come to pass—even though Pete's right, he'd want to see all the numbers and all the books and be a little suspicious.

Carol Browner talked about how he saw that in Florida and in the United States we had to reconcile the imperatives of economic growth and preserving our environment. And because of his vision, the forests and the swamps that

he loved so much as a boy, and especially the beautiful Florida Everglades, are going to be preserved.

He saw long before the rest of us the promise in every child and the need to give every child decent health care and a world-class education. The fragile cry of his young grandson who sang for us today, born several months premature, inspired him as Senator and Governor to want to give every child a healthy start in life, the chance to make the most of their God-given talent. How proud he would be to see his grandson making the most of those talents today.

I'm told that as he lay in state in Tallahassee a few weeks ago, a woman from Gadsden County, where Rhea and Lawton first began working to improve prenatal care in Florida, brought her young son to pay his respects. She said that Lawton Chiles had saved her son's life. That boy, and the millions of Florida children growing up healthy and ready, may well be his greatest legacy.

I'd also like to thank him publicly for something else. As Florida explodes and diversifies, he worked so hard to make all his native Floridians—those who were like him—see all the new immigrants as their own, to see those children as a rich resource that would make life more interesting and the future more prosperous.

I thank him for being an early supporter of political and campaign finance reform but in doing it in a way that made sense and didn't raise people's defenses. I don't think he had a sanctimonious bone in his body. He just didn't want everybody to have to spend all their time raising money. He thought it would be better if people talked to one another, face-to-face. He thought it would be better if, on television, people had honest debates and discussions. He didn't go around telling you how much better he was than everybody else because he only took a hundred bucks. And he knew that only one person could have ever made that walk,

and then you couldn't just repeat that over and over again. He tried to convince us to relax and think. And he did it in the right way.

Some of you know that, right before he died, I think I had about won a long, intense campaign that I waged to persuade Lawton to become America's Special Envoy to Latin America. He said, "Well, I don't want to spend a lot of time in Washington." I said, "Lawton, it's Latin America, not Washington." [Laughter] I said, "You know, you'll have to breeze through every now and then and give me a report. There's a telephone. There are fax machines. You can do this." And he was really getting interested in it.

And I say that not to make anyone sad, but to say that the reason his life was so rich is that he lived to the last hour of the last day thinking about tomorrow, thinking about other people's interest, thinking about other possibilities still to be developed.

So I thank you, Lawton, for teaching us that public service is not a position, it's a mission; that our job is not to posture, but to produce. I thank you for feeling the pulse of the people and making their hopes and dreams your own. I thank you for never losing the light in your eyes, the steel in your spine, the love in your heart.

Young Lawton's song was reminiscent of the wonderful lines from Wordsworth, "We can make our lives sublime, and departing, leave behind us footprints on the sands of time." What wonderful wide, deep footprints our friend left for us to walk in.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon in the Russell Senate Caucus Room, Room 325, at the Russell Senate Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Ann W. Richards, former Governor of Texas; Rhea Chiles, widow of Governor Chiles; and his granddaughter, Christin Chiles, and grandson, Lawton Chiles IV.

Remarks at the Employment Initiative in Oakton, Virginia January 28, 1999

Thank you. I would say this is a fairly high energy crowd here today. [Laughter] Thank you for making us all feel so welcome. Thank you,

Cheryl Simms. She was nervous as a cat. [Laughter] And I said, "Look, Cheryl, that

microphone, it will carry your voice. Just pretend you're talking to a friend or two." And I think she did a fine job, don't you? Let's give her a hand. [Applause]

I'd like to thank Mirian Graddick and Mary Jane McKeever for making us feel so welcome here today. I thank Secretary Herman and Secretary Riley for their wonderful work on the announcements I am about to make. I want to thank my longtime friend Senator Chuck Robb for being a terrific Senator for the State of Virginia and on education issues for all the United States.

And I'd like to recognize two Members of the House of Representatives who are here who have been very, very active on these issues, Congressman Tim Roemer from Indiana and Representative Dennis Kucinich from Cleveland, Ohio. Thank you for being here, both of you.

I also want to thank the Vice President for his interest in this. Not very long ago, just a couple of weeks ago, he convened a national meeting with business, education, labor, and government leaders to come up with proposals that will further our efforts to promote lifelong learning.

I want to say one other thing. There is a member of my staff who worked very hard on this who is leaving the White House, but she had a lot to do with this announcement I'm making today. Her name is Cecilia Rouse, and she's going back to be a professor. But I wish she were staying with us. Thank you very much, Cecilia, for what you've done.

I wanted to come here because this is a picture—a picture I hope will be in newspapers all across America tomorrow. I hope this picture will be on some television stations tonight. I want Americans to be able to visualize the kind of continuing lifelong learning opportunities that you have that I want for all Americans.

I want to compliment AT&T, the CWA, the IBEW, and Lucent Technologies. This workers alliance, I was told, since its inception in the mideighties has given way over 100,000 people the chance to come through here and get education and training. That is profoundly important. And it's important not just for people who work for AT&T, who are in the communications business.

I recently learned about a man in my home State who was 50 years old, had an eighth grade education, ran a conveyor belt for a company that converted to a new computerized transport

system. Since he only had an eighth grade education, he was computerphobic, to say the least, and he was afraid that he would lose his job. Instead, he enrolled in a training program, learned how to use computers, improved his reading and math skills so that he could master complex technical manuals. And instead of losing his job, he got a raise.

Now, a lot of you have been through more than one training program since you've been employed. I just met a gentleman who said he spent over 300 hours in this program, in alliance programs. And if you think about how almost every form of work today is different from what it was just a few years ago and how rapidly the nature of work is changing, we are going to be challenged to change our whole conception of what education is.

You know, a lot of you came from families like mine. I mean, my grandfather had a grade-school education; my stepfather, who raised me, didn't finish high school; my mother went to nursing school, never went to college; my father's uncle, who served three terms in the legislature, dropped out of school after the eighth grade to support the family. They all did just fine. Now—and all you have to do is look at the census data; you don't just have to tell family stories—if you look at the census data, high school graduates are likely to get jobs where their incomes drop over time, not go up. People who have the equivalent of at least 2 years of college and can keep on learning for a lifetime are likely to get jobs where their incomes go up and, if they lose their jobs, to find jobs that are as good or better.

So what we have now is a situation in America where the income gap, that we all know widened over the previous 20 years or so, is largely a skills gap and that it applies across all kinds of industries. We have to close that skills gap.

In 1992, when I took office, I said we had two deficits. We had a budget deficit and an investment deficit in our people. Well, thanks to Senator Robb and the Members of the House that are here, we've closed the budget deficit; we've got a surplus. But we still have a deficit in investment in our people. We have got to find a way to create in America, not only world-class public schools and access to college education—and you may have heard me say in the State of the Union Address that with the tax credits, the Pell grants, and the other things, no one should ever fail to go to college because

of the cost, now—but we have to create a situation in America where people can keep on learning for a lifetime, without regard to where they live, what their job is, what their income is.

Why? Well, just a couple of statistics. In manufacturing, 88 percent of the companies—I want to say that again—88 percent of the companies say they're having trouble finding qualified applicants to fill at least one kind of job in their operation. One in five companies says, today, it literally cannot expand its operation, even though the markets are there, because they don't have workers with the right skills.

You heard, I think, the Senator said that there are jobs going begging right here in the DC area. You've got high unemployment in DC, job vacancies in the communities outside. In America as a whole, there are over a quarter of a million high-tech jobs, computer-related jobs, vacant this day. We may have the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, but we've got a quarter of a million high wage jobs going vacant this day.

And there are places where the economic recovery hasn't hit, because people can't get the investment or because they don't have the skills to do these jobs.

Now, that's really why I wanted to come here. I want America to work like this place does. I want there to be an American alliance. I want workers who aren't lucky enough to be represented by the CWA or the IBEW to have access to lifetime learning. I want employers who may not have the resources of AT&T or Lucent Technologies to know that there is some way they can work with their employees to give them access to these kind of skills.

And in the State of the Union Address I just barely mentioned this, and so I wanted to come here to tell you the things, the specific things that I intend to propose that are in our budget. First, we need a national campaign to dramatically increase our efforts at basic adult education and family literacy, to help the millions and millions of adults who struggle with basic reading or math.

People that cannot fill out a job application cannot be expected to fill a 21st century job. You know, when Alexis told that old Getty joke—I love that—rise early, work hard, strike oil. It's good; it keeps us humble, reminds you there's a little bit of luck in life. *[Laughter]* But the oil today is in your noggin, not in the

ground. And everybody can strike oil today. But they have to have the means to do it.

This country has been greatly enriched, particularly by our immigrant populations. But I went to a school not very long ago, Senator, in Virginia, and they asked me in advance if there was any way we had time to have consecutive translation of my remarks, first in Spanish and then in Arabic, so the parents of the children at the school would understand the speech I was giving to their kids.

Now, I can tell you in a global economy this is not a bad deal; this is a good deal. But it is not a good deal when you think about—it's going to be hard enough for us all to understand our different racial and ethnic and cultural and religious traditions and figure out how to get all that together, if we can't even read one another's words or understand each other and if a certain group of people are locked out of the whole new economy, not because they're not intelligent and not because they don't work like crazy but because they literally can't plug in because their mind doesn't have the connections. And that is very, very important.

So we're going to seek new tax credits for businesses like the two that sponsored the alliance, which provide basic skills to their workers. And we will work to greatly expand the funding for basic adult education and high school completion programs. You read all these stories about inner cities, where there are all these young single people, unemployed. Nearly all of them dropped out of high school. And it's going to be difficult to get some of them into some of the training programs we want unless we can get them to come back and finish high school, get their GED, and then go forward. And so this is a very, very important thing.

Secondly, I'm going to recommend a large new investment in the worker training system we revolutionized last year. You heard previous speakers mention it. But basically what we did was to take all these Government programs, 40 or 50 of them, collapse them into a single skills grant and one-stop shopping, so that if somebody is eligible right now for Federal help and training, instead of having to go to this program, that program, the other program, they go to one place, get a skills grant, and they can decide how to spend the money, where it is most likely to give them the training that will most likely give them a job.

But the program is underfunded today. It will not cover all the people who need it. So over the next 5 years I've asked for funds sufficient for us to be able to provide appropriate training and reemployment services for all Americans who lose their jobs—all Americans. Now, next year we will increase the funding for skill grants, high-tech community career centers, and rapid response teams by more than \$360 million under our budget.

Third, I want to greatly increase our programs and our commitment to helping disadvantaged young people. We'll nearly double the funding for YouthBuild, an innovative program that gives young people a chance to learn construction skills to build homes for low income families, on the job. We will double the funding for our GEAR UP program, one of my favorite programs; it's a mentoring and tutoring initiative I mentioned earlier, which involves sending college students out into middle schools to mentor students, to get them to both learn their lessons and stay in school but also to raise their sights and believe no matter how poor their circumstances, they can go on to college and do well. And it's a great program.

We are also going to continue our investments in what we call youth-opportunity areas, to try to go into these areas where there are a lot of kids just walking the streets, and there aren't any jobs, to try to get these kids off the streets—either back in the schools, or into jobs. If we cannot deal with the challenges faced by these young people now, with the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years and the first budget surplus in 30 years and the smallest percentage of the American people on welfare in 29 years, we will never get around to doing this. Now is the time for us to try to bring these young people into the mainstream of American life.

We also are going to try to expand more partnerships. You have proved here that it takes people working together to make something like this go. We have a new initiative called "Right-Track Partnerships," to help schools, businesses, and community organizations work together to reduce teen dropout rates and to help former dropouts come back, building on what we did last year, directed especially toward Hispanic young people, because the dropout there is far higher than for any group in America.

Let me just tell you, though, you all know that we need more than a high school education to do what you guys are doing; so even if you

didn't have one once, with all the training programs, you've got to have more. In 1989, 10 years ago this coming fall, I met with all the other Governors and the then-President of the United States, George Bush, to set some national education goals. One of our goals was that we would have an on time high school completion rate of 90 percent. That was one of our goals.

We knew that some people would drop out regardless, you know, that just would happen. In 1989—well, 1998, last year, a wonderful thing happened. For the first time since we've been keeping these statistics, the last 20 or 30 years, the on-time African-American high school graduation rate was almost identical to the on-time high school graduation rate of white children. It was about—between 83 and 84 percent. That's the good news.

There's two pieces of bad news. Bad news piece number one is it's not 90 percent. And that's 16, 17 percent of the people we have to figure out how to get back to school and how to get education and training. And for Hispanic young people, many of whom have language barriers that cause them after the eighth grade not to be able to keep up, the dropout rate is still over 40 percent. So we must do more here.

And it's something I'd like to ask you all to think about. And here in Virginia, northern Virginia, you've got a lot of young people from all over the world, as the school districts get increasingly diverse—these kids have fine minds, but it will be harder for them, and the longer they go on in school without a complete mastery of English and access to learning, the more the difficult courses will become more out of reach. And if they get bored, they'll drop out eventually. So I ask for your help and attention.

Finally, let me say that I'm very gratified by the broadbased support that this initiative seems to have attracted among the American people. I think it's because everybody knows that what you're doing is what we all need to do for the future. But I would ask you to remember this day, to talk to your friends and neighbors who you may never have mentioned this to, to find out whether all the people that work in their workplaces have access to these sort of training programs.

But remember, what we're trying to do in this balanced budget now is we've closed the budget deficit, now we've got to close the skills

deficit. We cannot have the earnings gap in America, the income gap bigger because we didn't make the skills gap smaller. Now is the time to do it. We will never have a better time. And we will all—all—be richly rewarded when we have more stories like the ones I heard here from the alliance today.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the Atrium at the AT&T facility. In his remarks, he

referred to employee Cheryl E. Simms, who introduced the President, Mirian M. Graddick, senior vice president of human resources, and Mary Jane McKeever, president, government markets, AT&T. The President also referred to the Communications Workers of America (CWA), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), and the Alliance for Employee Growth and Development, Inc.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus *January 28, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1 to November 30, 1998. The previous submission covered events during August and September 1998.

Following United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan's September 30 announcement of an initiative to reduce tensions and promote progress towards a just and lasting settlement, the United Nations launched shuttle talks between both communities in October. During the

reporting period, U.S. officials urged the leaders of both Cypriot communities to support fully the U.N. initiative. They also underscored my Administration's commitment to finding a peaceful solution to the Cyprus dispute based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks to the 1998 Stanley Cup Champion Detroit Red Wings *January 28, 1999*

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated, everyone.

Commissioner Bettman, Coach Bowman, Denise Ilitch, General Manager Holland; to the team captain, Steve Yzerman, and all the Red Wings; Congressmen Bonior, Dingell, Knollenberg, Levin, Stupak; Mayor Archer and other mayors from Michigan who are here with us today: Welcome back to the White House.

You know, this is becoming such a regular thing—from time to time, we have State days at the White House. We'll have a Maryland day, and bring in people from all over Maryland, and let them meet members of the Cabinet

and talk about issues affecting the State. This is becoming so regular, we should just have Michigan day at the White House when the Red Wings come.

Vince Lombardi, who was a pretty good coach himself, once said that "excellence is not a sometime thing." I think it's clear that, with your four-game sweep for a second straight Stanley Cup, that's what the Red Wings are living by.

I've always found the history of the Stanley Cup particularly interesting. It's the oldest trophy competition by professional athletes in North America; the only trophy which bears the

names of individual players and coaches. And what I admire most is the tradition of the whole team sharing the Cup, each player getting to take it home to friends and family. I think it's a tradition that other sports ought to follow, because it recognizes that every person on a team makes a unique and enduring contribution.

The Red Wings overcame the Capitals—as I said, our hometown team, but we still are impressed with what you did—[laughter]—in four decisive games, with grit, determination, and teamwork. The series will be remembered as a defensive triumph that spotlighted your goalie, Chris Osgood, who allowed seven whole goals. Amazing.

And of course, it will be remembered for the performance of your team captain. Steve, your teammates have said you have the heart of a champion and that when the chips are down, you always made the plays. That's something that every leader needs to do, and you have certainly done it.

We all know, too, that great hockey teams have to have great coaches. Perhaps the Detroit Red Wings have the greatest coach in the history of hockey. This victory, with his eighth championship as a head coach, Scotty Bowman became the winningest coach in NHL history, maybe an athletic dynasty all to himself.

But teams win, whole teams, in the arena and on the sidelines, and we're glad to see the whole team here, including Vladimir, Sergei. Thank you all for coming. We're glad you're here. Thank you.

Last year when you were here, and this year again when you were going through the line, I sensed a real genuine spirit of not only championship but camaraderie. A sense of family, of caring for one another and supporting one another. In the end, that's even more important than winning the game.

So congratulations. I'm delighted to have you here. And I'd like to have Commissioner Gary Bettman come up and say a few words. Thank you.

[At this point, NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman, Denise Ilitch-Lites, daughter of Red Wings owners Mike and Marian Ilitch, and Coach Scotty Bowman made brief remarks. Red Wings team captain Steve Yzerman then made brief remarks and presented the President with a Red Wings jersey.]

The President. Thank you. When you gave me the last one, I started wearing it around the house, and Hillary pointed out I wasn't as broad-shouldered as she thought I was. [Laughter] One wag in my office today said, "You know, they'll probably give you a jersey, but I wish they'd give you one of those sticks. You could really put it to good use around here." [Applause] Thank you.

Let me just say in closing, to the coach, to Steve, to all the team, it is an honor to have you here. It's wonderful to have all your friends from Michigan and all your fans who live in Washington now but have their hearts in Michigan.

This house is truly the people's house. Every President is a temporary tenant. And I think, to me, the greatest joy of living here is seeing other people come in and share in the history. Every President since John Adams has lived in this house. George Washington conceived it, really, but never got a chance to live here. The whole history of our country is embodied within these walls.

This house has been burned down; in 1814 the British troops came in here—we were having a banquet, and everybody had to run. And Dolley Madison—whose husband, James Madison, was the last active Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, was out with our Army—and she cut that magnificent picture of George Washington down, which was purchased in 1797 for \$500. It has no price today. The British came in and ate our food—[laughter]—and then burned the house down. [Laughter] But the walls hung on, and it's been rebuilt, that time and one other time since. After all these years, whenever I land the helicopter on the back lawn and come in this house, I still get a thrill, because everything that our country has tried to be is embodied in this house.

So, for your excellence, for your spirit of teamwork, we're honored to have you here, with all of your family and friends. And I only hope that it is as enjoyable to you as it is to me every day. Welcome, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ken Holland, Red Wings general manager; player Vladimir Konstantinov and team masseur Sergei Mnatsakanov, both of whom were seriously injured in an automobile accident a few

days after the team's previous Stanley Cup championship in June 1997; and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI.

Remarks to the United States Conference of Mayors January 29, 1999

Thank you very much for the wonderful welcome. I want to say I'm just as glad to see you as you apparently are to be here. [Laughter] Just looking at you reminds me of why we do what we do. And I thank you so much for your work.

I'd like to thank Secretary Cuomo for his fine remarks, and Secretary Herman, who will have remarks in a moment, and Mayor Corradini for your leadership.

Because this is my only opportunity, I believe, today to see the press and to speak with them and with the American people, I hope you will forgive me because I need to make a couple of remarks about some developments in Kosovo at the beginning.

Kosovo

You remember that 2 weeks ago there was a massacre in the village of Racak. After that, we insisted that the Serbian authorities stop their repression and meet their commitments. Today Secretary Albright forged an agreement with our Contact Group allies, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia, on a common diplomatic strategy to achieve compliance with the rules of the international community. With our Allies in NATO, we stand ready to back that strategy with the threat of force.

Our goal is not merely to respond to the recent atrocities in Kosovo but to help resolve the conflict so that the violence can end for good. The Contact Group has now approved the terms of an interim agreement that would do just that, by protecting the rights of all the people of Kosovo and giving them the self-government they clearly deserve.

Both sides now have an opportunity to stop a war that neither side can win and to start building a better future for all the people by peaceful means. To that end, the international community has sent a clear message to the authorities in Belgrade: The time for denial and

delay is past. NATO is united and ready to act if you don't.

Domestic Agenda

I want to thank, again, Mayor Corradini, Mayor Webb, Mayor Coles for greeting me. Like Deedee, I want to say how much I appreciate the work that Mickey Ibarra and Lynn Cutler do to bring the mayors and the White House together to give us, I think, a virtually unprecedented working relationship. And I intend to keep it going.

I want to thank all the members of the Cabinet and the administration who are here. There is a stunning array—the whole Government is here on the front row. I hope there is no emergency in any Department today while we are all here. [Laughter] I feel rather badly about this; they've probably heard this speech a hundred times before. But I thank them. I think their presence here is evidence of the seriousness with which we take our responsibilities to work with you.

I also want to thank Mayor Corradini for her leadership on the census. I know we may have some questions about that later, but just let me say the Supreme Court struck down the use of sampling for congressional apportionment among the States. It reaffirmed our use of these scientific methods for other purposes. We remain committed to making the 2000 census both accurate and fair, and we are working very hard, as—Secretary Daley is working very hard to try to determine how we can best do that and have the most useful and accurate census we can.

You know, one of the reasons I ran for President 7 years ago is to do something about the then-condition of our cities. I also was encouraged by what I saw as I visited cities in 1991 and 1992 and I saw, even with the country in pretty bad shape, there were places where people were actually solving problems, where hope had returned because change was occurring. And I believed then, as I said in my first

Inaugural, that there is nothing wrong with this country that can't be fixed by what is right with our country. I have always believed that, and you have proved that that is right.

Now, since 1993 we have worked together, as I have said thousands of times, to create an America in which there is opportunity for all of our citizens, responsibility from all our citizens, and a community that includes all our citizens. No group of Americans is more committed to that than our mayors.

We've had a strategy for the new economy: to balance the budget, to invest in our people, to sell more of our goods and services around the world. We balanced the budget for the first time in nearly 30 years and still almost doubled our investment in education and training. The strategy has helped to steer our Nation through some tough global currents. And as you know, our economy is doing very well.

This morning we received more good news about the American economy. I can now report that in the fourth quarter of 1998, our economy grew at 5.6 percent. For the entire year, the growth rate was 3.9 percent, giving us the longest peacetime expansion in the history of the United States with the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957.

I remember after I was elected, we were sitting around the table at the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock arguing about our economic strategy. And I had all these folks come in from around the country, and they said, "Now, Mr. President, you just cannot grow the economy at more than 2½ percent for more than a year or two without having uncontrollable inflation." And I said, "Well, I'm not an economist, but I know what technology is doing, and I don't believe that." And at least for 6 years, it hasn't been so. The American people have proved that through productivity and hard work, we can grow the economy, reduce unemployment, and if we do the right things, by the way, we can also improve the environment, not destroy it. So this is an encouraging thing.

Today we're releasing an interim state of the cities report that tells the story of economic growth in the cities. Unemployment in our central cities has fallen by 40 percent since 1992; 4 of our largest 10 cities have cut their unemployment rates in half. We have the highest real wage growth in two decades; the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates since such things were first measured in

1972; average family income up by \$3,500; the lowest crime rate in, now, about 26 years, and a drop in our cities that averages 27 percent.

All of you in this room should be proud of what you have done, and I'm proud of what we've been able to do together. But I would like to reiterate today, in terms specific to the cities and our urban agenda, the general point that I made at the State of the Union Address. The present prosperity is an opportunity and a responsibility to make sure that opportunity and prosperity reaches every person in every corner of this country, into every neighborhood in every city of this country.

If we cannot do this now, with what some people believe is the strongest overall economy in our history, believe me, we will never get around to doing the job. And so I think we should all be very up front and say: This is a dynamic economy; you don't ever stand still in it; if you don't keep going in one direction, before you know it you'll be going in the other. And so what is our clear responsibility is also in the self-interest of all our citizens. And I hope you can talk to people about that in all your communities.

This is not a time to say, isn't this wonderful, and let's take another vacation. This is a time to say all these things that I bet you everybody in this room has talked about and worried about, wrung your hands about, probably for decades before you ever showed up in city government. It's finally a time that we can deal with these challenges. And that's what I have tried to construct a budget to help you do.

Secretary Cuomo sort of brushed by the remarkable role that HUD has played in the last 6 years, not only in helping you to grow the American dream in our cities but also to reinvent the Department of Housing and Urban Development, to make it smaller and able to invest more and have a bigger impact out there where people live.

David Osborne, the intellectual godfather of this whole REGO movement, said that HUD is a model of reinvention in the nineties. The balanced budget that I will submit to Congress will increase the overall HUD budget by \$2½ billion, to \$28 billion. It will support HUD's community empowerment fund: 100,000 new vouchers to make housing more affordable; dozens of other innovative steps. I want you to support this in the Congress. We have to have

votes from Members on both sides of the aisle in both Houses to pass the HUD budget.

But if we're going to reach every person in every corner of every city, we have to do more, and Mayor Corradini mentioned some of the things, but I'd like to run over them with you.

First, we have to create more economic opportunity. The best poverty program, the best anticrime program, the best urban program is still a job for every person who will work. We've created now 31 empowerment zones to bring the spark of private enterprise to inner cities. The Vice President announced the 20 newest zones earlier this month. I will ask Congress to fully fund this round to help support another 90,000 jobs.

We created a network of community development financial institutions, and we now propose increasing the investment in that. We strengthened and streamlined the Community Reinvestment Act, encouraging banks—just since we've been here—to make over \$1 trillion in financial commitments. Since the CRA became law in 1975, 95 percent of all the commitments made under it have been made since 1993.

And I hope you noticed that during this period our banks have not gone broke. [Laughter] I bet the town banker is doing pretty well where you live in a big city or a small town. And yet, unbelievably enough, when we are proving it is working, the Community Reinvestment Act is under fire again.

Again, this ought not be a political deal. Every American has an interest in seeing that every economic opportunity in every community is seized. And if it is a good investment, it's a good investment. The banks are not going broke; they're doing well. The Community Reinvestment Act is a good thing. I hope you will help us protect it and support it. Now, even so, capital still bypasses a lot of areas where it's most needed.

I said in the State of the Union, I'd like to say again, today the largest pool of ready untapped investment opportunity and new customers is not overseas; it's in our backyard, in Harlem or Watts or Appalachia, even our Native American reservations. According to a recent Harvard Business School study, underdeveloped communities in America still control more than \$85 billion a year in purchasing power. That's more than the entire retail market of Mexico, our second largest trading partner.

So I have proposed an initiative to bring jobs and opportunity to the new markets here at home. We should write into law a new markets tax credit: \$1 billion of tax credits over 5 years, worth 25 percent of the amount of equity placed in investment funds, community development banks, and other investment vehicles targeted for these untapped markets.

We should create "American Private Investment Companies," modeled on the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, that would provide for guarantees of a portion of private equity investment of up to \$1½ billion a year over the next 5 years. We should create new market venture capital firms to bring capital and technical assistance to small businesses in distressed areas.

Thousands, literally thousands and thousands of opportunities—of entrepreneurs in this country just need a little capital and a little guidance to expand their businesses and to create new jobs. All told, this new markets initiative will bring \$15 billion in new private sector investment, our most significant opportunity in years to break the cycle of poverty and joblessness in the neighborhoods where unemployment is still too high, and that 5.6 percent does not mean anything. I ask you to help me make sure it means something from now on to every American in every community.

We have to do more. I announced in the State of the Union that welfare is at its lowest level in three decades. Caseloads have been cut nearly in half. That's the good news. The bad news is that the remaining number of people on welfare who are able-bodied and who are required under the law to seek work will very often be harder to place, at least in terms of either their educational level, their skills level, or their difficulty in getting transportation to work, or perhaps they have more children, and therefore it's more difficult to support child care.

And yet we have seen evidence—I think either Secretary Shalala or Janet Yellen in one of the weekly economic reports quoted a report to me recently which said that we had some evidence now that even hard-to-place—people that you would type as hard-to-place welfare recipients—are actually being placed, being trained, and doing quite well, thank you, where the unemployment rate is low and the markets are so tight that employers had to be out and

train them and provide the kinds of tools necessary to give them a chance to go to work.

So again I say, I think it is very important that no public official get up here and disempower hundreds of thousands of Americans by saying, "Well, now we have creamed everybody off the top, and these other folks, we'll just have to give up on them." If we had time, I'd have my mayor here, my new mayor, come up here and tell you his life story. Thank God nobody gave up on him.

So I ask you to help me pass this provision of my budget, which would help us to give another 200,000 people the dignity of work, and reinforce the new markets initiative by making sure people are actually able to work if we can get the investment opportunities to them.

We have to do more to clean up abandoned industrial sites and redevelop them. My balanced budget proposes an abandoned buildings initiative that will help you accelerate your efforts to clean up brownfields and deal with sites with old and unused buildings and turn them into places of opportunity.

Now, every one of these initiatives will require Democrats and Republicans to work together to get through Congress. And every one requires Congress to act; I do not write the checks in America. *[Laughter]* So I need your help, across party lines. These things should be American initiatives. They relate to human potential and private initiative and private sector investment.

Second, we have to do more to keep our cities safer. I thank the mayor for what she said about your position on drug testing. I don't think people ought to be paroled in the first place unless they've been tested and they're drug-free. And I believe when they're on parole, if they had a drug problem in the first place, they should be tested and should have to stay drug-free to stay out of prison, because I think it will keep your cities safer.

You look at the numbers that the Attorney General gives me all the time, just look at the Federal prison system and the way that it's grown and the number of people there who are there because of drug-related offenses, and the numbers are bigger and the percentages are worse in State facilities. And I despaired for a long time—I ran a big prison system when I was a Governor for 12 years, and I dramatically increased the size of it. And every year I got sicker and sicker to see great world-class

facilities being built according to Federal court guidelines for my prisoners, while my kids were going to school in second-class facilities, many of which were too old even to be hooked up to the Internet.

But the point I want to make is this: I don't favor putting people in inhumane conditions, but I think we're wasting our time if we think we can keep jailing our way out of this situation in the same old way. That's the point I'm trying to make. And we'll have more to say about that later. But let's begin with first things first, with this drug testing initiative.

Secondly, with, I think, the superb partnership between the Justice Department and the local communities, we're going to achieve our goal this year of those 100,000 community police, under budget and ahead of schedule. I wish I had a list of everything everybody who ever voted against that bill in 1994 said. "Oh, this will never work." "Oh, what will happen?" "Oh, the mayors will hate you for doing this." "Oh, how can you do this?" I wish I had a list of all that stuff. *[Laughter]* The people that were opposed to that, they practically swole up and died when it was passed. You would have thought it was the worst thing that ever happened. *[Laughter]*

And I am so grateful to you for what you have done with the police program. We worked with you all the way, you and your law enforcement officials. I'm going to give a 21st century crime bill to Congress that will focus on, now, how we can make our communities even safer.

It's fine to say that crime is at a 30-year low. If you're a victim, it's still too high. And no one really believes that the United States, compared to other countries, is a safe country yet. We still have more to do. And no one seriously believes that we can really get private investment into all those places that have been left behind until we get the crime rate down. So part of it involves the drug strategy. Part of it involves, I believe, more police resources deployed in the toughest areas. And the budget we have will help our communities to hire or redeploy somewhere between 30,000 and 50,000 police.

And we had the 100,000 number down quite good, we thought, and we were being conservative, and now we know we're going to get there ahead of schedule and under budget. The reason I give you this rather flexible number—and I said up to 50,000 in the State of the Union—

is, obviously, it depends upon where those toughest neighborhoods are, and what the cost per police will be in the neighborhoods where they're deployed. Obviously, you know from the other program, we'll do our best to create the largest number of police possible as quickly as possible to do this.

We also want to enlist probation and parole officers, school officials, faith-based organizations in active attempts to prevent crime in the first place. We want to give your police more high-tech tools to fight crime, from digital mug shots to crime-mapping computers in squad cars. For years, we have seen—you can see in any movie, drug dealers using pagers, scam artists using the Internet, gangs with high-tech weapons. I think the police ought to have access to the same technology that their adversaries do.

I also thank you for what you're doing to take guns out of the hands of criminals, and I ask you not to relent. There is still almost—and it's still bewildering to me—but there is almost a culture war still going on out there over all these issues. I ask for your support as we seek to restore the 5-day waiting period for buying a handgun, to extend the Brady bill to violent juveniles, to pass legislation to require child safety trigger locks. These are three things we can do to save lives. No one is trying to stop anybody from their legitimate right to hunt or have weapons, but we need to pass these bills. And I ask for your support.

The third thing we need to do is keep working on these schools. Now, as all of you know, we not only have the most diverse student population in history, with one in five of our children with—I'll say it again—one in five of our children in school from immigrant families. We have 53 million kids in school, the largest number ever. Secretary Riley loves to say that number and then to look at me and say, "Well, you baby boomers are not the largest generation." [Laughter] And I think that's good because when all those kids get out of school, there will be more of them than us and they'll be able to support me in my old age better. [Laughter] I hope. [Laughter]

Now, there are a lot of good things going on in our schools. I've been in the schools in some of the communities here present. Test scores are up across the Nation. But I'll just—I'll give you one—I don't want to bore you with statistics, because I could talk about education all day long, but I just want you to think

about one thing. What does it say to you that on these international tests, comparing the performance of our children in math and science, our kids—a representative sample of our kids, by race, by income, by region—a representative sample rank at the top of the world on the 4th grade test, drop to the middle in the 8th grade, and are near the bottom in the 12th grade?

These children are not dumb. The system is failing them, not the other way around. And I think it's important for us to recognize that. Although you've got all of these dedicated teachers out there, you've got schools where everyone is succeeding, where they're all doing well on these exams, where they're all going to college.

Dick Riley and I have been working for more than 20 years together on education now, and I always told him—I always considered—to me the most frustrating thing to me about working in education is that every single problem has been solved by somebody somewhere. And we have simply got to do a better job of replicating success.

We need to finish the job of hiring 100,000 teachers to have class size smaller in the early grades, or we'll start losing the ground we've gained, with all these kids coming into school and all the teachers retiring. So we made a big downpayment on 100,000 teachers last year. We need to continue that. We ought to pass the bill that would enable you to build or modernize 5,000 schools. That's very important.

Again, I say we should—we have to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act this year. And I'm going to propose a dramatic change, and it will be very controversial, maybe right across the political spectrum, because I think that we now know what works. We know that there are great schools in every State in this country; we know—I've been in city after city, including this one, where I have been blown away by the performance of some schools, even as I get dismayed by the overall numbers. It is time the United States Government started investing in what is working and stopped investing in what is not.

I am quite sure I'll hear the same thing I heard when we passed the crime bill, you know, "You're trying to decide what they do at the local level." That is not true. The crime bill, as all of you know, was, in effect, written by your local police chiefs and prosecutors and mayors. They came to us, and they said, "This

is what works.” And Senator Biden and others put together a bill that reflected what you were telling us.

There is nothing in this “Educational Accountability Act” that we have not been told at high decibel levels by local educational leaders over and over and over again. And I ask you, if you know—and every one of you know this is true—if you know that every problem in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere, and you know there are certain common elements to the solution, just as there have to be—and you when you run your cities—a tailor-made construction of it, depending on the facts—but if you know there are common elements, how in the world can you keep giving people a check whether those elements are there or not? If you know that we’re not spending as much money as we should in education, how in the world can you justify not spending the money we are spending as well as possible? This is very serious.

Now, you can help us to pass this. But I think it is absolutely imperative that we say: no social promotion; quick action to turn around failing schools; qualified teachers; report cards on schools; discipline codes; don’t say that kids are failures, fix the system. That’s why—Deedee mentioned this—we want to triple the funds that you get for the after-school programs, more investment for the summer school programs.

We know these things work. We know they work. We know they work in the poorest neighborhoods. We know they work in circumstances where people say that you can never turn these schools around. We know they work. We have no conceivable excuse for continuing to invest in what doesn’t work and for not investing in what does. I implore you to help me pass a different way of sending Federal funds to invest in our children’s future that will work.

I also ask you to help me pass the rest of the budget so we can hook up every classroom and library to the Internet. We’re going to start getting the E-rate that we fought so hard for, so our classrooms, even in the poor neighborhoods, and libraries can afford to hook up to the Internet; to support the America Reads program—we now have 1,000 colleges with young people out in our grade schools helping kids learn to read; to support our GEAR UP program—we’ve got mentors now going into middle schools not only to tutor and mentor our children but to get them to start thinking about

going to college and to start telling them when they’re in middle school, “Look, here’s what the law is. Here’s what aid you can get. Here’s what the scholarships are. Here’s what the Pell grants are. You’ve got to start thinking about going to college.”

I see Mayor Rendell back there; this whole thing was the brainchild of Congressman Chaka Fattah from Philadelphia. And he and I were together with Chaka and a bunch of young kids from the inner city not very long ago, just sitting around drinking a Coke with them. Every single one of these kids wanted to go to college, every one of them, and intended to go and believe they could go. And we need to do that everywhere in America.

Fourth, I’d like to talk just briefly about the preservation challenge you all face. I talked about this at some length in the State of the Union, but we’re losing 7,000 acres of green space and farmland every single day. So I have proposed this billion-dollar livability agenda to help you save open space, ease traffic congestion, grow in ways that enhance the quality of lives of your citizens, including the Better America bonds. Carol Browner was telling me yesterday you kind of like those Better America bonds; it’s a tax cut to leverage \$9½ billion in private investment to clean up brownfields, to have clean air, and to do some other things that I think you know will be very important. So I hope you’ll help us to pass it. I hope you’ll support our billion-dollar lands legacy initiative, to preserve places of natural beauty all across this country, from the most remote wilderness to the nearest city park.

Now, if we can continue in this direction, in expanding economic opportunity and improving education and fighting crime, in making our communities more livable, we can do better. Even though times are good, we can do better. We can do much better. And we can reach all those neighborhoods and all those people to whom these statistics don’t mean a thing because they haven’t felt them. And it’s in everyone else’s interest because that’s how we’ll keep the overall American economy growing.

Let me just say, parenthetically, I hope you will all support my proposal to set aside the surplus till we fix Social Security and Medicare at the same time, not all of it but most of it—and to do something that we never think about in America, which is paying down some

of the debt. The reason I want to do that, especially now, is, you know about all this turmoil overseas; you know how a lot of countries are being punished for having big deficits; you know what will happen if we have to have—either they start having terrible inflation problems or have to have astronomical interest rates. They won't be able to buy as many of our products, and we'll have to develop more within our country.

If we fix Social Security and Medicare and do it by actually saving money until we need it, so while we're saving it, we're paying down the debt, that will keep our interest rates low, and it will free up money that people in the private sector would otherwise spend buying Government debt, to invest in your cities and in your neighborhoods.

So this is a very important part of this whole economic strategy. If the world economy resumes growing, we'll grow even faster. If the world economy—and about half the world is in a recession now—if the world economy stays in trouble, we have to find ways to keep growing, and one of the ways we can do it is to free up more private sector money for private sector investment to create jobs. So I hope you will support that as well. It will have a direct impact on your economic well-being, as well as, obviously, it is of concern because you want your seniors to do well and to be—this generation of seniors is fine, but you want them to do well in the future also.

Let me just make one last point. I know the First Lady is coming over here to talk later today about the millennium. We established this White House Millennium Council as an inspiration for communities and individuals. We've done a lot of things here. We've helped to save the Star-Spangled Banner and Thomas Edison's home and other things around the country.

We've had these White House Millennium Evenings; they've been utterly fascinating. The famous physicist Stephen Hawking came over from England and talked to us about the nature of time and black holes in the universe and all these things we'd find out in the 21st century that I could barely understand. It was fascinating. We had, early this week, we had two historians of religion come and talk about what the millennium meant to people from a philosophical and religious sense 1,000 years ago and what it might mean today. Wynton Marsalis came and conducted a seminar on the history

of jazz and how it embodied this last century and what it might mean for the next century. These things have been fascinating. But the millennium will never have its full meaning to us unless it is played out in every single community.

Now, I know most of you are planning to do something, but I would urge you to plan more than a celebration on New Year's Eve. You will all be invited by her to receive national designation as millennium communities by launching projects to save your history, honor your arts and humanities, prepare your children for the new century. I hope you will do that.

Often, when a century turns, it marks a turning point in how people see themselves in the world. Maybe all we do is catch up to what's already going on, but it gives us a chance to sort of stop and think and try to see patterns in our existence. If you look at the turn of the last century, we now see that it was a time of enormous creation and identification by cities: the world's first Columbian Exposition in Chicago; the unification of the five boroughs of New York; the rebuilding of San Francisco after the earthquake. In the early years of the 20th century, America really became a melting pot.

I heard a fascinating story with a friend of mine the other day. Both his sets of grandparents were Italian immigrants, and his grandfather died right after he came over here, leaving his grandmother homeless with five children, including his mother, the youngest of the children. And we were talking about this incredible dilemma his mother faced because there were homes for orphans but no places for five kids with a single mother, and how at the last moment, when they were destitute, she was rescued by this community church in Philadelphia. It was a very moving story.

But we now have this in our consciousness, and we know that the 20th century basically was the urbanizing, the industrializing of America, a new wave of immigrants coming in, and how we had to meet those challenges. And this time gives us a time to think again. We can create the community of our dreams in this country at the turn of this century. And the magnitude of the moment is heightened by the fact that it is also the turn of a millennium.

But we must not see our present prosperity from the perspective of self-satisfaction. We should say, thank goodness we happen to be in positions of responsibility, when we have an

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opportunity the people who came before us never had.

Do you know how many people were mayors of your cities or who held the office of President, in this century, who would have given anything—anything—to have had the chance to do what is right before our eyes? I think we ought to do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE. The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Deedee Corradini of Salt Lake City, UT; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; Mayor Brent Coles of Boise, ID; Mayor Edward G. Rendell of Philadelphia, PA; author and public management consultant David Osborne; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC.

Statement on the Transportation Department's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

January 29, 1999

For 6 years, our administration has worked hard to give more Americans the tools to make the most of their lives. Today I am pleased to announce that the Department of Transportation is reforming and strengthening a program designed to open the doors of economic opportunity for those who have too often been shut out.

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program gives thousands of minority-owned and women-owned business an opportunity to compete for State and local contracts to maintain our roads, construct new highways, and improve public transportation, among many other projects.

After carefully considering hundreds of comments and suggestions from local leaders, business owners, and citizens from across the country, the Transportation Department has amended the DBE rules to ensure that this vitally important program works more fairly, more efficiently, and meets all constitutional requirements. The new rule is an excellent example of our efforts to mend, not end, affirmative action. I applaud the hard work and dedication of Secretary Slater and his staff to make sure that all Americans can share in this time of prosperity.

Statement on the Attorney General's Decision To Conclude the Investigation of Harold Ickes

January 29, 1999

I have always had confidence that Harold Ickes acted lawfully and appropriately, and I am pleased by the decision announced by the Attorney General today. Harold's contributions to this administration over the years have helped improve the quality of life in this country, and I will always be thankful for his advice and hard work on behalf of the American people.

NOTE. On January 29, Attorney General Janet Reno notified the Special Division of the Court of Appeals in Washington, DC, that there were no reasonable grounds for further investigation into whether Mr. Ickes knowingly and willfully testified falsely before Congress in September 1997.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the United States Air Force Operating Location Near Groom Lake, Nevada *January 29, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with section 6001(a) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) (the "Act"), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6961(a), notification is hereby given that on September 25, 1998, I issued Presidential Determination No. 98-36 (copy attached) and thereby exercised the authority to grant certain exemptions under section 6001(a) of the Act.

Presidential Determination No. 98-36 exempted the United States Air Force's operating location near Groom Lake, Nevada, from any Federal, State, interstate, or local hazardous or solid waste laws that might require the disclosure of classified information concerning that operating location to unauthorized persons. Information concerning activities at the operating location near Groom Lake has been properly determined to be classified, and its disclosure would be harmful to national security. Contin-

ued protection of this information is, therefore, in the paramount interest of the United States.

The determination was not intended to imply that in the absence of a Presidential exemption, RCRA or any other provision of law permits or requires the disclosure of classified information to unauthorized persons. The determination also was not intended to limit the applicability or enforcement of any requirement of law applicable to the Air Force's operating location near Groom Lake except those provisions, if any, that would require the disclosure of classified information.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address *January 30, 1999*

Good morning. Americans have always believed that people who work hard should be able to provide for themselves and their families. That's a fundamental part of America's basic bargain. Today I want to talk to you about what we're doing to make sure that bargain works for all our people, by ensuring that women and men earn equal pay for equal work.

We're living in a time of remarkable promise, with the strongest economy in a generation: nearly 18 million new jobs; the lowest unemployment in 29 years; family incomes rising by \$3,500, the greatest real wage growth in over two decades. We have an opportunity now, and an obligation, to make sure every American fairly benefits from this moment of prosperity.

One of the best ways to meet this challenge is to put an end to wage discrimination. When President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act 35 years ago, women were joining the work force in ever-increasing numbers, but their work

was undervalued. At that time, for every dollar a man brought home in his paycheck, a woman doing the same work earned only 58 cents.

We've made a lot of progress since those days. Last June my Council of Economic Advisors reported that the gender gap has narrowed considerably. In fact, it's been cut nearly in half. Today, women earn about 75 cents for every dollar a man earns. Now, we can be proud of this progress, but 75 cents on the dollar is still only three-quarters of the way there, and Americans can't be satisfied until we're all the way there.

One big reason why the pay gap persists, despite women's gains in education and experience, is the demeaning practice of wage discrimination in our workplaces. Too many employers still undervalue and underpay work done by women. And make no mistake, when a woman is denied equal pay, it doesn't just hurt her; it hurts her family, and that hurts America.

Between 1995 and 1996 alone, the number of families with 2 working parents increased by nearly 2 million. And in over 10 million families, the mother is the only breadwinner.

Now just think what a 25 percent wage gap means in real terms over the course of a working year. How many bags of groceries or visits to the doctor? How many mortgage or rent or car payments? And over the course of a working life, it can mean hundreds of thousands of dollars: smaller pensions, less to put aside for retirement.

To prepare our Nation for the 21st century, we must do more to ensure equal pay, equal opportunity, and equal dignity for working women. Today I'm pleased to announce a new \$14 million equal pay initiative, included in my balanced budget, to help the Department of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission expand opportunities in the workplace for women and end wage discrimination once and for all. With more resources to identify wage discrimination, to educate employers and workers about their rights and responsibilities, and to bring more women into better-paying jobs, we'll be closer than ever to making equal pay a reality for all Americans.

In my State of the Union Address, when I called on Congress to ensure equal pay for equal

work, it brought Members of both parties to their feet in a strong show of support. Equal pay is not a partisan issue. It's a matter of principle, a question of what kind of country we want America to be today and into the 21st century when our daughters grow up and enter the workplace.

There's been strong leadership on fair pay from Members in both Houses of Congress, including Senator Tom Harkin and Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton. Today I ask Congress, as one of its first orders of business, to pass the "Paycheck Fairness Act" sponsored by Senator Tom Daschle and Representative Rosa DeLauro. It strengthens enforcement of our equal pay laws, expands opportunities for women, and helps working families to thrive.

If we meet this challenge—if we value the contributions of all our workers—we will be a more productive, more prosperous, more proud, and a more just nation in the 21st century.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:22 p.m. on January 29 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks on Submitting the Fiscal Year 2000 Budget February 1, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Podesta, Mr. Vice President, members of the Cabinet, the economic team, and Members of the Congress. I would like to, first of all, thank the Vice President for his invaluable partnership these last 6 years and for the remarkable address he gave in Davos, Switzerland, just a couple of days ago on the global economy and our responsibilities there. I will say more about that in a moment. But all of you know how much our long-term prosperity is tied to that.

I'd like to thank the large number of Members of Congress who are here. There are so many, we haven't introduced them all. But in view of the Vice President's remarks, I would like to point out that there is one person here in whom I take particular satisfaction. Congress-

man Jay Inslee from Washington is one of the people who lost his seat in 1994, in no small measure because he voted for the economic plan of 1993. And in 1998 the voters in Washington returned him to the House of Representatives, and I'm delighted to see him. Stand up. *[Applause]* Thank you.

I'd also like to point out that after the first couple of years, when we passed our economic plan in a highly partisan manner, we achieved a bipartisan consensus on a balanced budget which enabled us to continue our progress. And I think I speak for every member of my party in this room—we would like to return to that to pass this budget and keep going in the right direction.

This is our budget for the year 2000. It is the first budget of the 21st century. It charts a progressive but prudent path to our future, a balanced budget that makes vital investments.

Seven years ago, when I ran for President, I committed to put our fiscal house in order. Irresponsible policies had quadrupled our national debt in the 12 previous years. The deficit was \$290 billion in 1992 alone. That brought us high interest rates, low growth, and a Government unable to meet its most basic obligations or to build our bridge to the 21st century.

When I took office we charted a new course, as the Vice President said: fiscal responsibility, smart investments, more trade. Today, following that path, Americans have created the longest peacetime expansion in our history: nearly 18 million new jobs, wages rising at twice the rate of inflation, the highest homeownership in history, the lowest welfare rolls, the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957.

Last year, for the first time in three decades, as all of you know, we had turned red ink to black with a \$70 billion surplus. It is projected to be only the first of many. As I said in the State of the Union, America is on course for surpluses over the next quarter century. And our estimates, optimistic as they sound, are more conservative than those of Congress.

Our economic house is in order and strong. If we manage the surplus right, we can uphold our responsibility to future generations. We can do so by dedicating the lion's share of the surplus to saving Social Security and Medicare and paying down the national debt. We can. And because we can, we must do it now.

We have a rare opportunity that comes along once in a blue moon to any group of Americans. We see now that balancing the budget, an idea that once seemed abstract, arcane, or impossible, has made a real difference in the lives of our citizens. Fiscal discipline has transformed the vicious cycle of budget deficits and high interest rates into a virtuous cycle of budget surpluses and low interest rates.

When interest rates fall, more Americans can buy and refinance homes, as over 20 million of them have. They can buy cars, retire student loans, start new businesses. When deficits disappear, capital, more than a trillion dollars so far, is liberated to create wealth and jobs and opportunity at every level all over America.

The less money we tie up in publicly held debt, the more money we free up for private

sector investment. In an age of worldwide capital markets, this is the way a nation prospers—by saving and investing, not by running big deficits. This is one reason why this year's budget, as a percentage of our economy, is even smaller than last year's.

Now, the budget I present today keeps us on this path, a progressive but prudent path to a positive future. It has taken hard work and tough choices. I want to thank the members of the Cabinet for the whole array of difficult, long meetings we had. But with our economy expanding and our surplus rising, we have confidence that we can now look to the long-term challenges of our country, to fulfill our obligations to 21st century Americans, both young and old.

The baby boom, as we all know, will soon become a senior boom. The first budget of the next century is our first big step toward meeting that challenge. I have proposed committing 62 percent of the surplus for the next 15 years to Social Security and investing a small portion of that in the private sector, just as any private or State government pension would do, so that we can earn higher returns and keep Social Security sound for 55 years.

If we work together across partisan lines and make some tough but fully achievable choices, we can also save Social Security for the next 75 years, lift the earnings limitation on what seniors on Social Security can earn, and do something to alleviate poverty among elderly women.

Our balanced budget also takes steps to strengthen Medicare. Already we have extended the life of the Trust Fund by 10 years. We can save it for another decade if we use one out of every six dollars of the surplus for the next 15 years to guarantee the soundness of Medicare. This budget makes a downpayment on that goal.

It also commits 12 percent of the surplus—about \$500 billion, more if the Congress turns out to be right—for tax relief to establish Universal Savings Accounts—USA accounts to help Americans to invest, to save for retirement, to share more fully in our Nation's wealth.

This is the economically sound and fiscally prudent course for our country. If we do it—if we lock in the surplus to save Social Security and Medicare—we can fulfill our obligations to older Americans.

But as I said in the State of the Union—and I want to emphasize this in particular today—reform of Social Security and Medicare is equally important to younger Americans for two reasons. First of all, if we take care of this, then when the baby boom retires, our children will have their incomes to invest in their lives and the lives of our grandchildren. Secondly, although this, at first glance, may seem far removed from our lives, it is essential to their future. Because if we do this, we will pay down the national debt.

Now, look at this chart. If we set aside 62 percent of the surplus for 15 years for Social Security and we set aside 15 percent for Medicare, we will cut the debt by two-thirds. As a share of our economy, we will cut it by 84 percent. Look, when I took office it was about 50 percent; we've got it down now to about 44 percent. In 15 years, we will have it down to 7 percent, a third of what it was in 1981 before we started exploding the debt with the deficits. That will give us the lowest share of publicly held debt since 1917, before the United States entered World War I.

Why is this important? Well, we've already made deficit spending a thing of the past, but this huge debt remains. We quadrupled the debt in 4 years. When I took office, we were looking at a future where we'd be spending 20, 25 cents on a tax dollar just to pay interest on the debt—not to pay it down, just to pay interest. We've now got it down to a little over 13 cents on the dollar today. And we can take it, as you see, way, way down. If we take it down to 7 percent, our successors 15 years from now will only have to allocate 2 cents of every dollar the American people pay in taxes to pay interest on the debt—2 cents.

Now, this is especially important now, with all this financial turmoil around the world. We're doing everything we can—and again I want to thank the Vice President, Secretary Rubin, Deputy Secretary Summers; they went to Switzerland. We've been working hard for a year to try to stabilize the global economy, get growth going again. But we know that if things go haywire in other parts of the world, it can have an adverse effect here. This is an enormous insurance policy if we pay down the debt; that no matter what happens elsewhere, we'll be able to keep interest rates low, we'll be able to keep investing.

And I want to point out, if I could put in one plug for another part of our budget, it's also why our whole invest-in-America strategy—to go into the poorest neighborhoods in our cities and Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta and south Texas and in rural areas, including Native American communities—why that's so important, because these underinvested areas of America have to be seen as new markets, to go along with keeping the interest rates down and freeing up the money. If the waters are troubled overseas, we have to be able to generate more growth here as well.

So I say to all of you, this is something we're doing for our kids. Yes, we're saving Social Security and Medicare; and yes, that will prepare for the retirement of the baby boomers; and yes, it will save money for our children and our grandchildren; but it will also guarantee them an economy of continuing, enduring stability and a hedge against the storms that may happen beyond our borders.

So that's why this is so important. This is not just about saving Social Security and Medicare, although that is terribly important. It is also about knowing that when we leave this century and enter the next, we have given our children 20 years or so in which they can worry about the challenges of the future and they can meet their challenges of their times, things we may not even be able to foresee, unburdened by the unfinished business of the 20th century, unshackled by our profligacy in the latter part of this century.

It is profoundly important, therefore, that all across America people see this budget not just as a budget that saves Social Security and Medicare but the budget that ensures for young Americans the same chance that those of us in the baby boom generation enjoyed in the years after World War II, the same chance to meet the challenges that they will have to face that we don't know yet.

Now, it also invests, as I said. It invests in new markets in America; it invests in the education of our young people; it makes historic investments from quality education and teaching to school modernization, from smaller classes to summer school and after-school programs.

But by saving Social Security and strengthening Medicare and paying down the debt, it meets the critical first test of our obligation to the new century. These are the same challenges that Americans over the coming months and

years will have to meet together. It is what we must do in Washington this year.

All over America, most of what happens to Americans are being done by people that don't have anything to do with the Government. They're making their decisions for their families, for their businesses, for their education, for their future. But we can prevent them from making the most of their lives if we do not lift these burdens from them. And if we do, we will dramatically increase the number of Americans that will be able to live out their dreams and, therefore, keep the American dream going forever.

The decisions we make here and now are going to have a huge impact for a long, long time. We have a special obligation, because our predecessors for the last several years never had this opportunity. They never had the option to do what we can now do. It is now here before us, thanks to the hard work of the people of this country, and we had better fulfill our duty. I believe we will.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks to the National School Boards Association *February 1, 1999*

Thank you very much. First of all, Barbara Wheeler, thank you for your remarks. You covered everything I was going to say. *[Laughter]* You talked about the Capitol Steps. *[Laughter]* I think they're funny, too, but you must surely know, having heard them, that it is not the school boards association that is the Rodney Dangerfield in this town. *[Laughter]*

Let me say I'm delighted to be on this platform with Anne Bryant and your other leaders behind me and to be here with all of you. I see Delegate Member of Congress Robert Underwood from Guam here. I'm delighted to see him. I was in Guam with him recently. If you haven't been, I recommend it.

And I want to thank you for the wonderful, wonderful welcome you gave to Secretary Riley. We have been working on education together since we first met, over 20 years ago, and he is not only the longest serving, I think, clearly, the finest Secretary of Education this country ever had.

We've had a very good day at the White House today, and I thought I would tell you about something we did at the beginning of the day that does not directly, but surely will indirectly impact on you and what you do. This morning I presented my budget for this coming year, and there are a lot of good things in it for education. But the point I want to make is that we were illustrating today that with last year's surplus and the surplus we project this year, that if the Congress will do what I rec-

ommend and set aside over 75 percent of this surplus for 15 years so that we can secure the retirement of the baby boomers with Social Security and Medicare—since we won't need the money while it's being set aside for about, in the case of Medicare, 11 years, in the case of Social Security, more—we will, while we're saving it, be paying down the national debt.

Now, when I took office, the national debt was 50 percent of our annual income, and it was projected to grow to 80 percent. When I took office, we were spending over 14 cents on the dollar of every tax dollar just servicing the debt. It's now down to 44 percent of our annual income, the debt; we're spending a little over 13 cents on the dollar. But if we set it aside for 15 years, we will take the debt down to 7 percent of our annual income, a third of what it was in 1981 when we started this deficit binge, the lowest it's been since 1917 before we got into World War I. And it will only cost 2 cents of every tax dollar you pay to pay interest on the debt.

That will, as compared with now, free up another 11 cents on the tax dollar every year from then on, that we could be investing in our children and in education and in the future. It's an amazing statistic. It will also keep interest rates low and will free up trillions of dollars to invest in the economy. And all of you know, running local school boards, that if the economy is strong, then you'll have your tax revenues coming in at the local and State level.

So this is a compact among the generations. It's not simply a way to save Social Security and Medicare, although that, too, is good for younger people because it means that when we baby boomers retire, our kids won't have to give money to us that they could be investing in their grandchildren—in our grandchildren.

But it was a very good day. And it is a part of what I am trying to get our country to focus on, which is that we have opportunities now that people who came before us, over the last several decades, could only have dreamed of. And we have to decide how we're going to use those opportunities.

I think our most profound obligation is to say that at a time like this with the economy running well, with the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957, with all the economic indicators strong, but with trouble overseas which could affect our economy, we have got to take this opportunity to deal with the long-term challenges our country faces, finally, not only to have America working again but to really build that bridge to the 21st century I've been talking about for so long.

And all of you know that education has to be a critical part of that. You know better than I all the problems that your president just mentioned. You know better than I that we have the largest group of school children we've ever had and that it is more diverse in every way than it has ever been. The future of our whole country rests so much on how well we educate our children, and you have been chosen in your communities to carry that torch into a new century. It is a great honor and a heavy responsibility, and I thank you for assuming it.

I believe that here in Washington, our duty is to help to give you the tools you need to meet the challenge. And we've worked hard for 6 years, with all the economic challenges we faced at first, to do that duty.

In the last 6 years, while we have reduced the size of the Federal Government to its lowest point since President Kennedy was in office and eliminated hundreds of programs in order to balance the budget, at the same time we have almost doubled our investment in education and training. We've helped States who adopted tougher standards. We've helped school districts to deal with the challenges of drugs and gangs and violence and guns. We've cut regulations in our Federal programs affecting elementary and secondary education by two-

thirds, thanks to Secretary Riley's efforts. We've granted dozens of waivers to States and school districts to give them the flexibility they need to try new approaches. We've begun to organize an army of tutors, including young people in the America Reads program from a thousand colleges to help in schools to make sure our young people can read at elementary school, and a new group of mentors in the GEAR UP program to mentor middle school and high school students to prepare them for college and to make sure they know they can go.

We have increased our investment in early childhood, including Head Start, as Barbara said. We are making dramatic progress in connecting all our classrooms and libraries to the Internet by early in the next century. And this year the new E-rate, the education rate, comes on-line, and that should save about a billion dollars in the cost of hookups, something for which we've fought very hard.

Also, something—I think it's very important that all the high school seniors and juniors, and maybe even earlier, know that in many different ways we have basically opened the doors of college. Millions of young people this year will get the HOPE scholarship tax credit, which is worth about \$1,500 for the first 2 years of school. There are tax credits for junior and senior years of college, for graduate school. We've increased the size and reach of the Pell grant program, lowered the cost of student loans, added hundreds of thousands of work-study positions, and tried to basically put you in a position to say to the children in your school districts, "Look, if you make the grades, if you don't have any money, you can still go to college. No matter what the cost is, you can still go."

Last year, we got the first big downpayment on our goal of helping you to hire 100,000 highly trained teachers to lower class sizes in the early grades. And that, plus what all of you have been doing, is really paying off. I mean, the SAT scores are up, the math scores are up almost everywhere in the country. We see in some of the most difficult learning environments dramatic turnarounds where the proper attention has been paid to schools.

But if you look at the country as a whole, there are still some very challenging problems. Number one, reading scores haven't budged. Now, I think that's pretty explainable when you

consider the increasing percentage of our children whose parents don't speak English at home. You couldn't expect aggregate reading scores to be going through the roof. That doesn't mean that we can give up on making sure those kids are fluent in English. It just means we have to work harder; we have to work smarter; we have to do better.

Even more troubling to me is the fact that our relative standing on these test scores goes down as the kids go up in school. Our fourth graders were ranked in the top of the world last year in comparative math and science scores. And keep in mind, when we engage in this, we take a representative sample of kids—by income, by race, by region, every demographic category—and they're doing well. Our 8th graders are about the international average, and our 12th graders rank near the bottom. That tells us that there are things we have to do if we expect to be globally competitive that we're not doing. And I believe we can do better.

Probably most of you heard my State of the Union Address, in which I said that we, in my judgment, in the Federal Government, should change the way we invest Federal funds to emphasize what you have proved to us works and to stop investing in things that don't work. We will have an opportunity—and again, I believe, an obligation—to do that this year, because Congress must reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. I intend to send them, later this year, an "Education Accountability Act" to require States and school districts receiving Federal help to take five steps that most of you are probably already taking and that I think all of us would admit have been shown to work.

The components of this bill basically came to us from educators, from people like you, from principals especially, from teachers in some cases, and from our own on-site observation, not just mine and Secretary Riley's but all of us, of what we have seen working.

We believe that every district should have a policy of no social promotion but not identifying the children as failures, and therefore there should be after-school and summer school programs to support their continued learning.

All over America, teachers groups, not just the national organizations but grassroots teachers groups, have pleaded with us to say, if you're going to invest Federal money, say that every

school district must have a reasonable discipline code and it must be enforced.

We believe that parents should get report cards on their children's schools. We believe there should be a strategy in every school district to turn around or shut down schools that fail.

I appreciated the comment you made about vouchers. You know, I have steadfastly opposed them. I believe when I was a Governor, I think we were the second State in the country after Minnesota to have a statewide public school choice bill pass the legislature. And I have steadfastly supported the charter school movement in America, and I still do. But we must have a strategy that deals with failing schools. If you want to win the argument with people who don't do what you do every day—on vouchers—you must have a strategy that deals with failing schools. And it's very important.

I think we have to do more to ensure that all of our teachers are as well-trained as they possibly can be in the subjects they are teaching. Sometimes I think our teachers get a little bit of a bum rap, with the schools exploding and all of you having to compete for bright people with other forms of work, not just teaching. It should hardly be surprising to people that we have, in many of our school districts, teachers teaching subjects which they don't have degrees in, which they may not even have college minors in. But we have to do something about it. We have to do more to try to help support teachers. And the teachers, through their organizations, are clamoring for more investment to help develop skills and learning, to raise their qualifications in these academic subjects.

I'm going up to Boston tomorrow, and I'll be able to discuss some of this in greater detail. But what I wanted to say to you today is we need your help. We need your help. We need Congress to understand that—I do not believe the Federal Government should run the schools. I didn't wake up one morning and come up with these five ideas. I believe that you were showing us what works, and that is what we should invest in. And I think that, both as taxpayers and school board members, knowing the challenges we face, you should expect us to invest this money based on what you believe will work and what you have seen will work.

Nothing we can do here involves picking this person or that person or the other person to teach; involves how you select your principals;

involves how the climate of learning or the culture of the school is developed, school by school. We can't do any of that. But with limited Federal funds, which I have done my best to increase, and an enormous challenge out there, we ought to be investing in what works, and we ought to stop investing in what doesn't. And I ask for your help to persuade the Congress that that is in the interests of the local school districts of the United States. Essentially, we ought to try to take what is common sense to all of you and make it common practice in all of our schools.

Today, as I said, I released my budget, and I wanted to talk a little bit about what it does. First of all, it calls upon Congress to invest \$1.4 billion to hire new, better trained teachers to reduce class sizes in the early grades. This is a 17 percent increase over the budget I signed last fall, and it brings us another step closer to our goal of 100,000 new teachers. We have to make sure that Congress continues this financial support.

I might say, there were some people who didn't want to do that, but the arguments I heard about this were the same arguments I heard in 1994 against my crime bill when local police officers said, "Mr. President, the violent crime rate has tripled in the last 30 years, and the police forces have increased by 10 percent." It was not rocket science to think that if you had more police officers and they were walking the streets and working with neighborhood groups and others, that they could prevent crime from happening in the first place, catch criminals when they commit crimes, and drive the crime rate down. We now have the lowest violent crime rate in 30 years, the lowest overall crime rate in 25 years.

It is not rocket science to know that if you've got a teacher shortage now and a looming one in the future, that the Federal Government, if we have the resources, ought to be giving you the tools to hire more teachers. So I ask you to help us pass this through the Congress.

The budget also calls for investing \$35 million to provide 7,000 college scholarships for bright young people who commit to teach in places where the need is greatest, in the poorest inner-city and rural schools. That's 5 times the investment that Congress made in these scholarships last year when we inaugurated the program. It increases by \$25 million funding to train bilingual and English-as-second-language teachers. It

contains \$30 million to train middle school teachers to use technology in the classroom. It calls for \$10 million to train 1,000 Native Americans to teach in Indian reservations and other public schools with large Native American enrollments. It has \$18 million to recruit and train retired military members to become teachers.

We had an event on this at the White House last week, and we had this marvelous retired Army sergeant who is teaching in the Baltimore schools come and make a presentation. He's a special education teacher in the Baltimore schools. It was an overwhelming, emotional event.

And I remember when I was in Korea recently I met a senior master sergeant there who gave me one of his little military coins. And I said, "How long have you been in the service?" And he said, "Twenty-nine years." And I said, "How much longer are you going to stay?" He said, "About a year." And I said, "What are you going to do?" He said, "I'm going home to Kentucky to be a teacher." So I hope you will continue to support this.

The budget continues support for the master teacher program, to make sure our finest teachers get the recognition, the reward they deserve, and the opportunity to spread the skills they develop in going through the certification process with others in their schools. Our goal there is to try to get up to 100,000 board-certified master teachers in the country, enough to make sure that, with your help, we can have one in every school building in America. And I think that would be a very good thing, indeed.

The budget increases by \$26 million funding to mobilize tutors and trained teachers, to make sure all of our third graders can read adequately. It doubles funding for our efforts to provide middle school students with tutors, with mentors, to spark their interest and their capacity in going on to college.

We also, again, will try to pass the provision of the budget that would use tax breaks to enable us to build or modernize 5,000 schools. And that is very important, indeed. Again, I heard the argument last year, "Well, this is really not something that the Federal Government ought to be doing." Well, the Federal Government puts a lot of money into State highways, and this is our road to the future.

I, frankly, wish we were doing more. I don't know how many schools I've been in where

there were as many kids back in the house-trailers as there were in regular classrooms. I don't know how many I've been in where there were rooms closed off because the buildings were breaking down. We have schools buildings in some of our cities now that are so old they literally cannot be hooked up to the Internet without a whole rewiring. I think this is very important.

But again, I say it's important that you understand that you've got to go out and talk to Members of Congress of both parties and say, "Listen, this is not some cockamamie idea that the President had some person with a Ph.D. think up in a windowless office in the White House"—[laughter]—"you know, you go out and stroll around the schools of America, and it will come screaming back at you: We need some help here."

So I ask for your help. And finally, let me say, our Federal after-school programs began just 2 years ago with a million bucks; that's all I could get for it. And we went to \$40 million. Then in the third year, in our last budget, that I signed just a couple of months ago, we went to 200 million. This budget calls for 600 million, and that's enough to keep one million children in school and off the streets, learning and safe, in after-school programs. I ask for your support for that.

So this budget comes from Secretary Riley and me, two old—increasingly old—[laughter]—Governors who believe deeply in education and its promise, who believe deeply in the leadership of people like you at the local level. We don't want to micromanage the schools. We don't want to take resources away from people who need it. But it is unconscionable to continue to support that which doesn't work and to fail to support that which does. So we ask for a partnership that will invest more in our public schools and to invest in ways that you, out on the frontlines of change, have demonstrated will work so that our children will learn more. That's all we ask.

Again, I say, as I was thinking today when we started the day, Dick and I did, with the

rest of the Cabinet and 31 Members of Congress and we were looking at this line with the debt going down and what was going to happen in the future—you just think about where America is and you think about people who were Presidents, Secretaries of Education, Members of Congress, Governors and school board members, 10 years ago, 15 years ago, 20 years ago. There were people who would have killed to have had an opportunity like this. This is a high-class dilemma we've got here. [Laughter] You know? Why are we worried about the aging of America? Because before you know it, our average life expectancy will be over 80. That's a big problem. I like it better as the days go by—[laughter]—and the same thing with the surplus. But history is full of examples of people who had golden opportunities and squandered them because there was an easier, more well-trodden path to take.

And so I ask you—I don't think you know the influence you can have if you're determined to bring it to bear. This is a time for decisive action. Don't just go up to Congress and ask them to reauthorize the act the way it was and give you as much more money as you can get. You've got 53 million kids out there. They're from 200 or more different racial or ethnic groups, every religion in the world, every linguistic background in the world, and they are America's gold mine for tomorrow as the world becomes smaller and more and more interdependent.

This is a gift. It is a high-class challenge. And we have the resources, and we have the knowledge to do what is right. We have to do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:55 p.m. at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Barbara M. Wheeler, president, and Anne L. Bryant, executive director, National School Boards Association; and Sgt. Arthur Moore, USA (Ret.), teacher, Harlem Park Community School, Baltimore, MD. The President also referred to the comedy troupe Capitol Steps.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting Budget Rescissions and Deferrals

February 1, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report three rescissions of budget authority, totaling \$35 million; one new deferral of \$185 million of budget authority; and, two revised deferrals of budget authority, totaling \$1.5 billion.

The proposed rescissions affect the programs of the Department of Interior, Unanticipated Needs for Natural Disasters, and International Assistance Programs. The proposed deferrals af-

fect programs of the Department of State and International Assistance Programs.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter. The report detailing the rescissions and deferrals was published in the *Federal Register* on February 10.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Boston, Massachusetts

February 2, 1999

Thank you very much. Up to this point, I've had a great time here today. I could have listened to this go on forever. I want to say to all those here, to Elaine and to Alan and everyone who worked on this event; to Governor Romer and Len Barrack and all of those—to Joe Andrew and others who will carry on with the Democratic Party; to Joan Menard and Mayor Menino; and especially to Senator Kennedy, Senator Kerry, Congressmen Moakley and Meehan and McGovern and Tierney, Capuano, and the other members of the delegation, how profoundly grateful I am to be here; how grateful I am for every occasion in which I have come to Boston or the State of Massachusetts since 1991; for the kindness and support that you have given to me, to Hillary, to the Vice President, to all of us; for being the State which has consistently given the Clinton-Gore team the highest percentage of the popular vote; for sticking with the agenda that we have set forth for America and sending a magnificent congressional delegation. I am very grateful.

This morning, Hillary asked me what I was going to do in Boston, and I said, "Oh, I'm going up there to canonize Steve Grossman." [Laughter] And she said, "Bill, don't say that.

That's the wrong religion." [Laughter] But that's basically what we've done. [Laughter] And every word deserved.

When I met Steve many years ago, and he was running APEC and I was a young Governor trying to learn about the complexities of the Middle East, I never could have dreamed that I would become so heavily involved in the peace process there, that I would have the opportunity to do what we have been able to do, to move it forward.

You know, when you think about the condition of the Democratic Party when Steve became chairman and you think about some of the difficulties we've faced in the Middle East—if you sort of assume that he helped give me the Presidency and I helped give him the Democratic Party, it's hard to imagine who got the better deal on some days. [Laughter] I think neither of us would trade the opportunity and the challenge for anything. And so, again, I just want to say thank you.

Let me also say that there is another reason that we did as well as we did in 1998, and that is that we stood for something, for all the American people, and for all kinds of Americans. I just want to mention one other person who

is here; I can't resist. Her presence here, I understand, is a birthday present. And tomorrow Rosina Grattaroti will celebrate her 90th birthday. I'd like to ask her to stand up. Where are you? There she is. *[Applause]* Happy birthday. I asked Mayor Menino if he knew her; he said, "Yes, she comes from an old Irish family in town." *[Laughter]*

But let me say to all of you, in 1992 you gave me a chance to try to lead this country in a new direction, based on old values. I said over and over again—sometimes to suspicious audiences—that I wanted the Democratic Party to go back to its old values with new ideas; that our mission would always be to provide opportunity to all Americans, to call forth all citizens to a sense of responsibility, and to give us a real sense of community.

I still think if there is one idea that sort of often divides us from our friends in the Republican Party, it is our passionate belief in community, the idea that we are interdependent, that none of us is better than any other, that we can never fulfill our complete destiny as individuals and families unless we live in a country which is giving everybody the chance to do it, and we're all working together. And increasingly, we know that to be true about the larger world beyond our borders.

In 1996, because the country had done well, I asked the American people to give us a chance to finish the job and build our bridge to the 21st century. And with Massachusetts leading the way, they did. In 1998, what did we say to the American people? What was the difference historically? This is not rocket science. Steve Grossman and all of our team, people like him all across America who followed his lead, went out and said, "You cannot let this party be destroyed. We must rebuild it financially, and we must remember what we stand for."

And then we went to the American people in 1998, and we never did say, until after the election was over, "Hey, did you know it's been since 1822 that the party of the President actually picked up seats in the House of Representatives in a 6th-year election? And wouldn't you like to make history?"

That's not what we said. What did we say? "Elect us. We will save Social Security first. We will pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. We'll be for world-class education. We'll keep our economy going. We'll keep pulling the American

people together. We have an agenda that will build America for all the citizens who live here." That's what this is about.

There is a lot of energy in our party today, because we have a mission for the American people; because we believe in opportunity and responsibility; because we believe, at root, in the idea of an American community; because we have never sought political power except to advance those ideals, not for ourselves but for others. And that is the secret that Steve Grossman brought to the United States, with all the other Democrats, that resulted in the election victories in '98.

And it is now our obligation to fulfill the mandate we were given by the people. That's what the State of the Union Address was all about. So when you leave here today, grateful to Steve Grossman, what you should really be grateful for is that because of his labors, we have made it more likely that we will save Social Security and Medicare and that in the process of doing it we will lift from the children—the grandchildren of the baby boomers—an enormous financial burden, which will free them to pursue their own destinies; that we will do it by saving most of the surplus, and that will enable us to pay down the national debt.

If anybody had come before you in 1992 and said, "Vote for me for President; in a few years we'll be paying down the national debt," you would have given them a quick exit home. You'd have thought, that guy's been, you know, chewing on funny reeds or something. *[Laughter]* But we will—if this proposal is adopted—listen to this: In 1981 our national debt was 26 percent of our annual income. In 1992, when I took office, our national debt was 50 percent of our national income. It's now down to 44 and dropping fast.

If our proposal for Social Security and Medicare is adopted, to save the surplus for those purposes and to buy into publicly held debt, it will go to its lowest point since 1917, before World War II, and we will be on our way to guaranteeing our children and our grandchildren a generation of low interest rates, strong economy, investment opportunities, education opportunities, and a brighter future for America in the 21st century. We ought to do this. That is what we were elected to do.

The mayor and I and the many members of the congressional delegation, when we leave

here we are going to a school, because it symbolizes the future that we fought for. And I will say again what I said to you in the State of the Union Address: We should invest more money in education, but we should spend it more wisely. We should spend it on what we know works and stop financing what we know doesn't.

We ought to say to all of our schools: We want to spend more money for better trained teachers. We want to hire 100,000 more teachers and make sure they're well trained. We want to build or modernize 5,000 schools because we're tired of our kids going to schools where they spend all day in a housetrailer because it's so overcrowded, or they go to a school that's so broken down, we can't even hook it up to the Internet because the school won't take the connection.

We want to say there ought to be certain rules in every school, no social promotion. But don't say the kids are failing when the system is failing them. That's why this budget triples funding for after-school and summer school programs that will lift student achievement and lift kids up and give them a chance to make the most of their own lives.

We ought to say even though America is doing very well, there are still neighborhoods not very far from here that aren't doing so well. There are still people who haven't been part of this economic recovery. Four of our 10 largest cities have cut their unemployment rate in half since 1992, but there are still neighborhoods in almost every large city where the unemployment rate is high. There are rural areas in my part of the country, in the Mississippi Delta or in Appalachia or in south Texas, there are Native American communities which have felt almost no positive impact from this great wave of economic recovery.

In the State of the Union Address I set forth a whole series of initiatives that could put \$15 billion, not of Government money but private sector money into our inner cities and our rural areas to create businesses and jobs and hope. Now, this is the best economy we've had in a generation, maybe ever. We will never have a better time to bring the American dream to poor people who are willing to work hard. If we can't do it now, we will never do it, and we ought to do it now.

We also were elected by a large and growing number of Americans of all ages who are con-

cerned about environmental issues but do not wish to give up the promise of economic growth. We have proved that you can make the air and water cleaner, that you can preserve more land, that you can restore more brownfields in cities and still grow this economy. A big part of our agenda is a livability and lands legacy agenda to help cities deal with traffic problems—you never have them in Boston—[laughter]—to help them clean up more brownfields, to help save more city parks, and set aside more isolated, irreplaceable places all over America. This, too, is an important part of what it means to be an American—living in harmony with our natural environment and growing our economy.

And finally, someone mentioned City Year earlier, and I noticed there was a smattering of applause. One of the proudest moments of my life was when, along with the pen that President Kennedy used to sign the bill creating the Peace Corps, we created AmeriCorps, the national service program. Senator Kennedy was there with me, other members of the delegation were. And since then there have been 100,000 young people, in only 4 years, serve in AmeriCorps.

I went home to Arkansas last week to see the tornado damage. Both the communities I visited, there were young AmeriCorps kids there from New York, New Jersey, California, Colorado—believe me, they never would have gone there before—helping people, learning things, sharing their lives. There were kids that went to Ivy League schools and kids that dropped out of high school. There were kids who came from wealthy families and kids who came from families on welfare all working together, pulling this country together, doing something to make America a better place. It is the embodiment of what we believe our public and political life ought to be all about.

So I say to you, I'm glad we won this election. I am grateful to Steve Grossman. But he would say to you—and I know he will say to you—we have to deliver. We have to deliver. We have to save Social Security and Medicare. We should pay down this debt. We should bring economic opportunity to other areas that haven't felt it. We should make world-class education the province of every American child. We can do these things. We can do it if we do it together.

Massachusetts, as much as any place, Boston, as much as any city in America, gave this administration the chance to bring that hope, that message, and that reality to the American people. I will never forget you. I will certainly never forget Steve Grossman. I am grateful. Now it's time to stand and deliver.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:05 p.m. in the Arlington Room at the Park Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to event cochair Elaine Schuster and Alan D. Solomont; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair-designate, and Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Joan M. Menard, Massachusetts State Democratic Party chair; and Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston.

Remarks to the Community at Jackson Mann Elementary School in Allston, Massachusetts

February 2, 1999

Thank you so much. First, I would like to thank all those who have joined us today. Governor, thank you for your remarks and your commitment. To Senator Kennedy and Senator Kerry, to Congressman Moakley and Congressman McGovern, and the other members of the Massachusetts delegation, I couldn't ask for stronger supporters and leaders for the cause of education.

Mayor, thank you for setting an example which I hope will be followed by every mayor in the country in terms of your commitment to education. I want to congratulate Boston on stealing your superintendent, Tom Payzant, from the Department of Education and my administration. *[Laughter]* I forgive you for that. You have given a lot more to me than you have taken, and it is a gift to the children of this city.

I'd like to thank Dr. Joanne Collins Russell and Gail Zimmerman and the faculty and the students, the chorus here at Jackson Mann, all of you, for making us feel so at home. Thank you so much. I want to thank the legislators and the local officials, the others who are here.

I'm glad to be here. I heard a lot about this school. Tom Menino told me the last time he was here that you gave him pasta. So I didn't eat lunch at the last event—*[laughter]*—just waiting. That's not true, but it's a good story. He liked the pasta. *[Laughter]* It is true that he got pasta; it's not true I didn't eat lunch. *[Laughter]*

But I also want to say to all of you, I was terribly impressed by what everyone said but

most impressed by what your principal and what your teacher said, because it convinced me that this is a school which is going to be able to do right by the children of 21st century America. And every now and then, while I'm going through this talk and tell you what I'm going to propose to Congress, just look up there—there they are; that's America's future. That looks pretty good to me, but it is very different than our past.

When I spoke at the State of the Union last month—to tell the American people that the state of our Union is strong, that our economy is perhaps the strongest it has ever been—I asked the American people to reflect upon what our obligations are in the midst of this economic success, with the social successes we've had, the welfare rolls cut almost in half, the lowest crime rate in a generation. What are we going to do with this?

And I asked the American people to join together to meet the great challenges of a new century—things like the aging of America, helping families balance work and child rearing, helping communities and States and our entire country balance the need to grow the economy with the need to preserve the quality of life and the quality of our environment—big challenges.

There is no challenge larger than giving every child in this country a world-class education, for every child will be not only a citizen of the United States but a citizen of the world. If you look at these children up here, you won't be surprised to know that all over America we

not only have the largest group of schoolchildren in history, it is the most racially, ethnically, religiously, culturally diverse group in history.

Now, as the world grows smaller and our contacts with people all over the world on every continent become more frequent and more profound, there is no country in the world better positioned to preserve liberty and prosperity and to be a beacon of hope than the United States. Because as we look more like the world, we will have more advantages to have a positive influence in the world—if, but only if, we prove that we really can build a successful multiracial, multiethnic, multicultural democracy where we say we cherish, we enjoy, we celebrate our diversity, but what we have in common is more important.

And the challenge of this and every school is to make sure that all of our children understand and are proud of what is different about them, but also understand and are proud of what they have in common, and understand that all children can learn and all children must learn and that it will be more important to their generation than to any previous generation of Americans.

The results you're getting here on your test scores, and just the feeling that one gets here in listening to what your principal and your teacher said, make me know that you are on the right track. I was so impressed with Ms. Zimmerman, when she got through I said, "You did a good job. You ought to run for public office." [Laughter] And she said, "Well, I might." [Laughter] I hope she'll teach a few more classes of kids with that kind of skill and understanding, first.

There are lots of schools—over the last 20 years, Secretary Riley and I used to be Governors together, and I've spent a lot of time in public schools over the last 20 years—a lot of time, a lot of time as President. And this is actually unusual for me, just to come to the meeting like this. Normally when I come to a school, I also visit a class and talk to the teachers and talk to the students and listen and observe.

And one of the things that I want the American people who aren't here to know and understand is that every single problem in American education has been solved by someone somewhere, and that many of these problems have been solved in schools where, if you didn't know anything about education, you could hardly be-

lieve it. Sometimes they're in the toughest neighborhoods; sometimes they have the most limited financial base. But with good principals, good teachers, a good culture in the school, high values, high standards, it is astonishing what I have seen in places where you wouldn't believe it.

The great trick and difficulty in American education is, and the thing that we have not solved, we have not yet figured out how we can accelerate the pace by which all schools do what works in some schools. And I think every teacher here, everyone who has ever been across the country or across the State or maybe even across the city and had experience from school to school would say that that is sort of the nagging challenge.

Part of it, of course, is that all schools are different; all kids are different; all classes are different; all circumstances are different. Part of it is that there are internal resistances to doing what the mayor is now trying to do city-wide and the Governor is now trying to do state-wide.

That's why this year, our continuing effort to promote educational excellence will be of special importance, because this year we're going to try to do something the National Government has never done before. Every 5 years, we have a great debate in Congress on how we should spend the Federal contribution to our public schools: What are the terms under which the States and the school districts get this money? It is called a reauthorization act, and we're going to have that debate this year.

This year I am going to ask the Congress, for the first time, to invest more money than ever before in our schools but to invest only in what the schools and the teachers and the parents have told us works and to stop investing in what doesn't work. [Applause] Now, I don't think we should subsidize inadequate performance; I think we should reward results. And sure enough, more people will follow the lead of schools like this one, if it happens.

Now, this may seem self-evident; you all clapped. Believe me, this will be very controversial. After all, there are some people in Congress who don't believe we have any business investing in more—more in public education, because it is a State constitutional function. And in every State most of the money is raised either at the local level or at the State level, but only nationwide about 7 percent of the money comes from

the national level. But it's a lot of money. I mean, \$15 billion—\$15 billion is not chump change. It's real money, and it can make a real difference. There's more than ever before.

Last year we got bipartisan agreement in Congress, after a big debate, to make a big down-payment on 100,000 more teachers in the early grades to help you deal with the problem of more teachers retiring as more kids come in. And the plain evidence is that smaller classes in the early grades make a special difference.

We did not pass last year—I hope we will this year—my proposal to build or modernize 5,000 schools, through the use of the tax credit. Now, we actually have—Boston is the first city with all the schools hooked up to the Internet, you heard the mayor say that. I hate to tell you this: We have some cities where the school buildings are in such bad shape they are not capable of being hooked up to the Internet. And I have been in school districts from Virginia to Florida to California where there are so many kids that the outside is littered with house trailers where they're going to school.

So this is a big challenge. There are some who don't think we should be doing that. They think that's somebody else's job. But there's an even deeper debate you will see this year about more than money. Some people argue that even though we spend \$15 billion a year on public education, the National Government has no business whatever holding the system accountable for results. They say, if we say we're going to hold districts accountable for results, that we're trying to micromanage the schools.

Nothing could be further from the truth. If I have learned one single, solitary thing in 20 years of going into schools, it is that if you have a good principal and a good attitude among the faculty and a decent relationship with the parents, you're going to have a successful school. You're doing the right things; I've learned that.

So you will not find anybody who is more reluctant to micromanage the schools than me. But keep in mind what I said—and you ask the teachers when I'm gone if this is not true—every problem in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere. The problem is we are not very good at spreading what works to all the rest of the schools in a timely and efficient manner.

Therefore, what I propose to do is to write into the law what teachers and other educators have said to me are the critical elements of

dealing with the challenges of this generation of young people, and the dramatic income and other differences we see from school district to school district, and say: If you want the money, you should do this—not should—you must do this.

This will be very controversial. But I'm telling you, I have been frustrated for 20 years in trying it the other way. We had some school districts in my State that had done things that achieved national acclaim, and I put in a bill—and I passed it—to create a pot of money to pay the expenses of educators from other school districts in my State to go to these school districts to see what was going on, and a majority of them wouldn't do it when I offered to pay their way. We should have—it wasn't because they weren't dedicated. It was just sort of, "Oh, well, you know, we do it our way. They do it their way."

And I believe that this is a very, very important debate. And I came here because I approve of what you're doing in this school, and I'm proud of it. I came here because I'm proud of what the mayor is doing. I'm proud here because of Massachusetts' historic commitment to excellence in education. I came here because your congressional delegation is as devoted to excellence in education as any in the land. That's why I'm here—to say that every place should be like this, and that we can help. And I hope you will support that.

Can you imagine any company spending \$15 billion and saying, "Here, take the money. We don't care what the results are. And come back next year, and I'll write you another check." [Laughter] I don't think any child in America should be passed from grade to grade without knowing the material. I don't think we're doing children a favor. I don't think any child should be trapped in a failing school without a strategy to turn the school around or give the kid a way out. And I believe these should be national priorities, not to tell people how to do this but to say that you must have a strategy to do it, that you implement, that produces results. You decide how to do it.

From now on, I think we should say to States and to school districts, "Identify your worst performing, least improving schools; turn them around, or shut them down." There's \$200 million in my budget to help school districts do that—\$200 million. And we can do this. I'll talk more about it in a minute; I'll give you some evidence of that.

If we fail to do it, how many kids are we going to lose to low expectations? And every one of them can learn. You know it, and I know it. If we succeed, our best years lie ahead. Their years will be America's best years.

I'll tell you, I've listened to this debate for two decades now, and half the time when I hear people say we can't do something, what they're really saying is, "Those kids are different from my kids, and I don't really believe they can learn." Well, that is not true. All of our children can learn, and I intend to see that they do.

We're working to help every city follow Boston's lead and be hooked up to the Internet by early in the next century. We're working to expand Head Start. We're working to bring more tutors to elementary schools to help work with the teachers to help make sure our kids can read. And it's very important, when their first language is not English, to give more and more help in the schools. We're working to send college students as mentors into middle schools and high schools where hardly any kids go to college, and convince all kids they can go to college.

If you look at the scholarships, the loans, the Pell grants, the tax cuts, the work-study programs that this Congress has approved in the last 4 years, there's no excuse for anybody not going to college because of the money. You can afford to go now. We have put the money out there. And every 11- and 12- and 13-year-old kid in America needs to know this. They need to know that they can make their own future.

I know that some of our America Reads tutors are working at Jackson Mann, and several AmeriCorps City Year members are working here, too. And I want to thank them. Boston University AmeriCorps, thank you. And I want to get back to the point here. Our schools are doing better all over the country. Almost all the scores are up. The math scores are up. The SAT scores are up. But we have two big challenges, and I want you to focus on them.

Number one, reading scores have hardly budged. Now, that should not surprise you, because our school population every year has a higher and higher percentage of immigrant children whose first language is not English. So it's harder just to stay in place, but it's not good enough, because these children are still going to have to go out into a world where

they'll either be able to read and learn and think and reason in this country's main language, or they won't. So we have to do better.

Something that bothers me even more is that these international comparative scores in math and science—this is fascinating—American children, a representative group by race, by income, and by reason, rank at the top of the world in the international math and science scores in the fourth grade. You know, they're always first or second or third, last couple of years. They drop to the middle by the time they're in the eighth grade. By the time they're in the 12th grade, they rank near the bottom.

Now, you can't say that the kids can't learn, otherwise, they never would have been at the top, right? So that means that we have to do some things in our system to make sure that their fast start speeds up, not slows down. There could be no more compelling evidence that our children can learn.

So in this year's budget—I'll say again—I not only want to finish hiring the 100,000 teachers, take another big step there, and fix the 5,000 schools and keep hooking up to the Internet and also give you something to find on the Internet—we're going to set up a digital library with hundreds of thousands of books that schools can access—so every school library in America, literally, within a few years, every school library in America can have 400,000 books if the digital library works.

We also want to pass this bill that says, "Okay, here's the Federal money, but here's what you have to do if you want to get it. First of all, you have to identify the worst performing, least improving schools and take responsibility for turning them around," just like the mayor is and the school people are here in Boston. Mr. Payzant is working on that. That's what you've got to do. Why is that? Because we've got to insist that the schools, no matter how difficult their circumstances, offer world-class education.

Now, under our plan, States and school districts would audit failing schools for educational weaknesses, find resources that would help, do what Ms. Zimmerman does on her own: Go out and help the mentor teachers; make sure that all the teachers have been given the best development possible; provide reading tutors if they're needed; provide other kinds of help to get more parents involved; do whatever is necessary.

Then, if after 2 years the student achievement still doesn't improve, States and districts would have to take stronger action, including permitting students to attend other schools if they and their parents want to do so; or reconstituting the school, making staff changes as appropriate; or maybe even closing the school and reopening it, completely differently constructed.

Now, this can work. Let me just give you two examples. Six years ago Houston listed 68 of its schools as low performers. Today, after much aggressive intervention and hard work, the vast majority of those are off the list, because they're getting different results, not because they're trying harder but because they changed their results.

Dade County, Florida—that's Miami—one of the most diverse school districts in America, had 45 critical, low-performing schools. They raised their math and science scores so much—math and reading scores so much now that within 2 years all 45 were off the list, just by focusing on it and by refusing to accept the proposition that just because these kids were having a tough time financially or they live in tough neighborhoods, that their schools couldn't function and they couldn't learn.

Now, this is what Boston is committed to doing, but this is what every place in America should do. And in our budget, we have \$200 million to help them do it.

We also call for ending social promotion, but we say—and I want to reiterate that—it's not the students who are failing; it's the system's failing them. So you don't want to punish the students; you want to change the system. Therefore, among other things in this budget, we call for tripling the funds available for after-school and summer school programs to help kids learn more.

In 3 years—listen to this—3 years ago, Congress appropriated \$1 million for the Federal contribution to after-school programs. Then, the year before last, it was 40; then last year it was 200. And this year I hope it's going to be 600, and we'll have a million more children in every State in this country off the streets, in the classroom, learning more and having a better future.

We also have to give more support for teachers, more support for teacher development, more support for teacher education, more understanding of what's involved here. You have 53 million people, and you're going to have a

couple of—according to Secretary Riley, a couple of million more teachers retire in the next few years.

It should not—let me just say something. One of the big reasons that the test scores go down in math and science is that the teacher shortage has been so profound that there are a huge number of our teachers in America today in our junior and senior high schools, our middle schools and high schools, teaching courses in which they didn't have a college major or even a minor, because there was no one else available to teach them.

And we have to do more to support the recruitment and the support and the continuing teacher development of those people. One of the things in this budget that I think is particularly important, even though it's not a big number, is that we have funds for 7,000 college scholarships for young people where we pay their way to college in return for their commitment to teach for 4 years in an inner-city school or some other place where there's a serious teacher shortage of trained teachers. This is a big deal. It can make a significant difference.

I also believe that all parents should get report cards on all schools. That has worked. The Boston schools are doing it. It ought to be done everywhere. People are entitled to information. Most towns in this country, you can find out more about the local restaurants than you can about the local schools, if you're a parent, unless you just go there and hang around. I mean, it's important.

And finally, interestingly enough, you know what the teachers organizations and teachers at the grassroots asked us to do, to put into this bill? They said we should say that every school district should have a reasonable, comprehensive discipline code that is actually implemented. Teachers asked for that, and I think that's important.

So again I say, look at those kids. Think about what you want America to be like in 20 years. Think about what we're going to do with this golden moment for our economy, with this first budget surplus we've had in 30 years. There's a lot of things we need to do, but nothing is more important than giving our children a world-class education—nothing. And I hope you will support it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Feb. 2 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. in the auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Argeo Paul Cellucci of Massachusetts; Mayor

Thomas M. Menino of Boston; and Joanne Collins Russell, principal, and Gail Zimmerman, teacher, Jackson Mann Elementary School.

Statement on the Death of Paul Mellon

February 2, 1999

Hillary and I are saddened by the death of Paul Mellon, one of America's most dedicated philanthropists. His generosity over a long lifetime invigorated and sustained our Nation's cultural and educational institutions. Carrying on his family's work, he donated a remarkable collection of priceless art to the National Gallery of Art, so that it could be enjoyed by future generations. He gave the Nation the Cape Hatteras National Seashore and led the restoration

of Lafayette Park, across the street from the White House. He received the National Medal of the Arts and the National Medal for the Humanities, but his true recognition comes from the millions of people whose love of art his gifts inspired. His legacy of commitment to public service is, itself, priceless. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Bunny, his children, Catherine and Timothy, and his grandchildren.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization

February 2, 1999

Dear _____:

I transmit herewith the report required under the heading "International Organizations and Programs" in title IV of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO). The attached report covers the period through December 1998.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the Emigration Policies and Trade Status of Albania

February 2, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Albania. The report indicates continued Albanian compliance with U.S. and international standards in the area of emigration. In fact, Albania has imposed no emigration restric-

tions, including exit visa requirements, on its population since 1991.

On December 5, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Albania is not in violation of paragraphs (1), (2), or (3) of subsection 402(a) of the Trade Act of 1974, or paragraphs (1), (2), or (3) of subsection 409(a)

of that act. That action allowed for the continuation of normal trade relations status for Albania and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver. This semiannual re-

port is submitted as required by law pursuant to the determination of December 5, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 2, 1999.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in New York City *February 2, 1999*

Thank you very much. If I may, with all respect to Caroline, borrow a line from President Kennedy, it looks to me like—that it is highly likely that I will increasingly be known as the person who comes with Hillary to New York. [Laughter]

I want to, first of all, say to all of you how grateful I am to Steve Grossman for the great work he has done as our chairman. Nobody wanted to be head of the Democratic Party when it was \$18 million in debt—[laughter]—but Steve Grossman, he thought it was just a minor irritant that we could do away with. And I said today—you know, Hillary came to New York today, and I went to Boston—and I'll tell you more about that in a minute; I had a great day in Boston. She said, "Now, tell me again what you're doing in Boston." I said, "Well, I'm going to go up to Boston, and we're going to canonize Steve Grossman." And she said, "Bill, don't say that. It's the wrong religion." [Laughter] So I did it anyway. I introduced him to his hometown crowd today as the first person of the Jewish faith ever to be called Saint Steven. [Laughter] And they liked it in Boston. At least, the Irish and the Italians liked it, which is a big part of the crowd. [Laughter]

We had a great day. I want to thank Len Barrack for the work he's done, and Governor Romer, all the staff folks. I want to thank Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz for being willing to serve. I want to thank Judith Hope for doing a great job here in New York. And I cannot tell you how grateful I am to Jerry Nadler, Carolyn Maloney, and Nita Lowey. They are treasures. They do a magnificent job for New York, but they stand up for what's right for America, and you should be so proud that our party is represented by people like them in the United States Congress.

I want to thank Congressman Klein and Speaker Silver and all my pals from Indiana who are here tonight. [Laughter] Joe Andrew, this is a good sign. You're going to spoil us; you know, when we go to Washington State, I'm going to be looking for the five people from Indiana. When we're in south Texas, I'll be looking for the five people from Indiana. [Laughter] We're going to open every meeting with "Back Home in Indiana." [Laughter] We'll all sing it.

You know, I could tell when Hillary was talking to you about the women with whom she met today that it touched you. But you have to know that I think that politics only works if you have certain principles and values, you have ideas about how to implement them, and then you have some sense of what the human impact of what you do is. I mean, if this doesn't make any difference to anybody's life, why did you come out here tonight? You could have eaten downstairs for less money—[laughter]—which, with all respect to the owner at this restaurant, is saying something. [Laughter] And you could have done that.

So I'm getting ready for my next life. I'm going to be the comic that closes the show—[laughter]—my standup life. I just want to tell you two stories, too, that really mean a lot to me. The other day—well, let me back up and say I believe there are two things which distinguish the two parties today on almost every issue of major significance. There may be 200, but I think there are two, for sure.

First is, what is the role of Government in making the America of our dreams in the 21st century? The first thing is, we ended the old debate that nearly wrecked this country and quadrupled the national debt and got us in a terrible hole in the 1980's, where, you know, the argument was always: Is Government the

solution, or is Government the problem? And my argument was always that Government is neither, that the role of Government is to create the conditions and get people the tools to make the most of their own lives.

The second and, I think, fundamentally even more important difference is our idea of community. Our idea of community goes way beyond just saying you believe in the same things. I think most of us, in the very fiber of our being, believe that we are all interconnected, that we are an interdependent people in an increasingly interdependent world, that when you strip away all the layers, nobody is any better than anybody else, and that we cannot find personal or family or business—economic—fulfillment without some decent concern for the ability of others to find the same. I believe that.

And I was raised with those values and had a fresh reminder involving New York City the other day, from a strange source. I have a 60-year-old cousin who runs the local HUD office, the housing project in the little town in Arkansas where I was born, and the other day she called the White House. And we've been friends—she was the best rodeo performer in Arkansas when she was 16 years old. *[Laughter]* I used to watch her barrel race and rope cows and—I mean, the calves and all that stuff; she was fabulous. And she still looks like she could do it after all these years.

But she called and said she was coming to Washington for a HUD conference and wanted to spend the night, and she spent the night. And I got up, and we had breakfast in the morning. She still gets up real early, like I used to do when I lived there. And so we were talking, and she said, "I'm really worried about something." And I said, "What is it?" She said, "Well, you know, I come from about the smallest place represented at this conference." She said, "Most of these people are from New York or Los Angeles or someplace like that." And she said, "They tell me there are 20,000 to 30,000 children a year in foster care that turn 18 and are just turned out. Their parents don't get any more money, and some of them are foster parents who can't afford to take care of them. And a lot of these kids are just on the street when they ought to be going to college." So I said, "Well, I think we're trying to do something about that, and I'll get back to you."

Four days later, Hillary did an event about part of our budget that she has been crusading

for for years, to provide funds to places like New York City to support those children, to give them a decent place to live, to give them a chance at going to college, to give them a chance to go on with their lives. Twenty thousand to thirty thousand people in a country of 260 million is not all that many. But if it's your life, it's the biggest number in the world.

And I thought to myself, my cousin, raised by the people on my mama's side of the family who had all the same values, was really worried about those kids in New York City, and I was very proud to be related to her. And I am proud to be related to all of you because I think we care about that, and I think it illustrates what our party stands for.

Now, today I went up—while Hillary was having a good time in New York, I was in Boston—*[laughter]*—having a good time at the Mann Jackson Elementary School. It's a great school, and I won't bore you with all the details, but they had the choir singing for me. And then I met with the choir afterward and a bunch of the students. And gosh, there were Irish kids and Italian kids and Jewish kids, and there were Arab-American kids, and there were Hispanic kids from a bunch of different countries, and there were Chinese kids, Japanese kids, Thai kids, kids from the Indian subcontinent, both Indians and Pakistanis. They were all there. And it was amazing. And I thought, you know, this is this bewildering kaleidoscope that is America.

So they're going to ask me all these questions, right? And they're all going to be very ethnically distinguishable. "What's your favorite food?" *[Laughter]* Chinese-American kid says, "Why do you live in such a big house? You've got more room than you need." *[Laughter]* And I said, "Well, it's not really my house. It's sort of a museum, and I live in a few rooms." And I said, "Well, why don't you just come down and see it?" "Do you like your job?" I said, "Now, I have to be honest." *[Laughter]* And I told them the truth; I said, "Every day! Even the bad days—every day."

Then there was this incredibly touching child who was quite large for his age, 9-year-old child, who was blind, who was either Indian or Pakistani; he didn't tell me, and we didn't have time to talk. And he came up, and he says, "I've got a song I learned, and I want to sing this song"—barged up to the front of the line. And I said, "Well, just sing ahead." And it was an environmental song about not polluting.

And the point I want to make to you is that what these children had that was different about them is part of what makes America interesting and will make us a more interesting country in the future. But what they had in common was self-evident and profound. And that's the other thing that means a lot to me.

So I am very glad that I had the chance to serve as President. I'm very glad that we got a chance to put the ideas that I brought to the country in 1991 and 1992 into effect. I'm glad I had incredibly gifted people like the Vice President and Hillary and so many other people on our team to make it work, not the least of whom, as all of you know, is my great Secretary of the Treasury from New York, Bob Rubin.

But what matters to me is the lives that changed. You know, if you say, "Well, we've got the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957," that's an applause line. But the real applause line is what it does to the lives of the people. You say, "We've cut the welfare rolls nearly in half." How did it change people's lives? If we have the lowest crime rate in 30 years, what difference does that make? That means a whole lot of people are walking around who wouldn't be even walking around otherwise. These are the stories, the songs of life, the texture of America.

And I would like to say, in much briefer and more, sort of, impressionistic language, the point I tried to make at the State of the Union, which is: Yes, I'm very glad for the economic record that has been amassed. And I'm glad that most of you have done very well in this economy and can do this and still send your kids to college—be here tonight. *[Laughter]* But what I would like to say is, I believe that we shouldn't be celebrating; we should be thanking the good Lord that we have this opportunity.

I mean, I think about past Presidents, past Members of Congress, past Governors, past you-name-it, people who had public responsibilities, who would have killed to have the circumstances that we have now, to have the freedom to face the long-term challenges of America.

And I believe that as a political party, we have a solemn responsibility to go out and tell the American people, "Look, if you want to give us a pat on the back for being right in 1993 and bringing the deficit down, getting the interest rates down and for being right about family leave and right about the Brady bill and right

about the crime bill, that's fine. We'd be honored to have it. But what we want you to do is to think about what, as a country, we can do with these times and this prosperity, what our responsibilities are, how many new good stories we can create out there."

And this country—even though we're doing very well, we have huge challenges. And I just—the aging of America; the children of America, who are poorer than the seniors; the continuing challenge to reconcile work and family; the difficulty of maintaining our own economic expansion when there are places in America and in this city that have not felt any of the economic recovery; and when there is such instability and uncertainty around the world about the global financial system and the global trading system, where more and more ordinary citizens, not in this country even as much as other countries, have real questions about whether they will be personally benefited if we continue to expand trade, and when we know it's the only way to keep economic growth going—these are huge questions.

How can we continue to grow the economy and seriously manage the problem of global warming? A lot of people don't think about that. I have to tell you that I am—Al Gore was showing me those carbon charts 5 or 6 years ago, but for the last 24 months, it's been my cause, too. I am sold; I am convinced this is a huge deal. And the good news is that it is obvious that the technology is there to deal with this issue and continue to grow the economy, probably at a more rapid rate, and not only for us but for countries like China and India and Pakistan and Argentina and other developing countries as well.

Now, these are huge things. So what I was trying to say in the State of the Union is, we, as Americans, have a special responsibility from which it would be easy to walk away, because we're doing fine. But it's a very dynamic world. And the women that Hillary talked to today and the kids that I spoke with today, they deserve better. They deserve better, and so do you, and so do your children and your grandchildren.

We may never have another opportunity to prove that we can find ways to put billions and billions of dollars of private capital into inner city and rural neighborhoods that haven't had any new investment in this recovery and in the process keep our own economy going.

We will never have a better time to deal with Social Security and Medicare by setting aside the lion's share of this surplus to do so or to provide for all Americans to have the opportunity to save, to invest, to create a share of wealth, something most Americans can't afford to do, even with the enormous improvement in the stock market.

And this is also for our children. I said yesterday—I want to say again, if we buy in the privately held debt and obligate the repayment of the bonds to the Social Security Trust Fund and to Medicare, we will reduce publicly—debt held by the private citizens to the lowest percentage of our economy since 1917, before World War I. In 15 years—today, when your Members of Congress vote on the budget, they'll have to set aside over 13 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes to pay interest on the debt. In 15 years, that Congress will only set aside 2 cents on the dollar, if we do this.

Can you imagine what our successors will be able to do with 11 percent of your tax money? If we have a slowdown in the economy, they'll be able to afford a tax cut. If we have a crisis in education, they'll be able to deal with it. If we need to dramatically increase our investment in medical research or if we have some new security threat, they'll have the money to invest in it, and we'll still be strong. And I could go on and on and on. That's what this is all about, and it will change the stories. It will change the future of the country.

So I ask you to keep your energy level high, to keep your sights high, to realize that rarely do a whole people get a chance to help make

the world their children and grandchildren will live in and to make it a better place. And in the process, recognizing humbly that we cannot begin to foresee everything that they will face, we will at least be giving them the tools with which to face the challenges we do not know.

That is our obligation. It is perhaps fortuitous, perhaps fated, that it occurs at the end of this century and the end of this millennium. But Hillary's theme for this occasion, "Honoring the past and imaging the future," both require us to take these steps. That's what your presence here will enable us to do.

So I ask you to leave here with confidence, I ask you to know that the President and the First Lady feel a gratitude to the people of New York, the city and the State, that is inexpressible. But the only way we know how to express that gratitude is to seize this moment, and I want you to help us do it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 p.m. at the Le Cirque Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg; Steve Grossman, national chair; Leonard Barrack, national finance chair; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair-designate; and Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair-designate; Democratic National Committee; New York State Democratic Chair Judith Hope; former Congressman Herb Klein; Sheldon Silver, speaker, New York State Assembly; Myra J. Irvin, section 8 rental assistance program manager, Hope, AR, Housing Authority; and elementary school student Gerald Mejia.

Remarks to the American Association of Retired Persons National Legislative Council

February 3, 1999

Thank you, and good morning. Thank you, Mr. Perkins—or, good afternoon. Don't tell anybody. *[Laughter]* Don't tell anybody I didn't know what time it was. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Mr. Perkins, for your memory of that; I did say that, about counting. Mr. McManus, Tess Canja, Margaret Dixon, John Rother, and Horace Deets, thank you especially

for representing the AARP so well in dealing with the White House over the last 6 years.

I was glad to be invited to come over here today. You know, it's rare that a President gets to speak to an organization of which he's a member. *[Laughter]* And as I said repeatedly a couple years ago, I had mixed feelings about that, when you called my attention to the fact that I was aging. *[Laughter]* But I don't have

mixed feelings about the record the AARP has established for 40 years, calling attention to the challenges of aging to all Americans.

Those challenges, today, are more profound than ever as we look forward to the baby boom becoming a senior boom, the number of seniors doubling by 2030. We owe it to 21st century America, to the children and the grandchildren of the baby boom, as well as to all the seniors, to meet those challenges and to meet them together.

I remember, in 1992 when I was a candidate for President, I came to your convention in San Antonio and talked about the kind of America I wanted to work with you to build, an America in which we honor our obligations to older Americans without burdening younger Americans, an America with its fiscal house in order and its future shining brightly. When I took office, we charted a new course to achieve that kind of America with fiscal discipline, more investments in our people, more trade for our goods and services around the world.

In the past 6 years, the American people have worked hard and come far. We know now that we have the longest peacetime expansion in history: nearly 18 million new jobs; wages rising at twice the rate of inflation; the highest homeownership in history; the lowest welfare rolls in history; and now, the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957. Last year, for the first time in three decades, the red ink turned to black with a \$70 billion surplus. We project one slightly larger than that this year and projecting them on out for about a generation, as we have ended the structural deficits that caused our national debt to quadruple between 1981 and 1992.

I want to thank you for your hard work over these past 6 years, for standing strong for bipartisan progress on the issues of great concern to you. Now, I ask you to stand with me and to say, we must meet the great challenges of the next century. We must use this prosperity; we must use this confidence; we must use this projected surplus to save Social Security, to strengthen Medicare, to meet the challenges of the aging of America.

In my State of the Union Address, I laid out a four-point plan to do that: saving Social Security; strengthening Medicare; providing tax relief to help Americans save for their own retirement; and a tax credit to help families with long-term care for aging, ailing, and disabled

relatives. These will help our country to honor our duties to people today and to uphold our responsibility to future generations.

On Monday I sent my new balanced budget to Congress—the first budget of the 21st century—to implement this plan. First, in the budget we dedicate the lion's share of the surplus to saving Social Security and to strengthening Medicare. Both are important, and I'd like to explain why.

I proposed that we invest 62 percent of the surplus to save Social Security, and the surplus—excuse me, for the next 15 years. I am very pleased that Members of Congress in both Houses and both parties have agreed that this is the right thing to do. As you know, I have proposed investing a small portion of the Trust Fund in the private sector, to do it in a way that any private or State government pension would do. I agree with AARP that we absolutely have to insulate any investment of the surplus from political influence. And I believe we can, just as other public pension funds do.

I was in New York last night, talking to several people there in the investment community who came up to me and said they thought I was right, and they hoped that we wouldn't let initial criticism stop us from offering a plan which would demonstrate to the American people that you could run this investment just like any other public pension investment is run. And I am confident that we can do that.

If we do this, we can earn a higher return and keep Social Security sound for 55 years. Now, all of you know that from the beginning we have measured the financial health of Social Security by asking if it will be sound for 75 years into the future. I do believe we have to take steps to strengthen Social Security for 75 years. I have looked at the options. Believe me, it's a lot easier to go from 55 to 75 than it is to go from where we are now, 2032 to 75.

I also believe we have to improve the program by reducing poverty among elderly women who are twice as likely to be poor as married couples on Social Security. I believe we should eliminate the limits on what seniors on Social Security can earn. This costs the Trust Fund some money in the short run, but over the long term it will actually strengthen the retirement systems of the country. And more importantly, it will strengthen the quality of life of people in their later years.

Now, doing these things will require some difficult choices, but they are clearly achievable. You know basically what the range of options is, and I know what it is, as well. To make them, it is clear what we have to do. We have got to work together across party lines to make these decisions. We have to work together across generational lines to make these decisions. But think of how we'll feel if we have Social Security secure for 75 years, if we lift the earnings limit, and if we do something to reduce the deeply troubling rate of poverty among single elderly women, who are growing in numbers at a very rapid rate.

I have told the American people and Members of Congress in both Houses of both parties—I've met with dozens of them, literally—that I am ready to make these choices and to make them with them, and it is time to get on with the job. Now, I feel pretty good about where we are with that, because of the initial positive support for setting aside the surplus portion for Social Security. I wanted to come here today to tell you what I said in the Union I was very serious about—I do not think it is enough. We all know that Medicare is going to have financial trouble well before Social Security does, unless we do something about it.

Now, if you look at—where is my chart? There it is. [*Laughter*] What I propose is to take 62 percent of the surplus, which you see there for Social Security—maybe I'll bring it up a little closer. [*Laughter*] You may be able to see it just fine, but I can see better from here. [*Laughter*] And then to take 15 percent, about a little less than \$1 in every \$6 of the surplus, and commit it to Medicare.

Now, some of those who agree with us on Social Security do not agree that we should do this. They would use the entire rest of the surplus for tax cuts. I believe we can only meet our responsibility to the future by saving Social Security and Medicare. Now, President Kennedy, who first proposed Medicare, once said, "To govern is to choose." And so we should have a great national debate about the choices involved in managing this surplus. After all, we haven't had one in 30 years, and it's a little unusual for us.

Yesterday we learned of a proposal that would make a very different choice about what to do with the surplus. The plan would spend well over \$1 trillion over the next 15 years on a tax proposal that would benefit clearly the

wealthiest Americans—who have, I might add, done quite well as the stock market has virtually tripled in the last 6 years. I'm happy about that; we should all be. But we ought to look at this proposal against that background. It would do this before Medicare has been secured and in a way that would prevent us from spending 15 percent of this or investing 15 percent of this surplus in Medicare.

Now, to govern is to choose. I believe that's the wrong choice. I believe this is the right choice. You, the American people, and the United States Congress will have to decide.

This is the latest in a rather long series of large and risky tax proposals that we have heard over the years. If we had adopted even one of the large ones, we wouldn't have the surplus we enjoy today. We cannot return to the old policies of deficit and debt. Quite apart from our obligations to deal with the aging of America, the strength of our economy is premised on our demonstrated discipline and driving down profligate deficit spending, driving down interest rates, getting private investment up, generating opportunities for the American people.

I believe the American people should have tax relief. In a few moments I'll talk a little bit about what I think the best way to do that is. I believe there are things we can and we must do to help families. And I believe our targeted tax cut for the USA account is especially important. I'll say more about it in a moment.

But first of all, anyone who hopes to invest the surplus or to spend it on other programs or to spend it with a tax cut, must first tell America's families: What is your plan to preserve and strengthen Medicare in the 21st century? I was always taught from childhood, as most of you were, that you may want to do a lot of things, but you have to do first things first. To me, Social Security and Medicare, with their looming financial challenges, are the first things, and we have to take care of them first.

I want to work with you to strengthen Medicare. I want to work with the results of the Medicare Commission that Senator Breaux is chairing. In the bipartisan balanced budget we reached in 1997, we extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by 10 years. But no one seriously believes this is adequate, particularly with more and more people qualifying for Medicare.

To stabilize Medicare, we should extend its life until 2020. To truly strengthen Medicare for the long term, we will have to take further steps. That means committing a percentage of the surplus to the Trust Fund. It also means committing ourselves to meaningful reforms that will meet the demands of the 21st century.

I am frank to tell you that some people have said, "Well, the President, by committing this amount of money from the surplus to Medicare, to the Trust Fund, is trying to convince people that we can just go on forever without making any changes in Medicare." That is simply not true, and I don't want to pretend that that's true. But neither do I believe we should be in the position of making reforms or changes that we might later regret, simply because we haven't stabilized the Trust Fund when we have the funds to do it. These funds should support meaningful reform and prevent permanent damage to Medicare and to the people who depend upon it and are entitled to rely on it.

So here's what I think we should do, with regard to at least basic principles, as we look forward to the 21st century Medicare program. Did they change the chart? Good. *[Laughter]*

First, Americans should be able to count on Medicare and know it will be there when they need it. I have proposed to use, as I said, about one of every \$6 in the surplus for the next 15 years to just simply guarantee the soundness of the Medicare fund until the year 2020. Without these new resources, Medicare spending would have to plummet significantly below the private sector average. No one believes we can have that happen without seriously weakening a program that millions of older Americans need.

Second, Americans on Medicare should be able to count on a modern, competitive system that maintains high-quality care and top-notch service by drawing on the best private sector practices.

Third, Americans on Medicare, especially Americans with lower incomes, should be able to count on a defined set of benefits and protections without having to worry about excessive new costs they can't begin to afford.

Fourth, Americans on Medicare should be able to count on a benefit that many have long waited for and that will actually cut our cost over the long run and lengthen life and lengthen the quality of life: prescription drugs.

Now, I believe we ought to use the savings that reforms in Medicare can create to provide this prescription drug benefit. Yes, it will be more costly on the front end, but over the long run it is bound to save money. It will keep people out of the hospital. It will keep people away from more expensive medical procedures. It will lengthen life, and it will lengthen the quality of life.

I want to thank especially Senators Kennedy and Rockefeller for their leadership on this issue. I look forward to working with members of both parties. But keep in mind, within these principles, my view of Medicare is: Take 15 percent of the surplus; make sensible reforms; add the prescription drug benefit. All three will be required to truly strengthen Medicare for the 21st century.

Now, as I said before, we know the American people have worked very hard to replace the era of budget deficits with an age of budget surpluses. They deserve to benefit from that, and they deserve some tax relief. The real question is: What kind of tax relief and how much should it be? What are the other competing demands for the country? Again, to govern will be to choose.

I think we should use a percentage of the surplus to give Americans tax relief that strengthens working families, that encourages savings and the sharing of our Nation's wealth among a broader range of Americans. And that is why I have proposed that we set aside—we're back to the chart now—12 percent of the surplus or, over 15 years, \$536 billion, to establish USA accounts, Universal Savings Accounts, that give working Americans a chance to save for the future. These accounts would basically involve the Government giving a tax credit that would be a cash match for a certain amount of savings by Americans who save, with extra help for Americans who are lower income working families who have less ability to save on their own.

Now, all of you know that when Social Security was set up, it was never viewed as the sole source of income, ideally, for retirees. Although, unfortunately, it still is the sole source of income for a large number of people. We need a country in which we have a sound Social Security system, a sound set of pension options—and all of you know how the pension marketplace has been changing, from defined benefits to defined contributions—and we need,

thirdly, a vehicle which promotes more private savings.

The USA account is designed to give tax relief—which, I might add, would be considerably greater tax relief for middle income families than most of the other proposals I've heard that cost a lot more money—but tax relief in the form that actually promotes personal savings, more secure retirement, and gives people who otherwise would not have it a chance to have a savings account which would give them the opportunity to hook into the creation of wealth in America and to own a part of America's wealth-creating enterprise. I think it's very, very important.

I have also proposed \$1,000 tax credit to help pay for the long-term care needs of families who are caring for aged, ailing, or disabled family members. We know that long-term care needs will increase. Frankly, I would like this tax credit to be even larger. But I believe if we start now, within our other obligations to fix Social Security and Medicare and the other competing claims and responsibilities of the Government, I believe that this will become an integral part of the way we manage long-term care and will be a strong part of a bipartisan American consensus for how we should support long-term care over the long run. So I very much hope that will pass.

For middle income families I have also supported tax relief for child care, for work-related expenses for disabled Americans, for further tax relief from the interest payments on student loans, and tax relief to businesses which help their employees start retirement programs. We've worked very hard for 6 years to stabilize the existing retirement systems and to facilitate the establishment of retirement programs by more small- and medium-sized businesses for whom the old laws were quite a hassle and a lot of trouble and actually a lot of startup costs, so we're working very hard on that.

Now, this is the kind of tax relief that I think is good for the country. I have proposed tax relief to individuals and corporations who will invest money in areas of high unemployment in America, in inner cities and rural areas, to bring private enterprise to create jobs and to generate more national growth and more national wealth.

This is the first time, at least in 30 years, when we've had a level of prosperity and the resources necessary to actually get free enter-

prise into the inner-city and rural areas that still have been left behind by the economic expansion. And I hope you will all support that, because, keep in mind, that helps the whole economy. We have to keep finding new ways to grow this economy, even with a low unemployment rate, that doesn't spark inflation. And this is clearly the best way we can.

Now, I think this tax relief is good for America. We can afford it. It is all paid for, all this tax relief I mentioned. Except for the USA accounts, every other bit of this tax relief I mentioned is paid for in the balanced budget. It has nothing to do with this surplus. It will not have anything to do with undermining our fiscal strength.

I simply think we have to use the surplus in a way that honors our most profound responsibilities to our parents, to our children, to our grandchildren. And I think that we cannot waste a penny of it until we have saved Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century.

As I pointed out in the State of the Union Address, there is another enormous benefit that will come from saving the surplus in this way. It will enable us to buy back a lot of the national debt held by the public. And that is very important. Why? In 1981 our total national debt amounted to about 26 percent of our annual income. In 1992 it had quadrupled in dollars, and it was about half our national income. When I got the budget charts, it was projected to go as high as 75 or 80 percent of our national income, a very dangerous situation.

Now, the national debt has dropped from 50 percent down to 44 percent of our income, but if—if—we save the money I recommend for Social Security and for Medicare for 15 years, our national debt will drop to 7 percent of our national income. That's the lowest level since 1917, before the United States entered World War I.

Now, what does that mean in practical terms to an average family? It means that we will have lower interest rates, lower home mortgage rates, lower car payment rates, more investment, a dramatic increase in national savings, and more economic growth.

It also means that as we have all the financial instability you see around the world—and I want to make it clear that the financial instability, for example, we saw in Asia came primarily not

out of irresponsible Government spending policies—a lot of those people had balanced budgets—but there was just turmoil in the financial markets because of banking systems and investment patterns. That undermines our ability to grow, when our trading partners get in trouble. We need to know that we have some insurance against that sort of trouble here at home, so we can keep plugging ahead, even as we try to help our friends around the world get back on their feet and start growing again. So this is an enormous insurance policy.

The last thing I want to tell you is this: You can be thinking about what your successors around this table will be debating 15 years from now. Today, when we draw up a budget, the first thing we have to do is take interest payments on the debt off the table. Right? Some of you may own that debt; you may have Government bonds. We've got to pay you before we can do anything.

Today, that takes over 13 cents of every single tax dollar. Fifteen years from now, if we do this, it will take 2 cents of every tax dollar. Once we secure Social Security and Medicare, think what you could do with the difference in tax cuts, or investments in education, or what-

ever you think it ought to be spent on. This is a very important issue.

So, 7 years ago, I said to you that if we worked together we could leave our children a nation that is stronger, freer, and wealthier than the one we inherited. Today, we actually have the chance to do this. Today, we have a chance to deal with the aging of America, a challenge facing every advanced society on Earth, in a way that is dignified, that has genuine integrity, that will strengthen not only the lives of seniors but will strengthen the lives of their children and grandchildren. It is an enormous opportunity and an enormous responsibility. I ask you to join with me to make sure that our country meets that responsibility.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. at the Willard Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph Perkins, president, John McManus, national legislative council chair, Ester Canja, president-elect, Margaret Dixon, past president, John Rother, legislation and public policy director, and Horace B. Deets, executive director, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Statement on Representative Richard A. Gephardt's Decision Not To Seek the Presidential Nomination

February 3, 1999

Democratic Leader Gephardt and I had a good meeting this morning. He and I discussed his decision, and I feel he made the choice for the right reasons. I am pleased he will continue to focus on an agenda that will strengthen our Nation for the 21st century: saving Social Security and Medicare, strengthening public education, maintaining a strong economy, passing a Patients' Bill of Rights.

Dick has been a key ally for the past 6 years, and I know he will continue to be for the next

2. His leadership has been central to so many of the successes the Nation has enjoyed these past 6 years: from the 1993 economic plan to family and medical leave to expanding health care coverage and raising the minimum wage.

Finally, on a personal level, Hillary and I value Dick and Jane's friendship and look forward to Dick's continued leadership.

Feb. 3 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement on People Magazine's Decision To Print a Cover Story Featuring Chelsea Clinton *February 3, 1999*

We deeply regret and are profoundly saddened by the decision of People magazine to print a cover story featuring our daughter, Chelsea. For over 6 years, the media has understood and respected the unique situation facing Chelsea as she grows up in the spot light focused on her parents. Other than at public situations where she is an integral part of our family, Chelsea has not taken on a public role. We have been very grateful for the media's restraint in allowing Chelsea the privacy that any young person needs and deserves.

Unfortunately, despite personal appeals with respect to her privacy and her security from her parents, People magazine has chosen to run the story. We can only hope that the media will continue its policy of restraint with respect to our daughter.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a statement by the President and the First Lady.

Statement on Action Against Invasive Species *February 3, 1999*

Today I am signing an Executive order directing Federal agencies to expand and coordinate their efforts to combat a serious environmental threat: the introduction and spread of plants and animals not native to the United States.

Many Americans are all too familiar with gypsy moths and other non-native insects that devour our gardens and trees. Few realize, however, that countless other non-native plants and animals are upsetting nature's balance, squeezing out native species, causing severe economic damage, and transforming our landscape. Those affected range from western ranchers plagued by a weed called leafy spurge to Chicago homeowners whose stately maple trees have fallen prey to the Asian long-horned beetle. Some ex-

perts estimate the cost to the American economy to be as high as \$123 billion a year.

The Executive order mobilizes the Federal Government to defend against these aggressive predators and pests. Led by the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce, Federal agencies will work together to prevent the introduction of non-native species and control those already here. My fiscal year 2000 budget proposes an additional \$29 million to support these efforts, and I urge Congress to join us in protecting our economy and our natural heritage against the threat of non-native species.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for the "Marching Toward Justice" Exhibit *February 3, 1999*

Thank you very much. Judge Keith, it's good to be in your presence again. Mrs. Marshall; Rosa Parks; Mr. Hill, I'm honored to be in

your presence, sir. President Swygert, President Reid, Mr. Mecham; to Congressman Clyburn and members of the Congressional Black Caucus

and any other Members of Congress who may be here; Mr. Holder, Mr. Lee, and Justice Department officials who are here; to all the members of the White House staff, but especially Thurgood Marshall, Jr. I thank you for permitting me to be a small part of this momentous day.

"We are all created equal," the simplest, most powerful idea about human beings ever articulated. Our history is largely the story of Americans of courage and vision who have stepped forward, often at risk to their lives, to lead us in our ongoing march toward justice and equality. I thank you for chronicling their journey in this exhibit.

Perhaps no one in this century did more to open the doors to "the glorious temple of American liberty" than the man we honor and remember tonight, Justice Thurgood Marshall. You honor with this exhibit the courage of a man who traveled to towns of the segregated South, places where he couldn't find a bite to eat when he was hungry, a bed to rest when he was tired, a police officer's protection when he was threatened. He did all that to argue that we are all created equal.

We honor the genius of a man who masterminded a strategy to dismantle Jim Crow, case by case, trial by trial, decision by decision, from Baltimore to Topeka to Little Rock to the United States Supreme Court.

The 14th amendment, with its promise of equal protection under law, was Thurgood Marshall's sword and shield. It was pretty moribund when he began to work on it, but he breathed life into it and transformed it into a living charter of freedom. The legacy of the 14th amendment—the legacy of Justice Marshall, the legacy of his mentor, Charles Houston, his colleagues such as Wiley Branton and Jack Greenberg and Oliver Hill, the legacy of others we have lost,

like that great lion, Leon Higginbotham, our friend—that legacy can be seen every day, everywhere in America, in classrooms, in libraries, in restaurants, and in the lives and careers of so many of the men and women standing here tonight.

Because the road to freedom and justice is long and never ends, we can honor Thurgood Marshall best not only with grand buildings and museum exhibits but with great vision and vigorous action, to make equality ever more real and discrimination that some day will be something that can only be found in museum exhibits. No one should be denied a home or a job, a world-class education or equal pay for equal work or, indeed, any part of the American dream, because of race or disability or gender or sexual orientation or religion.

During some of the darkest days of Jim Crow, a single phrase whispered in African-American communities all across the South would give hope to millions: "Thurgood is coming." Today, at the dawn of a new century, it is up to each and every one of us to ensure that Thurgood is still coming.

So let us pick up his sword and his shield and fight for that more perfect Union, that one America that was his great and lasting gift to all of us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:15 p.m. in the atrium at the Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building. In his remarks, he referred to Judge Damon J. Keith, U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit; Justice Marshall's widow, Cecilia Marshall; Rosa Parks, civil rights activist; Oliver White Hill, attorney who worked with Justice Marshall at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund; H. Patrick Swygert, president, Howard University; and Irvin D. Reid, president, Wayne State University.

Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast

February 4, 1999

Thank you very much, Steve. Distinguished head table guests; to the leaders from around the world who are here; the Members of Congress, Mr. Speaker and others; ladies and gentlemen.

You know, I feel exactly the way I did the first time I ever gave a speech as a public official to the Pine Bluff Rotary Club officers installation banquet in January of 1977. The dinner started at 6:30. There were 500 people there.

All but three were introduced; they went home mad. [Laughter] We'd been there since 6:30; I was introduced at a quarter 'til 10. The guy that introduced me was so nervous he didn't know what to do and, so help me, the first words out of his mouth were, "You know, we could stop here and have had a very nice evening." [Laughter] He didn't mean it the way it sounded, but I do mean it. We could stop here and have had a very wonderful breakfast. You were magnificent, Max. Thank you very much.

I did want to assure you that one of the things that has been said here today, repeatedly, is absolutely true. Senator Hutchison was talking about when we come here, we set party aside, and there is absolutely no politics in this. I can tell you that is absolutely so. I have had a terrific relationship with Steve Largent, and he has yet to vote with me the first time. [Laughter] So I know there is no politics in the prayer breakfast. [Laughter]

We come here every year—Hillary and I were staying up kind of late last night talking about what we should say today, who would be here. I think, especially in light of what Max Lucado has just said, I would like to ask you to think about what he said in terms of the world we live in, for it is easier to talk about than to do, this idea of making peace with those who are different from us.

We have certain signs of hope, of course. Last Good Friday, in Northern Ireland, the Irish Protestants and the Irish Catholics set aside literally centuries of distrust and chose peace for their children. Last October, at the Wye Plantation in Maryland, Chairman Arafat, Abu Mazen, and the Palestinian delegation, and Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Israeli delegation went through literally sleepless nights to try to save the peace process in the Middle East and put it back on track. Throughout this year, our allies and we have worked to deepen the peace of Bosnia—and we're delighted to have the leader of the Republika Srpska here today—and we're working today to avoid a new catastrophe in Kosovo, with some hopeful signs.

We also have worked to guarantee religious freedom to those who disagree with all of us in this room, recognizing that so much of the trouble in the world is rooted in what we believe are the instructions we get from God to do things to people who are different from us. And we think the only answer is to promote religious

freedom at home and around the world. I want to thank all of you who helped us to pass the Religious Freedom Act of 1998. I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to Dr. Robert Seiple, the former head of World Vision, who is here with us today, who is now America's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. Later this month I have to appoint three members to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom; the Congress has already nominated its members. We know that's a part of it. But respectfully, I would suggest it's not enough.

As we pray for peace, as we listen to what Max said, we say, "Well, of course, it is God's will." But the truth is, throughout history people have prayed to God to aid them in war. People have claimed repeatedly that it was God's will that they prevail in conflict. Christians have done it at least since the time of the Crusades. Jews have done it since the times of the Old Testament. Muslims have done it from the time of the Essene down to the present day. No faith is blameless in saying that they have taken up arms against others of other faiths, other races, because it was God's will that they do so. And nearly everybody would agree that from time to time that happens, over the long course of history. I do believe that even though Adolf Hitler preached a perverted form of Christianity, God did not want him to prevail. But I also know that when we take up arms or words against one another, we must be very careful in invoking the name of our Lord.

Abraham Lincoln once said that in the great Civil War, neither side wanted war, and both sides prayed to the same God. But one side would make war, rather than stay in the Union, and the other side would accept war, rather than let it be rent asunder. So the war came. In other words, our great President understood that the Almighty has His own designs, and all we can do is pray to know God's will.

What's that got to do with us? Martin Luther King once said we had to be careful taking vengeance in the name of God, because the old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind.

And so, today, in the spirit in which we have truly been ministered to today, I ask you to pray for peace in the Middle East; in Bosnia and Kosovo; in Northern Ireland, where there are new difficulties. I ask you to pray that the young leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea will find

a way to avoid war. I ask you to pray for a resolution of the conflicts between India and Pakistan. I ask you to pray for the success of the peace process in Colombia, for the agreement made by the leaders of Ecuador and Peru, for the ongoing struggles to make the peace process work in Guatemala. I ask you to pray for peace.

I ask you to pray for the peacemakers: for the Prime Minister of Albania, who is here, for the Prime Minister of Macedonia. Their region is deeply troubled. I ask you to pray for Chairman Arafat and the Palestinians; for the Government of Israel; for Mrs. Leah Rabin and her children, who are here, for the awful price they have paid in the loss of Prime Minister Rabin for the cause of peace. I ask you to pray for our King Hussein, a wonderful human being, a champion of peace who, I promise you today, is fighting for his life mostly—mostly—so he can continue to fight for peace.

And finally, I ask you to pray for all of us, including yourself, to pray that our purpose truly will reflect God's will, to pray that we can all be purged of the temptation to pretend that our willfulness is somehow equal to God's will, to remember that all the great peacemakers in the world, in the end, have to let go and walk away, like Christ, not from apparent but from genuine grievances.

If Nelson Mandela can walk away from 28 years of oppression in a little prison cell, we can walk away from whatever is bothering us. If Leah Rabin and her family can continue their struggle for peace after the Prime Minister's assassination, then we can continue to believe in our better selves.

I remember on September 19th, 1993, when the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority gathered in Washington to sign the peace accord, the great question arose about whether, in front of a billion people on international television, for the very first time, Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Rabin would shake hands. Now, this may seem like a little thing to you, but Yitzhak Rabin and I were sitting in my office talking, and he said, "You know, Mr. President, I have been fighting this man for 30 years. I have buried a lot of people. This is difficult." And I started to make an argument, and before I could say anything, he said, "But you do not make peace with your friends." And so the handshake occurred that was seen around the world.

Then, a little while afterward—some time passed—they came back to Washington, and they were going to sign these agreements about what the details were of handing over Gaza and parts of the West Bank. And the two of them had to sign, on this second signing, three copies of these huge maps, books of maps. There were 27 maps—you remember—27 maps. There were literally thousands of markings on these maps, on each page—what would happen at every little crossroad, who would be in charge, who would do this, who would do that, who would do the other thing. And right before the ceremony there was a hitch, and some jurisdictional issue was not resolved. And everybody was going around in a tizzy. And I opened the door to the little back room where the Vice President and I have lunch once a week, and I said to these two people, who shook hands for the first time not so long ago, "Why don't you guys go in this room and work this out. This is not a big deal." Thirty minutes later they came out. No one else was in there. They worked it out. They signed the copies 3 times, 27 pieces each, each page they were signing. And it was over.

You do not make peace with your friends, but friendship can come with time and trust and humility when we do not pretend that our willfulness is an expression of God's will.

I do not know how to put this into words. A friend of mine last week sent me a little story out of Mother Teresa's life, when she said she was asked, "When you pray, what do you say to God?" And she said, "I don't say anything. I listen." And then she was asked, "Well when you listen, what does God say to you?" And she said, "He doesn't say anything, either. He listens." [*Laughter*]

In another way, St. Paul said the same thing: "We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit, Himself, intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words."

So I ask you to reflect on all we have seen and heard and felt today. I ask you to pray for peace, for the peacemakers, and for peace within each of our hearts—in silence.

Amen.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:26 a.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Steve Largent, master of ceremonies; Rev. Max Lucado, pastor, Oak Hills Church of Christ, San Antonio, TX; Yasser Arafat, Chairman, and

Abu Mazen, Secretary General of the Executive Committee, Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Prime Minister Milorad Dodik of the Republika Srpska; Prime Minister Pandeli Majko of Albania; Prime Min-

ister Ljubco Georgievski of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Leah Rabin, widow of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel; and King Hussein I of Jordan.

Remarks on Presenting the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards February 4, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. I must say I always love coming to this; this is the fifth time I have participated in the Baldrige Awards in the 6 years I have—this is the seventh year of my Presidency—I’ve done this five times. And I like it because this group is always so restrained, laid back, unexpressive, you know. [Laughter] Amazing.

I want to thank Secretary Daley for his truly outstanding service. And this is the first time he’s told me he intended to stay the whole 2 years; I appreciate that. [Laughter]

I want to thank Roger Ackerman, who is genuinely devoted to the Baldrige Awards. And I thank all of those who are responsible for the program. We’re glad to have Tish Baldrige here today. I thank Barry Rogstad, Bob Jones, Ernie Deavenport. I thank the National Institute for Standards and Technology.

I want to also thank my Adviser for Science and Technology, Dr. Neal Lane, who is here; and Congressman Jay Inslee from Washington State, who came to wave the flag for Boeing. And I congratulate Boeing Airlift and Tanker, Solar Turbines, and Caterpillar and Texas Nameplate, all of you, for your great recognition today.

Kosovo

Let me say to all of you—I have to ask your indulgence for a moment. This is the only opportunity I will have to be before the press for the rest of the day, and I know that you have been following the events in the Balkans and Kosovo and the work we’re doing there to try to promote peace and avert another ethnic slaughter in the former Yugoslavia. And Secretary Albright’s going to say something about this later today, but I need to take just a minute or two to speak not only to you but through you, to the American people about this subject.

We have worked for years to restore peace in the former Yugoslavia. Three years ago—I am very proud of the role the United States played in ending the war in Bosnia with our NATO allies, with Russia, and other allies—we sent 28,000 troops to that country, then. There are fewer than 7,000 today, and we are continuing our drawdown. But the peace process has taken hold.

I just came from the annual Presidential Prayer Breakfast that Congress sponsors, something I never thought I’d live long enough to see: the Prime Minister of the Serbian Republic within Bosnia—you know, there’s a Serbian Republic, and then there is the other republic, which is basically made up of the Croats and the Muslims—the head of the Serbian Republic came to the Prayer Breakfast and looked at me, after all the battles we’ve fought, and he said, “You know, we wouldn’t be at peace today if it weren’t for the United States.” And it could have—[applause].

But I would like to say to all of you, to the American people, what I said to the American people 3 years ago. The Balkans are an explosive area. They touch other difficult areas. And unless we can contain and ultimately defuse the ethnic hatreds in that region, they could embroil us, ultimately, in a much larger conflict with much more human loss.

Now, the biggest remaining danger to our objective of peace and stability in Europe has been the fighting in Kosovo. Unlike Bosnia, Kosovo is actually still legally a part of Serbia. But it is supposed to be autonomous under their law. Interestingly enough, Kosovo, which is primarily made of Albanian natives, is where the fighting in the former Yugoslavia began over a decade ago. We have an interest in seeing that that is where it ends.

If it continues, almost certainly it will draw in the neighboring countries of Albania and Macedonia. Both of their Prime Ministers came here today to meet with me and urge me to have the United States help to stop this war. It could potentially involve our NATO allies Greece and Turkey. It could spark tensions again in Bosnia and undo what we just spent 3 years trying to do.

Certainly, if this conflict continues we'll see another massive humanitarian crisis; there will be more atrocities, more refugees crossing borders, more people crying out for justice, and more people seeking revenge.

Our experience in the Balkans, and specifically in Bosnia, which all of you will remember, teaches us a sobering lesson: Where you have these smoldering ethnic hatreds, where you know they can get out of hand and destabilize millions and millions of other people, violence begets violence. If you don't oppose the violence, it just gets worse and worse and worse, until finally you do oppose it at a much, much higher price, under more dangerous conditions. Therefore, the time to stop this conflict in Kosovo is now, before it spreads, and when it can be contained at an acceptable cost.

We have agreed with our allies on a strategy that we believe can bring peace and to back that strategy with the threat of force by NATO. If a settlement—and it's a big if—if a settlement is reached, a NATO presence on the ground in Kosovo could prove essential in giving both sides the confidence they need to pull back from their fights. If that happens, we are seriously considering the possibility of our participation in such a force. We are discussing it now with Congress and our allies. No decision has been reached.

Our willingness to contribute troops will depend upon a number of things, and I'd like to outline them:

Number one, a strong and effective peace agreement: If both parties haven't committed to stop killing each other, there's no point in our sending Americans and other NATO forces and other allied forces into a situation where we can't succeed.

Number two, the parties must demonstrate a commitment to implementing the agreement and to cooperating with NATO and any other people who go in with us.

Number three, we have to have a permissive security environment, with the withdrawal of

enough Serbian security forces and an agreement restricting the weapons of the Kosovar paramilitaries.

And finally, we have to have a well-defined NATO mission with a clear exit strategy. Our European allies and partners will have to contribute a substantial majority of the troops. But NATO is a partnership, and they have a right to expect the United States, which has been the leader of NATO for 50 years now, to be a part of that. For now, we don't have to reach that question because the peace talks will begin on Saturday in France.

I would like to give a message, I believe, on behalf of all Americans, to both sides. For the Kosovar Albanians, I'd like to say that this is a chance not just to stop your people from getting killed but take control of your destiny, where your rights, your faith, and your culture are respected and you have the autonomy you have been promised by law.

For the Serbs, this is a chance to prove Kosovo can remain part of your country while regaining its autonomy and peace. For the people of both communities, this is a chance to stop wasting your energies and your lives on a useless war and to start conserving them for building a more open and prosperous future for your children. I hope that the people will take this chance. The United States will do what we can to support them.

Thank you very much.

Baldrige Awards

I do love the Baldrige Awards. I love it when all the employees are up there cheering. I think people ought to like what they do. Do you ever think about how many fewer problems we'd have in this country if everybody was happy at work every day? *[Laughter]* You laugh, but you think about it. How would you feel if you came here and you didn't feel like waving those handkerchiefs?

You know, it's a great joy for me and for Secretary Daley—he alluded to this—to have had the opportunity to serve our country at a time when we got out of debt and we went into surpluses and we drove interest rates down and we had all this new investment and all these new jobs. And now we've got the longest peacetime expansion in history and the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957 and the lowest minority unemployment rate among African-Americans and Hispanics ever recorded,

since we started doing that in '72, and wages rising at twice the rate of inflation and the highest homeownership in history, and for the first time, even in our cities, there are more homeowners than renters—never happened before.

It's wonderful for us to have been a part of that. But we know that what we in Government do is to create the conditions in which all of you create those jobs and create that economic activity. In fact, one of the things that I'm proudest of is that the Government's share of this economic expansion has been lower than any previous one since World War II. We have a smaller Federal Government than we've had at any time since President Kennedy was here. And I see every day fresh evidence that it is not only the changes in the direction of the Government, it has been changes in the direction of American business that has brought America back.

Boeing Airlift and Tanker, Texas Nameplate, Solar Turbines, you're showing the world that you can enhance competitiveness and make companies better places to work. You're showing the world that you can be good at what you do and happy while you do it. The employees are true stakeholders in the progress, not only of their companies but of our country, with new ideas and sharing in results.

I was particularly impressed to hear about how the winning companies helped employees enhance their skills, because that is a particular obsession of mine—that many have provided on-site GED and English-as-a-second-language classes, reimbursed for college in advanced degrees, even paid for books. We have worked very hard to create a system in America of lifetime learning, but companies have to be a big part of it.

I'd also like to thank one of our honorees, Dale Crownover for going back to college at the age of 42 to get his degree and setting a good example for his employees.

Now, as I said, you have brought America back, you and companies like you. When the Baldrige Awards started, our country was having difficulty in the international marketplace, and the vision of the Baldrige Awards was to show that there were American companies who were operating at world-class levels, and they ought to be honored, and then they ought to be emulated. And I think that you can take a great deal of pride in knowing that both those things have happened.

I heard a remarkable statistic—I hope it's true, because I'm fixing to say it. [Laughter] Normally, when somebody digs up a fact for me, it's so. Listen to this: Stock in companies that have won Baldrige Awards has surged at nearly 3 times the pace of the S&P 500 as a whole.

Now, when you consider the fact that the stock market has nearly tripled since January of '93, the fact that the stock in the companies winning the Baldrige Award has gone up 3 times faster than the S&P index, I think that's pretty darned impressive. And it shows you that if we can—one of the things that I hope always comes out of these Baldrige Awards, I hope that they'll be in business publications and in newspapers and on television stations all over America, and I keep hoping that all of you get hit on, then, all year long, after you get off this stage, from people wanting to know how you did what, because I hope that everybody will be out there trying to follow your lead and figure out how to do better, as you have done.

Because in spite of the fact that we have the lowest unemployment rate in peacetime since Boeing introduced the 707 in 1957, we know that the world is changing rapidly. And as every businessperson knows, once you slow down, the competition catches up. So this is not a time for America, with its prosperity, to slow down. It's a time to bear down and look at the long-term challenges facing us in the 21st century.

I would just like to briefly mention three points. Our economic success as a nation has come from a commitment to fiscal discipline, investing in our people, and expanding our markets. And I believe we have a great deal more to do in all areas. And let me just briefly say, in the State of the Union Address, I made what I expect to be an increasingly controversial proposal. I said, "We've got the first surplus in 30 years now. We project that we will average big surpluses over the next 25 years. I recommend that for 15 of those 25 years, we actually save almost 80 percent of the surplus and save it because when the baby boomers become the senior boom when we all retire, there will only be about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security."

Audience member. [Inaudible] [Laughter]

The President. And—did you laugh at me or what you said? [Laughter] Listen, as one of

them, I don't think it's too funny, myself. [Laughter]

And the Social Security payroll tax will not be sufficient to cover Social Security payments by 2013. By 2032, the Trust Fund will run out of money. Meanwhile, we're all living longer and depending more on sophisticated technology, so Medicare is projected to not cover its costs by 2010.

Now, I believe we can debate within the Congress, within the Democrats and Republicans, exactly how we're going to fix Medicare and how we're going to fix Social Security, but I know one thing: You're not going to fix big, sweeping demographic changes like this without some money. And so what I propose to do is to save this portion of the surplus, about a little over 60 percent for Social Security, 15 percent for Medicare for 15 years, and while we're doing it, to buy back the public debt with the money we're saving, because we don't need to spend it right now.

Now, if we do that, we will not only be able to save Social Security and Medicare in a way that will prevent the baby boomers from putting an impossible burden on our children and our grandchildren, which I can tell you as the oldest of the baby boomers is something that my generation constantly worries about, that when we all retire the cost of our retirement will be too burdensome on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. It will not only do that. It will enable us to pay down our debt.

Now, if anybody had ever told you 5 or 6 years ago we'd even have a conversation about paying down the debt, you'd probably thought they had slipped a gasket. But I'd like to tell you why it's important. We just presented a budget to Congress. Before we do anything with that budget, we have to pay interest on the national debt. The national debt quadrupled between 1981 and 1993. When I took office, it was taking over 14 cents of every dollar just to pay interest. Every time you pay a dollar in tax to the Federal Government, before we can spend it on the United States military—including the Army Band who were magnificent today—before we can spend it on education, before we can spend it on the environment, before we can spend it on health care, before we can spend it on a tax cut, before we can do anything with it, we had to take over 14 cents on the dollar and pay interest on the debt. And they told me, my economists, that it

wouldn't be anytime until we'd be up to over 20 cents on the tax dollar in interest.

Now, if you save this much money for 15 years, it will take our public debt from 50 percent, where it was when I took office, of our annual income, down to 7 percent of our annual income. It will be the lowest it's been since 1917, just before we entered World War I. And it will take debt service down to 2 cents on the dollar. And then our successors, the people that are up here running the show 15 years from now, they can do whatever they want with that 11 cents. They can give it back to you in a tax cut. They can invest it in education. They can invest it in whatever else we need. They can make sure we keep modernizing our military. They can do whatever is the right thing then. But I know it is the right thing to prepare for the retirement of the baby boomers and to stabilize these programs and to get this debt down.

There's something else I'd like to say. A lot of you compete in international markets. On the way in today—just today—Roger and I were talking about the difficulty of—and Secretary Daley—we were talking about the importance of trying to keep these Asian markets open, with all this financial turmoil over there and their not having enough money. You know, Secretary Rubin and I, we worked very hard to keep the financial crisis in Asia from spreading to Latin America. Thirty percent of our growth has come from exports.

Now, we don't know what's going to happen beyond our borders. But I know this: No matter what happens, we'll be better off. Interest rates will be lower; there will be more money to spend on new plant and equipment; there will be more money to invest in American economic growth if we pay down this debt and we keep your interest rates low. Then if the world takes off again—and we're working for it—we'll do even better. And if there are problems in the world, we won't get hurt nearly as badly as we otherwise would have been.

So I implore you, if we want more and more stories like the ones we celebrate today, I hope you will support our efforts to save a substantial portion of this surplus until we have secured Social Security, stabilized Medicare, and guaranteed low interest rates for another 15 years. It's important for America.

The second thing I'd like to say is that just as you make investments in your employees, we

must make more investments. America has had for many years a budget deficit and an investment deficit. While we have cut the deficit, we've almost doubled our investment in education and training. But 88 percent of the companies—listen to this—88 percent of the companies in manufacturing today are having trouble finding qualified applicants to fill at least one kind of job. One in five companies report that they cannot expand because they have not been able to have workers with the right mix of skills to support the expansion.

That's why I'm so grateful, as I said before, for the example that you were setting in your workplace and why our administration, the Vice President and Secretary Daley, Secretary Riley, and others, have worked so hard to set up a system of lifetime learning, to open the doors of college to all with tax credits and scholarships and much lower cost student loans, and many, many other things.

In this budget of mine, we are proposing a big new investment in our worker training system so we can support training and re-employment for every person who loses a job in America. We want to help millions more whose first language is not English, learn it. We want to help many more people come back and finish their GED and then go on to college. And you are setting a good example.

We also, in this budget, have tried to provide the private sector with the necessary incentives to reach the biggest group of new markets that we haven't fully tapped, and those are the markets for employees and consumers in the inner city and in rural areas that still haven't been part of our recovery. Now, this is very important.

In America today, in the urban and rural neighborhoods where unemployment is high and growth is low, there is a consumer market of \$85 billion in those areas, bigger than the consumer market of Mexico, which is our second-largest purchaser of American products and trading partner. So what I have asked the Congress to do is to pass laws providing tax credits for people who invest in these designated areas, and also setting up a model, sort of like our Overseas Private Investment Corporation, which many of you in this room have used before, to guarantee a portion of investments in an inner city, so that, for example—suppose that in a big urban census area that had a 15-percent unemployment rate, you were willing to go in

and set up a plant with 300 people and train them and do all that, and the initial investment was \$300 million. If you took full advantage of this proposal of ours, you could have 2 of that \$300 million guaranteed in the "American Private Investment Corporation." The other \$100 million, you'd get a 25 percent tax credit for the investment. So if we put together \$300 million of investment in an underdeveloped area, you would actually have only \$75 million at risk. That's a pretty good deal.

And we can—if we can't take free enterprise into these urban and rural areas that have had no recovery now, with our lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957, with a high growth rate, and with safer investment opportunities at home than many of those abroad we pursued—if we can't fix America now, when will we ever be able to do this? So again, I hope you will support this.

The last thing I'd like to ask you to do is to support the continued expansion of trade. In the State of the Union Address, I said, "We've got to build a new consensus on trade in America and beyond our borders." We've got to be able to convince the American people and people in other countries that trade benefits ordinary citizens, that it doesn't have to tear the environment up. It certainly doesn't have to depress labor standards.

I know and many of you in this room know that 30 full percent of all this growth that we all celebrate all the time came because we've expanded trade. And so I ask for your support to make sure that the financial crisis we saw in 1998 doesn't become a trade crisis in 1999 because we don't do everything we can to continue to expand trade and support open borders. [Applause]

Just last week the Vice President announced our plan to call for a big reduction in agricultural tariffs, which now average 40 percent. We're trying to restore the traditional trade authority that Presidents since Gerald Ford have had, to create new opportunity for American companies. We are committed to doing this, and I thank you for your applause. But you know as well as I do that a lot of Americans—it's very interesting—when we had this trade debate last year, I found that there was an unusual alliance in the Congress between some of the most conservative Republicans and some of the most liberal Democrats, both of whom thought those of us who were sort of stuck in the middle

believing that we could actually create a new world economic system that would benefit ordinary people were wrong, and they thought we had to withdraw.

As I said, I'm working hard within my own party to build a consensus on this, and at the same time I'm trying to reach out to Republicans to build a consensus with them. But I do not believe we can continue to grow the American economy and raise American incomes and reach into America's distressed neighborhoods unless we continue, also, to reach out to the rest of the world.

Furthermore, I believe we can minimize the likelihood that we will ever have to send our men and women in uniform into a big conflict if we have economic and other cooperation with countries that show that there are other ways to solve your difficulties than taking up arms and robbing children of their future.

So that's what I think we ought to do. I'm glad we're doing well. I am grateful for having had the chance to serve. I am very mindful of the fact that a lot of the credit for America's success goes to companies and the people who work for them, like those we honor today. But I am absolutely certain that this is not the time to sort of sit back on our laurels and say, "Isn't this nice. We've waited for 40 years for a time like this. I think I'll take a vacation."

This is a time to take this prosperity we have and this confidence we have and expand our efforts. We can meet the long-term challenges of the 21st century. We can alleviate the loom-

ing specter that the baby boom might bankrupt our children and our grandchildren to pay for our retirement. We can guarantee a secure retirement, a compact within the generations, and we can pay down the national debt and guarantee low interest rates and a stable situation and more capital to invest in the private sector for 15 years. We can improve our education and training systems. We can invest in our inner cities. We can expand trade. That is an economic agenda that will set a framework within which more companies who follow your lead will find the same kind of success that you have.

And remember what I said when I started. America wouldn't have nearly the problems we have today if everybody was as happy on the job as you are.

Thank you, and good luck.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in Imperial Ballroom A at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to award foundation president Roger G. Ackerman, chairman and chief executive officer, Corning, Inc.; former Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige's sister, Letitia Baldrige; foundation chairpersons Barry K. Rogstad, president, American Business Conference, and Roberts T. Jones, president and chief executive officer, National Alliance of Business; foundation trustee Earnest W. Deavenport, Jr., chairman and chief executive officer, Eastman Chemical Co.; and Dale Crownover, president and chief executive officer, Texas Nameplate Co.

Message to the Congress Reporting on Efforts To Achieve a Sustainable Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina

February 4, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 7 of Public Law 105-174, I am providing this report to inform the Congress of ongoing efforts to achieve sustainable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). This is the first semiannual report that evaluates progress in BiH against the ten benchmarks ("aims") outlined in my certification to the Congress of March 3, 1998. NATO adopted these benchmarks on May 28, 1998, as part of its approval of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) mili-

tary operations plan (OPLAN 10407). The Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) subsequently adopted corresponding benchmarks in its Luxembourg Declaration of June 9, 1998.

NATO, the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and my Administration have coordinated closely in evaluating progress on Dayton implementation based on these benchmarks. There

is general agreement that there has been considerable progress in the past year. The basic institutions of the state, both political and economic, have been established. Key laws regarding foreign investment, privatization, and property are now in place. Freedom of movement across the country has substantially improved. Fundamental reform of the media is underway. Elections have demonstrated a continuing trend towards growing pluralism. Nevertheless, there is still much to be done, in particular on interethnic tolerance and reconciliation, the development of effective common institutions with powers clearly delineated from those of the Entities, and an open and pluralistic political life. The growth of organized crime also represents a serious threat.

With specific reference to SFOR, the Secretaries of State and Defense, in meetings in December 1998 with their NATO counterparts, agreed that SFOR continues to play an essential role in the maintenance of peace and stability and the provision of a secure environment in BiH, thus contributing significantly to progress in rebuilding BiH as a single, democratic, and multiethnic state. At the same time, NATO agreed that we do not intend to maintain SFOR's presence at current levels indefinitely, and in fact agreed on initial reductions, which I will describe later in this report. Below is a benchmark-by-benchmark evaluation of the state-of-play in BiH based on analysis of input from multiple sources.

1. *Military Stability.* Aim: Maintain Dayton cease-fire. Considerable progress has been made toward military stabilization in BiH. Entity Armed Forces (EAFs) are in compliance with Dayton, and there have been no incidents affecting the cease-fire. EAFs remain substantially divided along ethnic lines. Integration of the Federation Army does not reach down to corps-level units and below. However, progress has been made through the Train and Equip Program to integrate the Ministry of Defense and to provide the Federation with a credible deterrent capability. Although it is unlikely to meet its target of full integration by August 1999, the Federation Ministry of Defense has begun staff planning for integration. The Bosnian Serb Army (VRS) continues its relationship with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) Army. Similarly, the Bosnian Croat element of the Federation Army maintains ties with Croatia. In both cases, however, limited resources impinge on what either Croatia or the FRY can provide

financially or materially; the overall trend in support is downward. In some areas, the VRS continues to have certain qualitative and quantitative advantages over the Federation Army, but the Train and Equip Program has helped narrow the gap in some key areas. The arms control regimes established under Articles II (confidence and security-building measures) and IV (arms reduction and limitations) of Annex 1-B of the Dayton Peace Accords are functioning. In October 1997, BiH and the other parties were recognized as being in compliance with the limitations on five major types of armaments (battle tanks, armored combat vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft, and attack helicopters) set forth in the Article IV agreement, which were derived from the Annex 1B 5:2:2 ratios for the FRY, Republic of Croatia, and BiH respectively. The parties have since maintained armament levels consistent with the limitations and are expected to do so in the future. A draft mandate for an Article V agreement (regional stability) has been approved; negotiations are due to begin in early 1999. Military stability remains dependent on SFOR as a deterrent force.

2. *Public Security and Law Enforcement.* Aim: A restructured and democratic police force in both entities. There has been considerable progress to date on police reform due to sustained joint efforts of the International Police Task Force (IPTF), Office of the High Representative (OHR), and SFOR, which have overcome a number of significant political obstacles. So far, approximately 85 percent of the police in the Federation have received IPTF-approved training, as have approximately 35 percent of the police in the Republika Srpska (RS). All sides continue to lag in the hiring of minority officers and, as the IPTF implements its plans to address this problem, tensions will increase in the short-term. SFOR often must support the IPTF in the face of crime, public disorder, and rogue police. Monoethnic police forces have often failed to facilitate minority returns. In these types of scenarios, SFOR's use of the Multinational Specialized Unit (MSU) has been a force multiplier, requiring fewer, but specially trained troops. At this point, SFOR's essential contribution to maintaining a secure environment, to include backing up IPTF in support of nascent civilian police forces, remains critical to continued progress.

3. *Judicial Reform.* Aim: An effective judicial reform program. Several key steps forward were taken in 1998, such as the signing of an MOU on Inter-Entity Legal Assistance on May 20, 1998, and establishment of an Inter-Entity Legal Commission on June 4, 1998. The Federation Parliament in July adopted a new criminal code. Nevertheless, the judicial system still requires significant reform. Judges are still influenced by politics, and the system is financially strapped and remains ethnically biased. Execution of judgments, in particular eviction of persons who illegally occupy dwellings, is especially problematic. The progress made in the area of commercial law is encouraging for economic development prospects.

4. *Illegal Institutions, Organized Crime, and Corruption.* Aim: The dissolution of illegal pre-Dayton institutions. Corruption remains a major challenge to building democratic institutions of government. Structures for independent monitoring of government financial transactions are still not in place. Shadow institutions still need to be eliminated. The burden of creating institutions to combat fraud and organized crime falls mostly to the international community and in particular to the IPTF. SFOR contributes to the secure environment necessary for the success of other international efforts to counter these illegal activities.

5. *Media Reform.* Aim: Regulated, democratic, and independent media. Approximately 80 percent television coverage has been achieved in BiH through the international community's support for the Open Broadcasting Network (OBN), which is the first (and so far only) neutral source of news in BiH. Several television and radio networks have been restructured and are led by new management boards. Most are in compliance with Dayton except for some regional broadcasts. The Independent Media Commission assumed responsibility for media monitoring from the OSCE on October 31, 1998. Progress has been significant, but BiH still has far to go to approach international standards. SFOR's past actions in this area are a key deterrent against illegal use of media assets to undermine Dayton implementation.

6. *Elections and Democratic Governance.* Aim: National democratic institutions and practices. With the exception of the election of a nationalist to the RS presidency, the September 1998 national elections continued the long-term trend away from reliance on ethnically based parties.

The two major Serb nationalist parties lost further ground and, once again, will be unable to lead the RS government. Croat and Bosniak nationalist parties retained control, but saw margins eroded significantly. In this regard, SFOR's continued presence will facilitate conduct of the municipal elections scheduled for late 1999 but, as has been the case with every election since Dayton, the trend of increasingly turning over responsibility for elections to the Bosnians themselves will continue.

7. *Economic Development.* Aim: Free-market reforms. While the process of economic recovery and transformation will take many years, some essential groundwork has been laid. Privatization legislation and enterprise laws have been passed, and banking legislation has been partially passed. Fiscal revenues from taxes and customs have increased significantly. Nevertheless, the fiscal and revenue system is in its infancy. Implementation of privatization legislation is slow and the banking sector is under-funded, but there are signs of development in GDP. There has been a marked increase in freedom of movement, further enhanced by the uniform license plate law. SFOR's continued contribution to a secure environment and facilitating freedom of movement is vital as economic reforms begin to take hold.

8. *Displaced Person and Refugee (DPRE) Returns.* Aim: A functioning phased and orderly minority return process. While there have been some significant breakthroughs on DPRE returns to minority areas, such as Jajce, Stolac, Kotor Varos, Prijedor, Mostar, and Travnik, the overall numbers have been low. In some areas where minority DPREs have returned, inter-ethnic tensions rose quickly. Some nationalist political parties continue to obstruct the return of minority DPREs to the areas they control. Poor living conditions in some areas present little incentive for DPREs to return. The Entities are using DPREs to resettle regions (opstinas) that are of strategic interest to each ethnic faction. SFOR's contribution to a secure environment remains vital to OHR efforts to facilitate minority returns.

9. *Brcko.* Aim: A multiethnic administration, DPRE returns, and secure environment. Freedom of movement in Brcko has improved dramatically. Citizens of BiH are increasingly confident in using their right to travel freely throughout the municipality and the region. Police and judicial elements have been installed, but the goal of multiethnicity in these elements

still has not been realized. About 1,000 Federation families have returned to the parts of Brcko on the RS side of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line, but few Serb displaced persons have left Brcko to return to their pre-war homes. SFOR support will be a critical deterrent to the outbreak of violence during the period surrounding the Arbitrator's decision on Brcko's status anticipated for early in 1999.

10. *Persons Indicted for War Crimes (PIFWCs)*. Aim: Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) leading to the transfer of PIFWCs to The Hague for trial. Thanks to action by the Congress, the Secretary of State now has the ability to offer rewards of up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction of PIFWCs. Of the 81 people indicted publicly by the Tribunal, only 29—36 percent—are still at large. The two highest-profile indictees, Karadzic and Mladic, are among them. Bosniaks are cooperating with the ICTY, but the failure of the RS to support the ICTY is a major obstacle to progress. Bosnian Croats have cooperated with respect to the surrender of all but two public indictees, but have not cooperated fully with respect to the Tribunal's orders that they turn over documents needed for the fair trial of a number of indictees. SFOR continues to provide crucial support in the apprehension of PIFWCs and for ICTY exhumations.

In my report to the Congress dated July 28, 1998, I emphasized the important role that realistic target dates, combined with concerted use of incentives, leverage, and pressure on all parties, should play in maintaining the sense of urgency necessary to move steadily toward an enduring peace.

The December 1998 Peace Implementation Council Declaration and its annex (attached) offer target dates for accomplishment of specific tasks by authorities in BiH. The PIC decisions formed the background against which NATO Defense Ministers reviewed the future of SFOR in their December 17 meeting. Failure by Bosnian authorities to act within the prescribed timeframes would be the point of departure for more forceful action by the OHR and other elements of the international community. Priorities for 1999 will include: accelerating the transition to a sustainable market economy; increasing the momentum on the return of refugees and displaced persons, particularly to minority areas; providing a secure environment through

the rule of law, including significant progress on judicial reform and further establishment of multiethnic police; developing and reinforcing the central institutions, including adoption of a permanent election law, and the development of greater confidence and cooperation among the Entity defense establishments with the goal of their eventual unification; and pressing ahead with media reform and education issues.

In accordance with the NATO Defense Ministers' guidance in June 1998, NATO is conducting a series of comprehensive reviews at no more than 6-month intervals. The first of these reviews was completed on November 16, 1998, and recently endorsed by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) Foreign and Defense Ministers. In reviewing the size and shape of SFOR against the benchmarks described above, the United States and its Allies concluded that at present, there be no changes in SFOR's mission. NATO recommended, however, that steps begin immediately to streamline SFOR. The NAC Foreign and Defense Ministers endorsed this recommendation on December 8, 1998, and December 17, 1998, respectively. The Defense Ministers also endorsed a report from the NATO Military Authorities (NMAs) authorizing further adjustments in SFOR force levels—in response to the evolving security situation and support requirements—to be completed by the end of March 1999. While the specifics of these adjustments are still being worked, they could amount to reductions of as much as 10 percent from the 6,900 U.S. troops currently in SFOR. The 6,900 troop level already represents a 20 percent reduction from the 8,500 U.S. troops deployed in June 1998 and is 66 percent less than peak U.S. deployment of 20,000 troops in 1996.

The NATO Defense Ministers on December 17, 1998, further instructed NMAs to examine options for possible longer-term and more substantial adjustments to the future size and structure of SFOR. Their report is due in early 1999 and will give the United States and its Allies the necessary information on which to base decisions on SFOR's future. We will address this issue in the NAC again at that time. Decisions on future reductions will be taken in the light of progress on implementation of the Peace Agreement. Any and all reductions of U.S. forces in the short or long term will be made in accordance with my Administration's policy

that such reductions will not jeopardize the safety of U.S. armed forces serving in BiH.

My Administration values the Congress' substantial support for Dayton implementation. I look forward to continuing to work with the Congress in pursuit of U.S. foreign policy goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

February 4, 1999.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 5.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development

February 5, 1999

The President. Thank you. Carol, you'd better watch it; before you know it you'll be running for office. [Laughter] What a remarkable statement; thank you so much.

I'd like to take a little—a few moments more than I normally would by way of introduction today. Hillary and I and Bob Rubin are real happy today, because this is one of the things that I ran for President to do, to see these stories, to see the spirit, and to see the potential.

I want to thank Secretary Rubin. You know, I used to tell a joke about Bob Rubin. He's been here a long time now, and he left this fabulous career on Wall Street. And I used to tell everybody that I asked Bob Rubin to come to Washington in 1993 to help me save the middle class, and by the time he leaves he'll be one of them. [Laughter]

Secretary Rubin. That always seems a lot funnier to you, Mr. President. [Laughter]

The President. Yes. I don't know how much it's cost him to stay here these 6 years, but one of the reasons that I really wanted him to come is that when we—even in the beginning, when we began talking about these matters in '92, he always said, "You know, I'd like to get the economy going again and working again, and then we could maybe really do something for poor people in this country. Maybe we could really bring the spirit of enterprise to all these places that have been left behind."

I don't know how many Secretaries of the Treasury in our country's history have ever had that sort of driving passion. But I know we had one, and he's done a magnificent job. And I'm very grateful to him.

I want to thank Senator Harkin, Senator Kennedy, Senator Wellstone, Congressman Oberstar, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for supporting this economic vision so strongly. I thank former Senator Riegle, who is here, who was the committee chairman who helped us to make this a critical part, this whole microenterprise, a critical part of our economic strategy way back in 1993.

I welcome Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson from Iowa; we're delighted to have her here with her honorees. I want to thank our former OMB Director Frank Raines; Mary Ellen Withrow, our Treasurer; Ellen Lazar and others who have supported our efforts here. A special word of thanks to Aida Alvarez and Betsy Myers and all the other members of her team from SBA who are here. And to Brian Atwood and Hattie Babbitt and the others from AID. I believe that under our administration we funded 2 million of these small microenterprise loans, from Africa to Asia to Latin America, last year.

There's one group of people who have not been acknowledged—and Hillary and I were talking about it—who were out there ahead of the Federal Government for years, without whom microenterprise never would have really taken off in America, and that's all the members of the foundation community. I'd like to—all the representatives of the foundations that are here that have supported microenterprise lending, I'd like to ask you to stand, please, and be acknowledged. Thank you. [Applause] Thank you very much.

And I'll say more about this in a minute, but this whole issue has been a passion for the

First Lady for, as she said, about 15 years. We had a friend who was working at the South Shore Bank in Chicago which had a microenterprise loan program. We went there; we saw what they were doing.

Then in 1984 I was able to meet, here in Washington—I was here at a Governor's meeting; I'll never forget it. I got up early one morning and had breakfast with Muhammad Yunus, who had been trained as an economist in the United States and then gone to Bangladesh and set up the Grameen Bank. Hundreds of thousands of loans had been made—market interest rates—very tiny loans, almost all to poor village women. The repayment rate was better than the commercial banks in Bangladesh, and it changed my thinking about this forever.

And then Hillary scrounged up some foundation money and other money, and I squeezed some out of the Arkansas Legislature, and we started a development bank with a microenterprise program in Arkansas. And after I became President, she literally has gone all across the world. She's been in small villages on every continent, where people like her never go.

And I should tell the rest of the story because I don't think President Museveni would object. I have the highest regard for the President of Uganda. He's one of the most intelligent and effective leaders of any developing country anywhere in the world. But when we were walking on this little rocky pathway into this village to see all these village women who now had their own businesses, he looked at me, and he said, "That's some wife you've got." He said, "Until you showed up here, I didn't even know we had these programs in our country." [Laughter]

So, without her we probably wouldn't be here today. And I'm very, very grateful for everything that Hillary has done to champion this cause.

I also want to say a word of appreciation to Carol and all the other small-business owners here. It takes a lot of courage to run a small business. Hillary and I have talked about this a lot. She talked to me about one time when she was a high school girl, she worked in a small business in her hometown, and there were days when no one came in. Every day, if you open a small business, you feel like politicians feel on election day. [Laughter]

I'll never forget—I can't remember, one of the great old Hollywood moguls said, "You know, if you make a bad movie, the people will stay away, and you cannot stop them"—

[laughter]—which I think is great. So I want to thank all of you for having the spirit of enterprise and the vision and the courage.

This whole country is basically built by entrepreneurs, whether they're in Silicon Valley or young investment bankers in Manhattan or people running the street-vending operations out here for the tourists in Washington. The genius of actually being able to have an idea and act on it, and having people respond to it and invest in it and be your customers and, as Carol said, in a way validate your ideas, your character, and your hard work, it's the whole secret of America.

And because of the strength of our economy, I believe we have an obligation to give that opportunity to everyone. Just this morning we learned that what is now the longest peacetime expansion in American history has grown longer. Last month our economy created nearly another quarter-million jobs, and unemployment stayed at 4.3 percent. That's the lowest peacetime rate since 1957. Wages now rising at over twice the rate of inflation. Again, unemployment rates among Hispanic- and African-Americans dropped to their lowest recorded levels ever.

Now, if we cannot expand opportunity into every corner of America now, we will never get around to it. We have an obligation now to spread the spirit and the opportunity for enterprise to all the American people. As you've heard from others, we've been working on this for 6 years now, working to bring opportunities to some of our most distressed communities, with an agenda of empowerment. That's what we celebrate here, not a handout, a hand up. This microenterprise program is the embodiment of empowerment.

We know—and I was so glad to hear what Carol said about self-esteem, because sometimes a crisis of economic distress is a crisis of the spirit as well, a shortage of confidence that is just as debilitating as a shortage of cash. And these stories today—I want all of you to imagine not only the economic success but what it has done to these people's lives. There are stories like this all over America and all over the world.

What does it mean to a single mom's life when she goes to the mailbox in the morning and sees a bank statement instead of a welfare check? What does it mean to a child when he or she can go to school and say, when they ask, "What does your mother do for a living?" "She owns a beauty shop?" What does it mean

to a neighborhood when, all of a sudden, an old building that has been vacant for 10 years has a "help wanted" sign out in front of it?

This is about more than economics. And through our network of community development banks—or CDFI's, as we call them, community development financial institutions—through the strengthened and streamlined Community Reinvestment Act—and I will say that even though that act has been on the books for more than 20 years now, 95 percent of all the investment under community reinvestment has been done in the last 6 years, in our administration. And I'm proud of that. And the banks are doing quite well. *[Laughter]* They're doing well by doing good. And it's important to remember as the debate develops this year about that. And through these empowerment zones, we've seen the steady expansion of opportunity.

Last month, as the Secretary said, I announced this new markets initiative, to spur even more private investment in underserved areas. And we want to reach—building a bridge from Wall Street to Harlem, to Appalachia, to the Mississippi Delta, to south Texas, to Pine Ridge, South Dakota—everywhere there are opportunities still untapped.

Today I am proud to announce that, as a part of our budget, we would more than double our support for microenterprise in America. We would continue our—*[applause]*—thank you. We also want to continue our efforts to promote microenterprise abroad, especially in the nations that have been hardest hit by the global financial crisis or by our neighbors hit by natural disasters. And I think that is very important, because we are giving courage and awareness to other governments and other countries to do more for their own people in this regard.

First, we recognize that, for the vast majority of microentrepreneurs, good ideas and credit are just the beginning. A little guidance, lessons on accounting, billing, planning, those things are essential for any business to thrive in a complex economy. The budget doubles the Small Business Administration's capacity to provide such training through its microloan program, triples support for SBA's one-stop capital shops, which offer microlending advice and other assistance in disadvantaged communities. I'm also proud to support the bipartisan program for investments in microentrepreneurs, the PRIME Act, sponsored by Senator Kennedy and Senator Domenici from New Mexico, and Representa-

tives Rush, Leach, and LaFalce, so that we can expand our technical assistance through the Treasury's CDFI fund.

Second, we want to make even more credit available to low-income Americans with good business ideas. That's why I'm proposing to leverage more than \$75 million in new loans by doubling our support for the SBA's microloan program.

Third, we want to keep encouraging Americans to save some of their own hard-earned money, to start or expand businesses. Last year, I was proud to sign new individual development accounts into law, fulfilling a campaign pledge from 1992, and thanks in no small measure to the leadership of Senator Tom Harkin from Iowa and former Senator Dan Coats from Indiana. We thank you very much, Senators, for that. *[Applause]* Thank you.

For those of you who don't know, these individual development accounts, IDA's, are special accounts that provide Federal matching funds to low-income Americans who save money to invest in their business, buy a first home, pay for a college education. I want to double support for these accounts in our budget.

Next, we will continue to lead the world through USAID to promote microenterprise for millions of families to get out of poverty in other countries. The recent local financial crisis and the hurricanes in Central America and the Caribbean have literally upended the lives of tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people. As you have heard from the First Lady's account, we have seen, first hand, how these loans, sometimes in other countries loans as small as \$10, \$15, \$25, \$50 can make all the difference in helping families to get back on their feet.

Our balanced budget will target extra microenterprise assistance to the countries that are in trouble. And to break down the bureaucratic walls that block microenterprise in some developing countries, we'll continue to work with the World Bank and other financial institutions to reform the regulatory structures so we can make more of these loans available. There is a virtually unlimited potential abroad and at home for this, and I keep hoping if we just keep pushing and keep pushing and keep pushing we will reach a critical mass of investment which will explode it and let the whole world know that this works.

And this ceremony today is a part of letting the whole world know. So we come here not

only to honor you with these Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise but to say to the world that these six organizations whose vision and commitment have made such a profound difference in the lives of the business owners, their employees, and their customers are but a small beginning of what we could achieve together in the United States and throughout the world if we work harder to make the economy work for ordinary citizens.

And so this, too, is a part of letting the whole world know. And when you come up here and get your awards I hope that you will not only feel enormous pride; I hope that you will not only feel an enormous sense of rededication to further success; I hope you will feel that you are sending a message to people who will see this all over America or read about it in their newspapers. And you may be sparking someone else's conviction either that, A, they ought to set up one of these funds, or B, they ought to find one and get a loan.

And I believe that we will continue to see the steady march of progress here. This has the potential to revolutionize not only the lives of ordinary Americans but the whole way we organize our economy here and around the world.

So, first: For excellence in the category of access to capital, the Microcredit Industry Rural Organization. Since 1987, MICRO has provided some \$5.5 million in loans to more than 1,000 entrepreneurs living in rural Arizona's poorest Hispanic communities. Accepting this award is Executive Director Frank Ballesteros and entrepreneur Maria Jesus Gaxiola, a former migrant farm worker who used a \$1,500 loan to build her own cosmetics business, and I might say, she's a remarkable walking advertisement for her success. *[Laughter]* Please come up here.

[The President presented the award.]

Next, for excellence in developing entrepreneurial skills, the Detroit Entrepreneurship Institute. Founded at Wayne State University, the institute has worked to teach low-income clients the full range of business skills. Clients can also take advantage of a free computer center, a tax preparation service, and graphic design department to help launch and expand their businesses. Accepting this award is Cathy McClelland, the president and CEO; and Jackie Tucker, who started a successful catering busi-

ness after training at the institute. I'd like to ask them to come up now.

[The President presented the award.]

Also for excellence in developing entrepreneurial skills, the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund of Virginia, Minnesota—*[laughter]*—in the Iron Range, north of Duluth. Serving rural communities throughout a 20,000 square mile area, the fund offers one-on-one counseling to clients, helping them to tailor their studies to specific needs. Accepting this award is the fund's president, Mary Mathews; and our star speaker today—*[laughter]*—Carol Willoughby.

[The President presented the award.]

For excellence in poverty alleviation, the Institute for Social and Economic Development of Iowa. One of the earliest statewide microenterprise efforts in the Nation, the Institute—listen to this—has helped 90 percent of its welfare clients free themselves from lives of dependency through self-employment. Accepting this award today is John Else, founder and president; and entrepreneur Rhonda Auten, a former welfare recipient who started her own dance school with help from ISED.

[The President presented the award.]

For excellence in private support for microenterprise development, the Corporation for Enterprise Development. For two decades, through research, public advocacy, and technical assistance to microenterprise organizations, the corporation has fostered so much of the progress we see today, including the success of three of this year's award winners. We are all—including all of us in this administration—profoundly indebted to the awardee, the corporation, and its founder and chairman, Mr. Robert Friedman.

[The President presented the award.]

For excellence in public support for microenterprise development, the Montana Micro-business Finance Program. As part of the Montana Department of Commerce, this program has helped to launch or sustain a dozen micro-lending organizations serving communities throughout that vast and beautiful State. Accepting this award are program officer Robyn Hampton and entrepreneurs Kevin and Heidi Snyder, who used a microloan to start their racquetball and fitness centers. They are two

walking advertisements for what they're doing, as you can see. *[Laughter]* Come on up.

[The President and the First Lady presented the award.]

Now, don't you feel better than you did when you got up this morning? *[Laughter]* Isn't this great?

Henry Ford—a small entrepreneur—once said that the best Americans were those with “an infinite capacity to not know what can't be done.” We honor those kinds of Americans, testaments to the power of enterprise and the strength of the human spirit.

I ask you to leave here committed to work in the years ahead to bring this spirit, and this

opportunity, to every corner of every community in our land and on our globe.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Carol Willoughby, owner, Let the Whole World Know, who introduced the President; former Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr.; Muhammad Yunus, founder and chief executive, Grameen Bank, Bangladesh; and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the District of Columbia Courts' Fiscal Year 2000 Budget Request

February 5, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the District of Columbia Code, as amended, I am transmitting the District of Columbia Courts' FY 2000 Budget request.

The District of Columbia Courts have submitted a FY 2000 Budget request for \$131.6 million for its operating expenditures and \$17.4 million for courthouse renovation and improvements. My FY 2000 Budget includes recommended funding levels of \$128.4 million for

operations and \$9.0 million for capital improvements for the District Courts. My transmittal of the District of Columbia Courts' budget request does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

I look forward to working with the Congress throughout the FY 2000 appropriation process.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 5, 1999.

Remarks at a Gala Honoring Hank Aaron in Atlanta, Georgia

February 5, 1999

Thank you very much, Tom. I want to thank Ted and Jane and you, Tom, and Gerry Levin and all the people from CNN and Time Warner for your role in this magnificent evening—all the sponsors, all the previous speakers.

You know, the truth is, I wanted to come down yesterday just to get ready for this. *[Laughter]* I saw the list of the baseball players who were going to be here. You know, my job is not always the most fun in the world. *[Laughter]* I was interested in this.

Governor Barnes told a story about Hank Aaron appearing with him. I want to tell you a story that's even more compelling. In 1992, on the weekend before the Presidential election, I was struggling to prevail in Georgia and Governor Miller said, “You have to come one more time. And if you come, I think Hank Aaron will appear with you.” I forgot about how many electoral votes we had—I forgot, you know, I just—so I came. And we went out to this high

school football stadium, which held 25,000 people; it was completely full. Way over half of them came to see him. [*Laughter*] Three days later, after Hank Aaron blessed me in front of 25,000 people, we carried Georgia by 13,000 votes. [*Laughter*] I have never forgotten it, and I never will.

Ladies and gentlemen, the essayist Jacques Barzun once wrote, "Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball." Well, probably more than any other sport, baseball revels in statistics. I wish we could have a contest tonight. We'd all know that Ty Cobb has the highest lifetime batting average and Cy Young the most wins; Mark McGwire, closely followed by Sammy Sosa, the most home runs in a single season. Most all of us here know that Henry Aaron has more baseball records than any other single player: most RBI's, most extra base hits, the only player to hit at least 30 home runs in 15 seasons, at least 20 homers in 20 seasons. First, as you heard on the film, to reach 300 hits—3,000 hits and 500 home runs.

He also had an exquisite sense of timing. When he broke what appeared to be the most unbreakable record of all, he had the presence of mind to do it on opening night so all of us could plan to watch. Because Henry Aaron's story is so much the story of baseball and because it is the story of a changing America being manifest in baseball, knowing it is necessary to know the mind and heart of modern America.

All of us honor him tonight not only for the power of his swing but for the power of his spirit; not only for breaking records but for breaking barriers; not only for chasing his dream but even more for giving children, like those we saw tonight, the chance to chase theirs. From Mobile to Milwaukee to Atlanta, through a segregated South in the old Sally League where he was the only member of the team that didn't stay in the same motel, the only one who couldn't get served at the dinner counter, he moved through a changing America. And he changed the mind and heart of America.

When he came here, he had an interesting experience. Many of you have referenced tonight that when Hank Aaron approached Babe Ruth's record there was a dark, deep undercurrent which led him to get lots of hate letters and death threats so serious the FBI had to watch his home and the pall of violence began to hang over the games. But he said that very

little of this mail came from Atlanta. And so as President of this whole country, I'd like to also take my hat off to Atlanta tonight.

When Andy Young was up here talking, and then I saw the reference on the film by Mayor Allen—I remember as a boy growing up, burdened with the awful stain that the crisis in the high school in my State's capital caused us, that every one of us who felt as I did envied Atlanta because it had a mayor and business leaders who said they were determined to be known as the city too busy to hate. And they gave us, all of us, Martin Luther King and John Lewis, and leaders like Andy Young and Maynard Jackson and so many more, too many to mention. It was fitting that a son of the South who braved the storms of segregation would come home to the most important baseball record of all and go indelibly into the mind and heart of America.

I came here tonight as a baseball fan, to remember a golden moment. I came as a friend, to thank a person who was there for me when I needed him in the worst way. I came here as President, to honor a great American—for courage and decency and dignity, for caring about all the kids coming along behind him, for giving them a chance to chase those dreams. America is a land of dreamers. Hank Aaron has made it even more so.

So Hank and Billye, we thank you for the path you blazed, for the voices you raised, for the helping hands you gave. We thank you. God bless you. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Now, don't sit down. I almost forgot my exit line. [*Laughter*] Ladies and gentlemen, our honoree, on the 25th anniversary of his 40th birthday and his 715th home run, Henry Aaron.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 p.m. in the Centennial Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to W. Thomas Johnson, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, Cable News Network; Ted Turner, vice chairman, and Gerald M. Levin, chairman and chief executive officer, Time Warner, Inc.; Gov. Roy E. Barnes and former Gov. Zell Miller of Georgia; former Mayors Andrew Young, Ivan Allen Jr., and Maynard Jackson of Atlanta; Mr. Aaron's wife, Billye; and Mr. Turner's wife, actress Jane Fonda. The President also referred to the South Atlantic (Sally) League.

The President's Radio Address *February 6, 1999*

Good morning. Six years ago I determined Washington had to get off the sidelines and join the frontlines in the fight against crime. I committed my administration to recovering our streets from violence, to reclaiming our neighborhoods as safe havens for families. Since then we've pursued a new strategy of law enforcement based not on tough talk but on tougher penalties, better prevention, and the substantial, visible presence of community police.

This strategy is showing remarkable results. Since 1993, crime rates in America have fallen to the lowest point in a quarter century. Property crime is down. Violent crime has dropped 20 percent in the last 6 years. The murder rate is the lowest in 30 years. Americans can take pride in streets that are safer, but mostly they can take comfort in lives that are more secure.

There are many reasons that crime is in a sharp decline. Chief among them is our growing ability to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. Gun-related crime is on the wane, and it's no wonder. According to a recent report by the Justice Department, the background checks we required in the Brady law have put a stop to nearly a quarter-million handgun purchases. Thanks to Brady, we turn away more than 200 felons a day, sending them home empty handed instead of well-armed. And now that the insta-check system is in effect, we can conduct these checks in even less time. Retail gun stores, sporting goods stores, licensed gun dealers: They're all working to keep guns out of the hands of felons and fugitives.

But there's a loophole in the law, and criminals know how to exploit it. They go to gun shows. Last year there were more than 4,400 gun shows all across America. I come from a State where these shows are very popular. I have visited and enjoyed them over the years. I know they're the first place where many parents teach their children how to handle firearms safely.

But at the same time, at too many gun shows, criminals are buying guns with no questions asked. That's because the law permits some sellers, one-quarter to one-half of the vendors at a typical gun show, to skip the background checks required by Brady. That is a significant

loophole. It's wide enough that criminals reach right through it, grabbing, collectively, thousands of firearms that disappear without a trace.

Last fall I asked the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General to report on the problem and to come up with solutions. I now have their report. It is sensible and sobering. It shows conclusively that gun shows are a forum for gun traffickers, a cash-and-carry convenience store for weapons used to maim and kill.

We must close this loophole. America cannot allow its gun shows to become illegal arms bazaars, where lawbreakers shop side-by-side with the law-abiding. That's why I strongly support the recommendations of Secretary Rubin and Attorney General Reno. We should extend Brady checks and gun-tracing records to any and all open markets where large numbers of firearms are sold. And we should vigorously and fairly enforce the rules. The gun lobby may not want to hear this, but clearly it's the right thing to do: No background check, no gun. No exceptions.

To toughen enforcement of the existing law, my balanced budget includes new funds to hire more than 100 agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. These agents will help arrest violent criminals and gun traffickers and will shut down illegal purchases of firearms. My budget also increases funding for firearms prosecutions and expands our successful efforts to keep guns out of the hands of violent youth.

In these efforts, I am thankful for the leadership of Senator Lautenberg and Congressman Blagojevich, who will introduce legislation to make this gun show policy the law of the land. I'm joined today by Senator Lautenberg, along with Senator Dick Durbin from Illinois and Congresswomen Julia Carson from Indiana, as well as Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder. I thank them all for their support.

I'm looking forward to working with members of both parties in the coming months, so that together we can strengthen the laws that serve us so well and, in doing so, build a stronger America for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:05 p.m. on February 5 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 6. The

transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Assistance to Jordan *February 6, 1999*

At this difficult time, my thoughts and prayers, as well as those of all Americans, are with His Majesty King Hussein, his family, and the people of Jordan. The United States stands by Jordan and is determined to do all that it can to support and strengthen it.

Next week I will ask Congress promptly to provide the \$300 million in supplemental bilateral assistance to Jordan that was promised as part of the Wye agreement.

The United States is working with the international community to mobilize additional resources to help Jordan maintain its economic stability. We are consulting with key allies, including our G-7 partners and the Gulf States, on further steps to support Jordan.

The International Monetary Fund will play a leading role in marshaling international support for Jordan. Substantial resources can be mobilized quickly under a new IMF program with expedited procedures.

The World Bank also is preparing to provide additional support for Jordan's economic reform program.

In addition, the United States will support substantial rescheduling of Jordan's obligations to bilateral creditors through the Paris Club on the basis of an IMF program.

These initiatives by the international community, combined with U.S. direct bilateral assistance, will provide substantial resources in support of Jordanian economic stability and growth.

Remarks on the Death of King Hussein I of Jordan *February 7, 1999*

Today the world mourns the loss of one of its great leaders, King Hussein of Jordan. I mourn the loss of a partner and friend. He was a magnificent man. And like so many, I loved and admired him.

King Hussein once wrote, "I believe we must live with courage and will. I must do so because, regardless of any difficulties I face, when the time comes for me to lose my life, I would at least have done my best."

He did far better than that. A humble man and a king; a leader whose nobility came not from his title but his character; a man who believed that we are all God's children, bound to live together in mutual respect and tolerance—King Hussein was ennobled. Many times his life was threatened, but each brush with mortality ennobled him. He learned that God only gives us a limited number of opportunities

and that we must make the most of them. Surely, he did.

As he survived, Jordan survived. He grew in wisdom, and so did Jordan. He grew in stature, and so did Jordan. He won the respect and admiration of the entire world, and so did his beloved Jordan.

We remember his voice, each word slowly said, followed by a pause, a moment for silent reflection, as if he were reminding us that it is wise to think before we speak, to speak before we act. His manner was as strong and calming as his message.

We remember him piloting his plane, traveling wherever his cause took him; flying at night in the years when courage and stealth were required just to speak to one's enemies; soaring in the sunlight above Jerusalem when the peace he forged with Israel made that possible again.

He once said, "The beauty of flying high in the skies will always, to me, symbolize freedom." King Hussein lived his life on a higher plane, with the aviator's gift of seeing beyond the low-flying obstacles of hatred and mistrust that heartbreak and loss place in all our paths. He spent his life fighting for the dignified aspirations of his people and all Arab people. He worked all his life to build friendship between the Jordanian and American people. He dedicated the final years of his life to the promise not only of coexistence but of partnership between the Arab world and Israel.

Indeed, he understood what must be clear now to anyone who has flown above the Middle East and seen in one panorama at sunset the lights of Amman and Tel Aviv and Damascus shining in the sky, that in the relationship among peoples who share this small, sacred corner of Earth, one thing, and only one, is predestined: All are bound to be neighbors. The question is not whether they will live side by side, but how. God willing, soon all will see what he saw and preached: There can be no peace, no dignity, no security of any of Abraham's children until there is peace, dignity, and security for all of them.

During the Wye summit, when the talks were not going so well, he came out within a few short minutes and changed the tenor of the meeting. Though frail with fighting for his own life, he gave life to the process many felt was failing. The smallest man in the room that day

was the largest; the frailest was the strongest. The man with the least time remaining reminded us we are working not only for ourselves but for all eternity.

To Queen Noor, I extend the heartfelt condolences of the American people. At times such as these, words are inadequate. But the friendship that joins Jordan and the United States, for which your marriage stood and your love still stands, that will never fail. You are a daughter of America and a Queen of Jordan. You have made two nations very proud. Hillary and I cherish the wonderful times we shared with you and His Majesty. And today we say to you, and indeed to all the King's large and loving family, our prayers are with you.

We say to his son, the new King Abdullah, we wish you well. Our prayers are with you as you assume the mantle of your father and grandfather. And to the people of Jordan, again we say, we extend the hand of friendship and partnership.

The Koran teaches: You belong to God, and you return to Him. Today my friend is in Paradise, and God has welcomed home a good and faithful servant.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The related proclamation of February 7 on the death of King Hussein is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of King Hussein I of Jordan

February 7, 1999

Hillary and I are deeply saddened by the news that King Hussein of Jordan has passed away. I had prayed this day would not come soon. But God has called King Hussein to his reward. The prayers of all Americans go out to the royal family and the Jordanian people.

No words can convey what King Hussein meant to the people he led for nearly half a century. Words cannot convey what he meant to me as a friend and inspiration. Through good times and bad, through health and illness, he showed the power of a strong will applied to a worthy cause. It takes a rare kind of courage

to be a peacemaker—the courage to learn from the past and imagine a better future. When peace finally comes to the Middle East, his name will be inscribed upon it. That day, King Hussein will smile on us one more time.

I had the honor of seeing him just a few weeks ago, as he was about to return home. There was no hint of the struggle he was waging. Instead, he spoke with his usual passion and humanity about Jordan's well-being, the future of the Arab world, the Palestinian cause, and peace with Israel.

To Queen Noor, to Crown Prince Abdullah, to the King's family, and to the people of Jordan, Hillary and I send our condolences. The United States stands with you—today, tomorrow, and in the future. I ask all Americans to remember this good man and his family.

NOTE: The related proclamation of February 7 on the death of King Hussein is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the 1999 National Drug Control Strategy

February 8, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

On behalf of the American people, I am pleased to transmit the 1999 *National Drug Control Strategy* to the Congress. This *Strategy* renews and advances our efforts to counter the threat of drugs—a threat that continues to cost our Nation over 14,000 lives and billions of dollars each year.

There is some encouraging progress in the struggle against drugs. The 1998 *Monitoring the Future* study found that youth drug use has leveled off and in many instances is on the decline—the second straight year of progress after years of steady increases. The study also found a significant strengthening of youth attitudes toward drugs: young people increasingly perceive drug use as a risky and unacceptable behavior. The rate of drug-related murders continue to decline, down from 1,302 in 1992 to 786 in 1997. Overseas, we have witnessed a decline in cocaine production by 325 metric tons in Bolivia and Peru over the last 4 years. Coca cultivation in Peru plunged 56 percent since 1995.

Nevertheless, drugs still exact a tremendous toll on this Nation. In a 10-year period, 100,000 Americans will die from drug use. The social costs of drug use continue to climb, reaching \$110 billion in 1995, a 64 percent increase since 1990. Much of the economic burden of drug abuse falls on those who do not abuse drugs—American families and their communities. Although we have made progress, much remains to be done.

The 1999 *National Drug Control Strategy* provides a comprehensive balanced approach to move us closer to a drug-free America. This *Strategy* presents a long-term plan to change American attitudes and behavior with regard to

illegal drugs. Among the efforts this *Strategy* focuses on are:

- Educating children: studies demonstrate that when our children understand the dangers of drugs, their rates of drug use drop. Through the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program and other efforts, we will continue to focus on helping our youth reject drugs.
- Decreasing the addicted population: the addicted make up roughly a quarter of all drug users, but consume two-thirds of all drugs in America. Our strategy for reducing the number of addicts focuses on closing the “treatment gap.”
- Breaking the cycle of drugs and crime: numerous studies confirm that the vast majority of prisoners commit their crimes to buy drugs or while under the influence of drugs. To help break this link between crime and drugs, we must promote the Zero Tolerance Drug Supervision initiative to better keep offenders drug- and crime-free. We can do this by helping States and localities to implement tough new systems to drug test, treat, and punish prisoners, parolees, and probationers.
- Securing our borders: the vast majority of drugs consumed in the United States enter this Nation through the Southwest border, Florida, the Gulf States, and other border areas and air and sea ports of entry. The flow of drugs into this Nation violates our sovereignty and brings crime and suffering to our streets and communities. We remain committed to, and will expand, efforts to safeguard our borders from drugs.

- Reducing the supply of drugs: we must reduce the availability of drugs and the ease with which they can be obtained. Our efforts to reduce the supply of drugs must target both domestic and overseas production of these deadly substances.

Our ability to attain these objectives is dependent upon the collective will of the American people and the strength of our leadership. The progress we have made to date is a credit to Americans of all walks of life—State and local leaders, parents, teachers, coaches, doctors, police officers, and clergy. Many have taken a stand against drugs. These gains also result from the leadership and hard work of many, including Attorney General Reno, Secretary of Health and

Human Services Shalala, Secretary of Education Riley, Treasury Secretary Rubin, and Drug Policy Director McCaffrey. I also thank the Congress for their past and future support. If we are to make further progress, we must maintain a bipartisan commitment to the goals of the *Strategy*.

As we enter the new millennium, we are reminded of our common obligation to build and leave for coming generations a stronger Nation. Our *National Drug Control Strategy* will help create a safer, healthier future for all Americans.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 8, 1999.

Remarks to the American Embassy Community in Amman, Jordan February 8, 1999

Death of King Hussein I

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to begin, if I might, by thanking President Bush, President Carter, and President Ford and this congressional delegation for coming on very short notice all the way to Jordan to make a clear and unambiguous statement about our regard and respect and gratitude to King Hussein and the people of Jordan. I thank them very, very much.

I want to thank Ambassador Burns and all of you in the Embassy community for representing us in a difficult and challenging part of the world, in a wonderful country. I thank all the Jordanian nationals who work for the United States. We are honored by your efforts. And when Jordanians and Americans work together in our Embassy here in Amman, they symbolize the partnership that we hope will always exist between the United States and Jordan.

Most of what I would have said has already been said so eloquently by those who have spoken before. I would just like to make a couple of points about King Hussein and about King Abdullah.

First of all, Hussein really did bring people together. You know, I was looking at the four of us—here we are, two Democrats, two Republicans—we've agreed on many things; we've dis-

agreed on a thing or two over time. But we know that America's interest and America's heart were close to this King and this country.

I looked at the Israeli delegation today; I could hardly believe my eyes. All the candidates for prime minister were there. [*Laughter*] They were all walking together. I don't know if they talk at home, but they were all talking here. [*Laughter*] I thought, it was as if Hussein was hugging them all, you know? It was really a beautiful sight. People coming from all around the world, countries that are at each other's throat, here meeting in peace and friendship and the sanctity of the umbrella of this great man. He worked with every American President since President Eisenhower—amazing thing.

The second thing I would like to say is that he really was driven not by the title he had but by the responsibilities it bore. And he was ennobled not by the title but by the strength of his own character and his vision and his spirit. It was unbelievable to me, when we talked right before we started this last round of peace negotiations at Wye—and I knew how ill he was—he said, "Well, I would be willing to come down there if you think it would help." I said, "If I think it would help? This whole thing is about to come apart; of course, it would help." I said, "If you come down, they won't have the courage

to walk away here without an agreement.” And so he did.

And he took a house, and some days he could only work 30 minutes or an hour. But every day we needed him in that long Wye peace accord, he was there. Every day he was needed, he was there—no matter how sick he was, no matter how bad he felt. And his son, the new King, told me tonight, he said, “You know, the truth is it put some days on his life because he was doing what he believed in.” And all the icy atmosphere of those tense talks would immediately disappear when Hussein walked in the room, because all the differences and animosities and grievances seemed small in the face of this very large presence. And it was almost as if the more frail his body became, the more powerful the essence of his spirit was.

Every Jordanian citizen can be proud of that—can be proud that on every continent, in every country of the world, people said that is the sort of person we all ought to be.

The last point I would like to make is that I would like to join the previous speakers in saying that I have great confidence in the young King of Jordan. I had a very good meeting with him today. He clearly understands his mission. He said in the most moving way—he said, “I and all of my brothers and sisters have absorbed our father’s teaching; we know what we are sup-

posed to do, and I intend to do it.” And he said it in a way that exuded the quiet, humble confidence that I saw so often in his father.

And finally, just on a purely personal note, I was deeply honored to be able to bring Queen Noor’s mother and father over on the airplane with me. They are in this audience tonight, because we are leaving from here. And I think we should let them know that our prayers and support are with them, and we are grateful that their daughter, a daughter of America, has been a magnificent Queen of Jordan and a great friend to the people of both countries.

Hillary and I have had so many unbelievable experiences as a result of the great honor of serving in the White House. But among those I will treasure most every day of my life are the times we had with the King of Jordan. He made us all a little better, and he always will.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:45 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Jordan William J. Burns; and Queen Noor’s parents, Najeeb and Doris Halaby. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former Presidents Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George Bush; the First Lady; and Ambassador Burns.

Statement on the Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Conflict *February 9, 1999*

I am deeply concerned by the heavy fighting along the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Since the dispute began in May 1998, my administration has sought to work with these two friends of the United States to achieve a peaceful resolution. Susan Rice, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, has conducted intensive shuttle diplomacy between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and former National Security Adviser Anthony Lake has made four trips to the region at my request.

We remain committed to this crucial effort. A peaceful solution can and must be found without delay. I urge both parties to halt the fighting immediately. If the conflict continues, its human and economic cost will be incalculable for the

people of Ethiopia and Eritrea and for the entire region.

I am disappointed that hostilities resumed while sustained diplomatic efforts by the international community were continuing. We welcome Ethiopia’s standing acceptance of the Organization of African Unity’s Framework Agreement and maintain our support for the efforts of the OAU and others to promote a peaceful resolution of this conflict.

The return to hostilities cannot bring about a lasting solution to this dispute. I am particularly alarmed by the recent use of air power, which escalates the conflict and violates the agreed airstrike moratorium. I urge the Ethiopian Government to refrain from further use

of its aircraft as currently employed along the border, and I ask both sides to renew their commitment to the moratorium.

For the sake of their people, the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea must immediately halt the fighting and recommit themselves to diplomatic efforts to secure a peaceful settlement.

Statement on the Nomination of Richard C. Holbrooke To Be Ambassador to the United Nations

February 9, 1999

I will soon send to the Senate my nomination of Richard C. Holbrooke to be the next United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

From building a lasting peace in Bosnia to searching for a political settlement in Kosovo to finding a workable solution in Cyprus, Richard C. Holbrooke's intellect, vigor, and diplomatic skills have significantly advanced the values and interests of the American people.

At a time when international crises, from Iraq to Kosovo, demand the leadership of the United States and the United Nations, it is essential that we have a strong and capable diplomat like Richard C. Holbrooke as our U.N. Ambassador. He is extraordinarily well qualified for this vital position, and I look forward to the Senate's timely consideration of his nomination.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Romania-United States Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreement With Documentation

February 9, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b) and (d)), the text of a proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Romania Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, with accompanying annex and agreed minute. I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the agreement, and the memorandum of the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency with the Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement concerning the agreement. The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy, which includes a summary of the provisions of the agreement and various other attachments, including agency views, is also enclosed.

The proposed agreement with Romania has been negotiated in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended by the Nuclear

Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 and as otherwise amended. In my judgment, the proposed agreement meets all statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States. The agreement provides a comprehensive framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation between the United States and Romania under appropriate conditions and controls reflecting our common commitment to nuclear nonproliferation goals. Cooperation until now has taken place under a series of supply agreements dating back to 1966 pursuant to the agreement for peaceful nuclear cooperation between the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Government of Romania supports international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. Romania is a party to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation to Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and has an agreement with the IAEA for the application of full-scope safeguards to its nuclear program. Romania also subscribes to the Nuclear Suppliers Group

guidelines, which set forth standards for the responsible export of nuclear commodities for peaceful use, and to the guidelines of the NPT Exporters Committee (Zangger Committee), which oblige members to require the application of IAEA safeguards on nuclear exports to non-nuclear weapon states. In addition, Romania is a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, whereby it agrees to apply international standards of physical protection to the storage and transport of nuclear material under its jurisdiction or control. Finally, Romania was one of the first countries to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

I believe that peaceful nuclear cooperation with Romania under the proposed new agreement will be fully consistent with, and supportive of, our policy of responding positively and constructively to the process of democratization and economic reform in Central Europe. Cooperation under the agreement also will provide opportunities for U.S. business on terms that fully protect vital U.S. national security interests.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed agreement and have determined that

its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the agreement and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

Because this agreement meets all applicable requirements of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended, for agreements for peaceful nuclear cooperation, I am transmitting it to the Congress without exempting it from any requirements contained in section 123 a. of that Act. This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act. My Administration is prepared to begin immediately the consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations Committees as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 b., the 60-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 9, 1999.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Soviet Union-United States Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty *February 9, 1999*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with section 625 of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (as contained in the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999, Public Law 105-277) (the "Act"), I hereby certify and affirm that the United States Government is not implementing the Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems of May 26, 1972 (the "MOU"), entered into in New York on September 26, 1997.

Attached is a report to the Congress on the MOU submitted pursuant to section 625 of the Act.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations, and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 10.

Remarks at the “AmeriCorps Call to Service” in College Park, Maryland *February 10, 1999*

Thank you very much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, when I was listening to Stephen and Leslie and Justin and Pepe talk, I was reminded of why I wanted to be President—so that I could give young people like them the chance to make America a better place.

I want to thank all those who are here today who have supported our efforts. I thank Harris Wofford for his outstanding leadership of the Corporation for National Service; Deb Jospin and John Gomperts of AmeriCorps. I thank Governor Glendening and Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend for making Maryland America's leading State for citizen service. They have clearly done that. I thank my good friend Prince George's County Executive Wayne Curry; Senator Mike Miller, my longtime friend; and Mayor Jacobs, thank you for making us welcome. Carson Daly, thank you for the work MTV did on those wonderful spots, the PSA's. I would like to thank also the mother of the Lieutenant Governor, my good friend Ethel Kennedy, for being here today. And I thank Mark Gearan, our Peace Corps Director, and I'll say a little more about the Peace Corps in a minute and its relationship to AmeriCorps.

I'd like to thank one person who is not here today but who was on the frontlines of creating AmeriCorps, Senator Barbara Mikulski, your United States Senator from Maryland. I thank her. I want to thank the president of the University of Maryland, on my right, and the president of the student government of the University of Maryland, on my left, for making me welcome. Avery and Dr. Mote, thank you.

You have already heard from Dr. Mote and others that 6 years ago I came here to celebrate the end of the Summer of Service, which was our dry run for this national service program. We wanted to work out the kinks and see whether we could make this idea go. There were three people who are here who were instrumental on that day; I would like to thank them: Georgia Sorensen, Marilyn Smith, and my former White House staffer, who I miss very much, Bill Galston. Thank you all very much for what you have done.

And I thank the University of Maryland for the College Park Scholars, the Team Maryland

athletes, the work-study students that are tutoring, and the others from the students and faculty who demonstrate the power of citizen service.

Let me say to all of you, when I ran for President in 1992 I wanted to get America working again and moving again, but I also wanted to bring America together again. It seemed to me that we had two great problems. One is that our economy was not functioning very well, and we seemed to be getting weaker, but also that we seemed to be letting our divisions overcome what we have in common.

Martin Luther King once said that the old law of an eye for an eye sooner or later leaves everyone blind. I always believed that America's differences could be the source of our strength if we respected and we celebrated our differences but we understood that, underneath it all, there was something that bound us together that was more important.

So, as I look back on the last 6 years, I think we can all take a great deal of pride in what our country has achieved together: economically, the longest peacetime expansion in history; the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957, 42 years ago; the welfare rolls cut nearly in half; the lowest crime rate in over a quarter century. I think those are great things.

But I think we can also celebrate the evidence that we are coming together: over 90 percent of our children across all racial and ethnic lines immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in history; the doors of college literally open to all, with the HOPE scholarship; the lifetime learning tax credit; the more generous Pell grant; more affordable student loans; more work-study slots. Those things matter. But maybe most of all, those of you here in AmeriCorps, and those in citizen service—whether in the Peace Corps, serving our country in the military, or serving in some other way—embody the determination of America to draw closer together as we grow more diverse. And that, I think, is terribly important.

When you saw the four AmeriCorps volunteers up here speaking, and each of you identifying with them in turn—if they worked in your project or you knew them—you know they were a picture of America, of the changing face of

America, and the best of America that never changes.

If you look around the world today, at many of the challenges that I face as your President and that the United States faces—the sad trip that the First Lady and I recently took to Jordan for the funeral of our friend the King of Jordan, who survived decades of assassination attempts—literally decades of assassination attempts, probably 50 in all—to stand as a symbol of peace among people in a very tough neighborhood, who use religion as a reason to find their differences more important than their common humanity. All over the world today, you see that. If the United States wants to lead the world toward peace and freedom and prosperity in a new century in a new millennium, it is actually quite an advantage for us to have within our borders people from all races, all religions, all ethnic groups, all cultural backgrounds doing all kinds of different things.

But we cannot do good around the world unless we are good at home. And therefore, we have to find this magical balance, being honest about our differences of opinion on matters from the serious to the mundane, and I'll leave it to you to decide whether it was serious or mundane when the president asked me take sides in the basketball game. *[Laughter]* You've got a great team here, though, I'll tell you that. I've watched it.

We have to find a way to do that, to say, this is what I believe; this is where I stand; this is what I'm for; and also to say how lucky we are to stand on the verge of the new millennium in a totally global society, where people are being brought closer together than ever before, and we are finding ways to relish, to celebrate, to honor our differences in a way to bring us closer together instead of driving us apart.

AmeriCorps is the living, breathing symbol of the answer to that. Where we do not ask people to check their differences at the door, but we do ask them to reaffirm our common humanity. We do not ask for a handout, but we do ask for a hand up for everyone who needs it, and we say we are going forward together. That is what you represent. That is my fondest hope for America. And I thank you for your service.

You know, all during the 20th century, the tradition of citizen service grew stronger in America. In the Great Depression—I remember my parents telling me about the chance Presi-

dent Roosevelt gave able-bodied, unemployed people to work in Civilian Conservation Corps, the CCC. They cleared trails; they fought fires; they planted trees. They built whole State parks: the Appalachian Trail, Skyline Drive in Virginia; parks in my home State that Hillary and I have stayed in, with rather interesting names like Petit Jean and Devil's Den. I have in the back office of the White House an old CCC cap, a cap that one of the volunteers wore in the thirties, that I found wedged in between a chimney and a wall in a cabin in a State park in the mountains of north Arkansas. And I have kept it with me all these long years to remember the unifying power of citizen service in one of the most difficult moments of the 20th century for the United States.

President Kennedy, in the 1960's, asked young people to serve in the Peace Corps to teach English, to provide health care, to bring running water and electricity to some of the most remote villages in Africa, Asia, and South America. My brother-in-law served in the Peace Corps in Colombia. And the other night, he was getting together with some of the people who served there with him. When we were getting ready to come out here today and Senator Wofford came in with Mark Gearan, the present Peace Corps Director, we were celebrating the fact that, if our new budget passes, we will have more people serving in the Peace Corps in the next 2 years than have ever served in any given year. We'll be back at an all-time high.

And we were lamenting the fact that we just had to withdraw our Peace Corps volunteers from Eritrea and Ethiopia, two countries that I have felt particularly close to in the last couple of years, because of the trouble the two countries are having, the threat to go to war. And the Peace Corps volunteers, going all the way back for decades, have volunteered to try to come in and solve the conflict and deal with the disputed area of land. I don't know if they will accept it, but think of that. All these years later, people that were there years and years ago remember what it was like, not to give a handout but to give a hand up and to ask people to understand that their differences are not as important as what they have in common.

So I thank our Peace Corps volunteers; I thank Mark Gearan. And I thank all of you

in AmeriCorps, because you are in the rich tradition of America's citizen service, from the CCC to the Peace Corps to AmeriCorps.

Now, six summers after I first came here, AmeriCorps is thriving. There now have been over 100,000 people serve in AmeriCorps in just 4 years of the full-time program. Everywhere I go around the country, I see you. I see you in all kinds of different contexts. I was in San Jose right before the election, and there were a lot of—the Peace Corps volunteers had just come to start their mission, and so I saw them standing on the street as I pulled into the hotel. And I asked them all to come see me, and we took a little picture, and they were from everywhere.

And then when I went home to Arkansas after the terrible tornadoes a couple of weeks ago, in both the communities I visited there were AmeriCorps volunteers there, and there were people there who, believe me, would never have come to Arkansas in their lives—[laughter]—if they hadn't been in AmeriCorps. I know it was good for the people they were helping, and I think it was pretty good for them.

This has been an astonishing encounter for tens of thousands of people. Now, all of you know what it's like. I love talking to people who have been in AmeriCorps because I always hear two things. Number one, they're proud of what they did to help people, teaching a child to read or immunizing a child or having a playground that's safe in an area that used to be dominated by gangs or cleaning up some polluted site or doing something to preserve the environment. I love that. The second thing I always hear is, "I like the people with whom I serve. I met people I never would have met. I got to know people I never would have gotten to know. We were all so different, and yet, when we worked together, we grew together, and it made my life different and better." That is what AmeriCorps needs to do, and that is what America needs to do.

America needs to think of itself as sort of a giant AmeriCorps, the Peace Corps at home, getting things done together. Getting things done together. If our budget passes this fall, we can boost the number of AmeriCorps volunteers by one quarter, to 50,000 members. In our new budget, we want to keep expanding AmeriCorps every year so that by the year 2003, and there forward, every year, 100,000 young people will be serving in AmeriCorps.

But I want to challenge the young people of this country, and the not so young who are willing to do it, to sign up for AmeriCorps, to see for yourselves what you can do to solve America's problems and reap America's promise. I want to challenge high school students, as well. Maryland has done a wonderful job, as the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor said, being the only State in the country to actually require community service as a part of a public education. In our balanced budget, we propose to allow high schoolers for the very first time to join AmeriCorps by serving part-time during the school year and full-time in the summers. And I want to challenge, again, the young people beyond this room, to dedicate a year or two of your lives to a cause larger than yourselves. It may be your best chance to change the lives of others for the better and to enrich your own life in the process.

Today, so many young people have the time and freedom and energy they will never have in the future, to tackle the kind of challenge AmeriCorps represents, to pack a bag at a moment's notice to fight a forest fire, or move into our most remote towns or Native American reservations to teach children, or work with churches in some of our toughest neighborhoods. At the end of your service, as all of you know, AmeriCorps will provide help to pay for college or pay off student loans. So I ask you all to help me reach others, to take advantage of this opportunity, to use this moment to prove that this generation of young people, far from being a generation of cynics and slackers, is instead a generation of doers and patriots.

Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend quoted something her father said. I would like to close with a quotation from Senator Robert Kennedy, in a speech he gave to college students in South Africa when I was a young man. It resonated around the world, and every person my age—which was then your age now—every young person I knew, without regard to their party or their opinions or anything else, was riveted by the notion that a United States Senator could go to South Africa and talk to the young people about building a different future, a long time before, for the first time in over 300 years, all South Africans had a chance to choose their future.

This is what he said: "Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he sends

forth a tiny ripple of hope. And crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

That is still true today. For those in AmeriCorps, I thank you for sending forth those ripples of hope. I thank you for bringing out the best in yourselves and others.

For those who could still yet serve, I ask you to join the rest of your fellow citizens in building that bridge to the 21st century that all can walk across, arm in arm, to the best days of America.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:34 p.m. in Richie Coliseum at the University of Maryland. In his remarks, he referred to AmeriCorps volunteers Stephen Hellinger, Leslie Mayo, Justin Ward, and Susan (Pepe) Carrasco; Gov. Parris N. Glendening and Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; Thomas V. (Mike) Miller, Jr., president, Maryland State Senate; Mayor Michael J. Jacobs of College Park; Carson Daly, host, MTV Live; Avery Straw, student government president, and C.D. Mote, Jr., president, University of Maryland, College Park; and the President's brother-in-law, Hugh Rodham.

Message on the Observance of the Lunar New Year, 1999

February 11, 1999

Warm greetings to everyone observing the Lunar New Year.

This annual festival, rooted in the ancient religious and cultural traditions of Asia, is a joyous celebration of family and community, of hope and new beginnings. Each year during the first month of the lunar calendar, millions of families across America and around the world gather to welcome the imminent arrival of spring by honoring their ancestors, visiting friends, sharing delicious food, and enjoying a profusion of fireworks, colorful decorations, parades, music, and dancing.

The celebration of the Lunar New Year is also a reminder of how much our national life has been enriched by the customs, culture, and achievements of Asian Americans. In every field of endeavor, from business to the arts, from government to academia, Asian Americans are making vital contributions to our country's progress and prosperity.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration and for a new year of health, happiness, and peace.

BILL CLINTON

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the Emigration Policies and Trade Status of Mongolia

February 11, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

On September 4, 1996, I determined and reported to the Congress that Mongolia was not in violation of the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402(a) and 409(a) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended. This action allowed for the continuation of normal trade relations status for Mongolia and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver.

As required by law, I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Mongolia. The report indicates continued Mongolian compliance with U.S. and international standards in the area of emigration.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 11, 1999.

Remarks on the Conclusion of the Senate Impeachment Trial and an Exchange With Reporters *February 12, 1999*

The President. Now that the Senate has fulfilled its constitutional responsibility, bringing this process to a conclusion, I want to say again to the American people how profoundly sorry I am for what I said and did to trigger these events and the great burden they have imposed on the Congress and on the American people.

I also am humbled and very grateful for the support and the prayers I have received from millions of Americans over this past year.

Now I ask all Americans, and I hope all Americans—here in Washington and throughout

our land—will rededicate ourselves to the work of serving our Nation and building our future together. This can be and this must be a time of reconciliation and renewal for America.

Thank you very much.

Q. In your heart, sir, can you forgive and forget?

The President. I believe any person who asks for forgiveness has to be prepared to give it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:38 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on the American Airlines Labor Dispute *February 12, 1999*

Over the past several days I have closely monitored the labor dispute between American Airlines and the Allied Pilots Association. I am concerned about the impact this labor dispute is having on our Nation and the traveling public. With the potential for enormous disruption over the upcoming Presidents' Day holiday weekend, I urge both parties to think of the impact on the traveling public, set aside their differences, and work together to resolve the issues between them. We have a long history and tradition of settling labor disputes in this country under the law. The Railway Labor Act provides the means for the airline industry to resolve these disputes.

It is my understanding that American Airlines canceled up to 80 percent of its flights yesterday, affecting major cities such as New York,

Miami, Los Angeles, Dallas, and Chicago, and that it might cancel at least half of its scheduled flights today. I commend the cities, the airports, the tourism industry, and the other major carriers for doing their part to keep domestic air traffic moving. However, even with all of the carriers doing their part, it is likely that thousands of passengers will be forced to change their travel plans. They are innocent bystanders in a dispute that should be set aside over the weekend and resolved at the bargaining table.

Again, I urge both sides to consider the impact their dispute is having on the traveling public as well as the millions of Americans who depend on the transportation and tourism industries for their livelihood.

Message on the Observance of Presidents' Day, 1999 *February 12, 1999*

I am pleased to join all Americans in observing Presidents' Day.

Today we celebrate the vision and achievements of our nation's former Presidents, and we remember with special pride two of our

greatest leaders, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Though born almost 80 years apart and shaped by vastly different circumstances and experiences, they still shared much in common.

Each assumed the Presidency at a crucial moment in our nation's history; each had a clear vision of what America should be and the courage to lead his fellow citizens toward that vision; and each shared a profound devotion to our country and to its promise of freedom and human dignity. Because of George Washington, America's great experiment in democracy has succeeded; because of Abraham Lincoln, America's Union has been preserved.

Now, as we stand at the dawn of a new century, we have a historic opportunity—and re-

sponsibility—to build on the legacies of Washington and Lincoln. Blessed with peace and unprecedented prosperity, we must seize this unique moment in our national life and shape a future where every American has the tools and the opportunity to succeed; where we finally understand that the dreams and ideals that unite us are more powerful than any differences that divide us; and where new generations of Americans can live in peace, prosperity, and freedom.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

BILL CLINTON

The President's Radio Address

February 13, 1999

Good morning. This week the warring parties in Kosovo have been meeting at a 14th century castle in France, in search of a 21st century peace. They've come together because of the determination of the United States, our European allies, and Russia to help end Kosovo's bloodshed and build a peaceful future there. Today I want to speak to you about why peace in Kosovo is important to America.

World War II taught us that America could never be secure if Europe's future was in doubt. We and our Allies formed NATO after the war, and together we've deterred aggression, secured Europe, and eventually made possible the victory of freedom all across the European continent. In this decade, violent ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia have threatened Europe's stability and future.

For 4 years Bosnia was the site of Europe's bloodiest war in half a century. With American leadership and that of our allies, we worked to end the war and move the Bosnian people toward reconciliation and democracy. Now, as the peace takes hold, we've been steadily bringing our troops home. But Bosnia taught us a lesson: In this volatile region, violence we fail to oppose leads to even greater violence we will have to oppose later at greater cost. We must heed that lesson in Kosovo.

In 1989 Serbia stripped away Kosovo's autonomy. A year ago Serbian forces launched a brutal crackdown against Kosovo's ethnic Albanians. Fighting and atrocities intensified, and hundreds of thousands of people were driven from their

homes. Last fall, using diplomacy backed by the threat of NATO force, we averted a humanitarian crisis and slowed the fighting. But now it's clear that only a strong peace agreement can end it.

America has a national interest in achieving this peace. If the conflict persists, there likely will be a tremendous loss of life and a massive refugee crisis in the middle of Europe. There is a serious risk the hostilities would spread to the neighboring new democracies of Albania and Macedonia, and reignite the conflict in Bosnia we worked so hard to stop. It could even involve our NATO Allies Greece and Turkey. If we wait until casualties mount and war spreads, any effort to stop it will come at a higher price, under more dangerous conditions. The time to stop the war is right now.

With our NATO Allies and Russia, we have offered a comprehensive plan to restore peace and return self-government to Kosovo. NATO has authorized airstrikes if Serbia fails to comply with its previous commitments to withdraw forces and fails to support a peace accord. At the same time, we've made it clear to the Kosovo Albanians that if they reject our plan or continue to wage war, they will not have our support.

There are serious obstacles to overcome at the current talks. It is increasingly clear that this effort can only succeed if it includes a NATO-led peace implementation force that gives both sides the confidence to lay down their arms. It's also clear that if there is a real peace,

American participation in the force can provide such confidence, particularly for Kosovo's Albanians. For them, as for so many people around the world, America symbolizes hope and resolve. Europeans would provide the great bulk of any NATO force, roughly 85 percent. Our share would amount to a little less than 4,000 personnel.

Now, a final decision on troops, which I will make in close consultation with Congress, will depend upon the parties reaching a strong peace agreement. It must provide for an immediate cease-fire, rapid withdrawal of most Serbian security forces, and demilitarization of the insurgents. The parties must agree to the NATO force and demonstrate that they are ready to implement the agreement. NATO's mission must be well-defined, with a clear and realistic strategy to allow us to bring our forces home when their work is done.

Anytime we send troops, we must be mindful of the risks. But if these conditions are met, if there is an effective agreement and a clear plan, I believe America should contribute to securing peace for Kosovo. And I look forward to working with Congress in making this final decision.

America cannot be everywhere or do everything overseas. But we must act where important interests are at stake and we can make a difference. Peace in Kosovo clearly is important to the United States, and with bipartisan support in Congress and the backing of the American people, we can make a difference.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico in Merida February 15, 1999

Senate Impeachment Trial Vote

Q. Mr. President, do you feel vindicated by the Senate vote? And how do you think you will be able to overcome any damage that was caused in your relations with Republican leaders in Congress?

The President. Well, I have, really, nothing to add to what I said on Friday about that. I think this is a time for reconciliation and renewal. I think what we have to do is to serve the American people. And if we keep that in mind, I think everything will be fine.

We can't resolve the challenges of Social Security and Medicare, education, these other things, we can't keep the international economy going unless we have a level of cooperation. I'm encouraged that we have a number of Republican Members of Congress on this trip, and I intend to do exactly what I said I'd do last Friday. And I think if everybody just keeps our eye on the ball—which is that we are here to serve the public, and not the other way around—I think we'll be fine.

Mexico-U.S. Antidrug Efforts

Q. Mr. President, do you have any problems with the system the United States has for certifying drug cooperation?

The President. Well, first of all, it is the law of the land, and the Secretary of State sometime in the next few weeks will have to make a recommendation. I think the question is, how can we do better to deal with the drug problem? President Zedillo said it's his number one national security problem. Neither country has won the drug war. And the fundamental question is, are we better off fighting it together or separately, and perhaps sometimes at odds with one another?

Under General McCaffrey, who's here, we put in place a very aggressive antidrug strategy. Finally, we've got a lot of the indicators going in the right direction in the United States. And cooperation with Mexico has clearly improved under President Zedillo's leadership. The issue is what is most likely to free our children of this scourge in the new century, and that's what will guide my decisions.

Thank you all.

Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy

Q. Have you encouraged Mrs. Clinton to run for the Senate, sir? What have you said to her?

The President. People in New York started calling her. I don't think it had ever occurred to her before a lot of people started calling and asking her to do it. I think she would be terrific in the Senate. But that's a decision that she'll have to make. And for reasons I'm sure you'll understand, she hasn't had anything like adequate time to talk to the people who think she should do this, much less people who think perhaps she shouldn't. I mean, she just hasn't had time to deal with this.

But it's her decision to make. I will support whatever decision she makes enthusiastically.

She has a lot of other opportunities for public service that will be out there, and she and I both would like to continue to be useful in public affairs when we leave office. But it's a decision she'll have to make. She'd be great if she did it, but she hasn't had anything like the requisite amount of time to talk to people and to assess it, and I'm sure that everyone will understand and appreciate that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 11:30 a.m. in Hacienda Temozon. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Business Leaders in Merida
February 15, 1999

Mr. President, Mrs. Zedillo, distinguished Mexican officials, members of the Mexican Congress, the Governor and First Lady of Yucatan, the mayor and the people of Merida: Let me begin by thanking all of you for the wonderful reception you have given to me and to Hillary, to the members of our Cabinet, the Members of Congress, our entire American delegation.

Hillary and I came to Mexico 24 years ago for what I believe you call our *luna de miel*, our honeymoon. And your country has been close to our hearts ever since. I want to especially thank President Zedillo for joining me in building the closest, most candid, most comprehensive relationship in the long history of our two nations.

Merida faces the Caribbean and the interior. It looks north and south. It combines Old World architecture with a thriving indigenous culture. In many ways, therefore, this city symbolizes the new, inclusive community of the Americas, a community of shared values and genuine cooperation. I thank the Members of the American Congress of both parties whose presence here with me today is evidence of America's commitment to the common future we will make together.

Nothing better symbolizes the sea change in our sense of hemispheric community than the partnership between the United States and Mex-

ico. Not so long ago, the great Mexican writer Octavio Paz said, "The North Americans are outstanding in the art of the monolog." I'm glad to say we have turned the monolog into a dialog—a dialog of mutual respect and interdependence. Today, we speak with each other, not at each other. From different starting points, our courses are converging in our common commitment to democracy and in the absolute certainty that we will share the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

We honor President Zedillo and all the people of Mexico for the steps you have taken and are taking to deepen your democracy. Now, as your people deliver their votes for democracy, we must all do what we can to make sure democracy delivers for them, for democracy will only endure if we can build the quality of life it promises.

That is the challenge we are addressing here today. I start with the good news: As President Zedillo has said, our economic relationship is strong, and we are making it even stronger. Our decision to let Mexican and U.S. airlines engage in joint sales and marketing will generate many millions of dollars in new revenues, not only for the airlines but for the travel and investment potential of our countries. It will benefit especially tourism regions like the Yucatan. We also

agreed today to enable the Ex-Im Bank to provide up to \$4 billion to keep U.S. exports such as aircraft and construction equipment flowing into Mexico and to maintain Mexico's position as Ex-Im's top market.

This year we celebrate 5 years since NAFTA entered into force. There were many doubters then. But look at the facts now: Since 1993, our exports to each other have roughly doubled. In the United States alone, a million jobs depend on this trade; that is up 43 percent since 1993. Of course, we still have work to do on labor, environmental, and other issues. But NAFTA has taught us that we have far more to gain by working together.

We learned that lesson again 4 years ago when the United States was proud to assist Mexico in restoring confidence in the peso. President Zedillo acted decisively and courageously. The Mexican people made tough sacrifices to speed recovery. The United States was right to support you, and you have followed the right course.

More recently, we all agree that our trade relationship has helped to insulate both countries from the global financial crisis that has caused such hardship elsewhere. In 1998, while U.S. exports to the Pacific Rim dropped 19 percent, our exports to each other went up about 10 percent. We must expand this oasis of confidence and growth in our hemisphere by creating a free-trade area of the Americas. And we must stand by our friends in the hemisphere when they face the difficulties of the moment—particularly President Cardoso of Brazil, whose reforms ultimately will help the Brazilian people and all the rest of us as well.

Today we did good work to deepen our partnership beyond economics. As the President said, we are joining together to help our Central American neighbors. We're improving public health along our border. We're working hard to protect the natural resources we share. As we learn more about pollution problems along the border, we're better able to respond to them, including through the institutions created by NAFTA.

Today we've agreed to strengthen our cooperation in fighting forest fires and air pollution, in cleaning our water, and in moving against climate change, the greatest global environmental challenge of the next century.

We have also made progress in areas today where, to be charitable, we have not always

agreed. Not long ago, we could not have had a conversation about drugs without falling into an unwinnable argument about who is to blame. That has changed. The American people recognize we must reduce our demand for drugs; the Mexican people recognize that ending the drug trade is a national security and public health imperative for you.

We can talk candidly about this now because we have started to speak the same language: the language of parents who love their children; the language of citizens who want to live in communities where streets are safe and laws are respected; the language of leaders who recognize that our responsibility is to protect our people from violence and our democracy from corrosion.

In 1997 President Zedillo and I committed our countries to an alliance against drugs. "Alliance" is not a word to be used lightly. It means that what threatens one country threatens the other and that we cannot meet the threat alone. If a town in Mexico lives in fear of traffickers who enrich themselves by selling to our citizens and terrorizing Mexican citizens, that is a problem we have a moral duty to solve together.

We have increased our cooperation. I welcome the plan Mexico announced 2 weeks ago to invest an additional \$500 million in the fight against drugs. The United States is ready to do all we can to support you. I offered our support to Mexico's newly established Federal preventive police force. We will expand consultation on cross-border law enforcement. We agreed to important new benchmarks that will actually measure our mutual success in the war on drugs.

We must also tackle the problem of corruption that bedevils every nation fighting drugs. I want to acknowledge President Zedillo's efforts in Mexico's interests to root out this scourge. Much has been said in my country about the extent of the problem you face. But let us not forget that what we know in America comes largely from Mexico's brave efforts to get to the truth and air it. Mexico should not be penalized for having the courage to confront its problems.

Another sensitive issue that has divided us all too often is immigration. The United States is a nation of immigrants, built by the courage and optimism of those who came to our shores to begin life anew. We continue to accept large numbers of legal immigrants, and we continue

to have our borders crossed every year by large numbers of illegal immigrants. As we welcome new immigrants, we must also strive to manage our borders. I say to you that we will do so with justice, fairness, and sensitivity. We will also work to promote safety and human rights at the border. And as we agreed today, we must work together to stop the deadly traffic in human beings into and through our nations.

Ten years ago our relationship was marred by mistrust. Today, we recognize that any complex relationship will have its ups and downs, but we know our differences cannot divide us. President Zedillo and I have invested a great deal in our partnership. We intend to lay the groundwork for the next generation of leaders to follow, people who will build on the legacy all of us have worked hard to create. The way we approach our problems now will define how our successors—not just our leaders but ordinary citizens—in Mexico and the United States will live their lives for decades to come.

Mexico is the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world. Before long, the United States will be the second largest Spanish-speaking country in the world. Almost 15 million United States citizens trace their ancestry to Mexico. Twenty-eight percent of our foreign-born population come from here. Every year our border is legally crossed about 250 million times. With each crossing, we move beyond mere diplomacy, closer to genuine friendship, a human friendship between two peoples who share the same con-

tinent, the same air, the same ancestors, the same future.

We are more than neighbors. More and more, we belong to the same American family. Like any family, we will have our differences, born of history, experience, instinct, honest opinion. But like any family, we know that what binds us together is far, far more important than what divides us.

Not long after Merida was founded, a Mexican poet described the renewal that comes every year at this time to those who wisely till their fields and plant ahead, in these words: “Here, by the Supreme Giver, one and all, in stintless grace and beauty, are bestowed. This is their dwelling. These, their native fields. And this, the tide of spring in Mexico.”

This tide of spring has brought a new season of friendship between Mexico and the United States. President Zedillo, people of Merida and Yucatan, I wish you a happy Carnival. For all of us, I pray that we will reap the full harvest of the season. *Agradezco a los Mexicanos de todo corazón*. Thank you, Mexico.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. in the Teatro Peon Contreras. In his remarks, he referred to President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico and his wife, Nilda; Gov. Victor M. Cervera of Yucatan and his wife, Amira; Mayor Xavier Abreu of Merida; and President Fernando Cardoso of Brazil.

Remarks on Legislative Priorities for the Budget Surplus

February 17, 1999

She was great—give her a hand. [*Applause*] Great job. Well, thank you very much, Sharon. You did a great job, and I feel better knowing that you’re out at NIH, doing great work there.

I would like to thank Secretary Rubin and Commissioner Apfel and Senator Robb and Representative Baldwin. I’d like to thank Congressmen Levin and Hoyer for being here, and the members of the administration; all of the young people here from your various organizations. We have young people here from City Year and AmeriCorps. We have young people here from the University of Maryland, from the

James MacGregor Burns leadership program. We have young people here who are doing other things with your lives, who consented to come.

I want to talk a little today in greater specifics about the nature of the choice facing our country now. For 200 years, the test of each generation of Americans has been not simply how well they did in their own time but whether they left our country in better shape for future generations. Because of the size of the baby boom generation, to which the First Lady and I and a few others in this room belong, we have a

special responsibility to the generation represented by most of you in this room and by Sharon, in particular, as she spoke.

We have rarely had both a clearer picture of the large challenges facing our future and more resources to meet them. And I don't just mean money although we do have a strong position in that budget. But our country is doing well. We have a lot of confidence. We have a lot of access to information. We have a lot of tools for dealing with our challenges that many of our predecessors did not have. Since we have a pretty good idea of what the challenges are and we have an extraordinary array of opportunities and resources to meet them, I would argue to you that we have an even greater obligation than our predecessors did to do just that.

We now have embarked on a great debate as a result of our surplus, on the one hand, and the evident financial challenges to Social Security and Medicare on the other. We have clearly two different strategies through all the complexities for moving into the future: one offered by our administration and many members of our party and the Congress, on the one hand; and on the other, by the leaders of the majority party in Congress. We're debating how best to seize this moment, how best to provide a better future for you.

This is a truly historic opportunity. And it is very important that as a people we choose wisely. It is a substantive debate. It is an honest debate. It is a debate worth having.

Underlying all the details and all the complexities you will hear this year about how you do the accounting on the surplus, how we should increase the rate of return on Social Security, what exactly we should do on Medicare, how much money will be required in the future for defense, should we also be investing more in medical research and education and other things over the long run, what should be the size of the tax cut and who should get the tax cut—all of these questions are quite complex, particularly when you try to mesh them together in one plan. But underlying all of it, there is fundamentally a very simple choice: Will our first priority be spending the budget surpluses we have worked so hard to create on a terrifically appealing tax cut in the moment? Or will our first priority be investing whatever the necessary amount of the surplus is for at least the next 15 years to strengthen Social Security and Medi-

care, to cut taxes in a way that help people not so much today but to save for their own retirement and to pay down the national debt as much as we possibly can, so that we can guarantee longer term prosperity into the 21st century?

That is really what the simple choice underlying all the details will be: What is our first priority? It's no secret what I think it should be. I think we should move forward with the economic strategy of the last 6 years, to put a priority on investing in our people and the future. I do not believe we should go back to a version of the policy that dominated the United States in the 12 years before this administration came to office and gave us a decade-plus of deficits and quadrupling the national debt and underinvestment in our future.

The proposed new tax policy of the majority party in Congress, I believe, would spend too much of the surplus now and invest too little of it for tomorrow. I believe it would target the lion's share of the benefits away from the middle class who need the money the most to prepare for the future of their children and their own retirement. I believe it would reward consumption over savings, when we should be doing the reverse.

Our plan would put priority on investing for the future. And I'd like to say, in defense of our plan, I think we ought to be at least entitled to the benefit of the doubt, based on the last 6 years.

Seven years ago when I was running for President and going from college campus to college campus, there was a lot of anger, a lot of frustration. There were a lot of young people who felt that they had been betrayed by their parents' generation, because we had just allowed things in this country to get out of hand. The deficit was out of control, the debt had quadrupled, interest rates were high, unemployment was up, social problems were growing worse, and the division—the sense of anxiety and division in the country was intensifying. And there was really a lot of doubt about whether our country was up to meeting these challenges. I didn't doubt that very much because it seemed to me that it just simply required people in positions of responsibility to make a few clear decisions. And remember, in every complex debate the details really matter, but they only matter after you make the big, simple decisions.

We now have the longest peacetime expansion in our history; 18 million new jobs, almost; wages are going up at nearly twice the rate of inflation. We have the highest homeownership in history; the lowest percentage of our people on welfare in history; the lowest recorded rates of our minority unemployment since we've been keeping those statistics, for about 27 years now; the lowest peacetime unemployment in our country since 1957. Last year, for the first time in three decades, as Senator Robb noted, the red ink turned to black with a surplus of \$70 billion. We project a slightly larger surplus this year, with more to come.

Now, of course, over the next 15 or 20 years, there will be fluctuations that we can't predict exactly from year to year. If we have a recession, there will be fewer people paying taxes, and there will be more money going out to the unemployed. But the point that has to be emphasized is that the long-term projections are good because we have eliminated the permanent structural deficit. We now have a permanent, structural balanced budget and surplus.

And that is what has brought us to this moment of decision, that and the evident financial crisis which will be imposed on Social Security when the baby boomers retire and on Medicare even sooner, because we're living longer and there's more technology and because the older you get, the more it costs to maintain a state of wellness.

Now, I would say again, I realize that the path we have recommended, and the path that I personally passionately believe in, will not be the most popular one at first hearing. But I ask you to at least look at the last 6 years and say, maybe they ought to be given the benefit of the doubt.

I was very moved when Sharon talked about being a nurse and learning from dealing with all different kinds of people that no one can predict what will happen to you in life. My mother was a nurse, and she used to tell me those stories over and over again. By pure coincidence, less than an hour before I came over here, I got word that a young woman whose family has been close to Hillary and me over the last several years, who has two young children, just found out that she has cancer. Now, she may be fine; there's wonderful treatment available; the tests are just being done. But the point is, a week ago such a thing would have never crossed her mind. She is the picture of

health; she is a fitness fanatic; she has no conduct that would indicate propensity to develop it. These things happen.

And the great dilemma for all of us, both in our family and our work lives and in our national life, is that we really have to always be planning for the future as if we're all going to be all right from now on, because as a country and as a people and in our families, most of us are, most of the time. But we also have to plan for a future in which we recognize our shared responsibility to care for one another and to give each other the chance to do well, or as well as possible when the accidents occur, when the diseases develop, when the unforeseen occurs, or when time takes its toll and we get older—which looks younger every day to me. [Laughter]

And that is the question. This is—it's hard to imagine a more profound subject, really, with which to be dealing. Tammy was talking about her grandmother and her niece. This is something that affects us all, and as time and chance occurs, and we try to fulfill our responsibilities, we have to make it work out so that, at the end of the day, our families are stronger and our Nation is stronger and your future is brighter.

Now, what I want you to think about today is what we should do as our first priority with this surplus. When I took office in 1993, we were spending 14 cents of every dollar you paid in taxes paying interest on the national debt—\$200 billion—15 times more than we were spending on education, training, and employment services, just to make the interest payments. By the year 2014, when I took office, it was projected that we'd be spending 27 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes making interest payments on the debt—\$1.28 trillion.

Now, just by eliminating the deficit over the past 6 years and going into these surpluses, we now know that we'll be able to meet our Social Security obligations between now and 2032, because the Trust Fund will be available—actually, it will be in about 14 years that the taxes will not cover the payments on a monthly basis, but the Trust Fund, the savings account, will carry to 2032.

Now, that's a lot of progress. But we've still got some real challenges. Number one, 2032 is not that far away, and when you're dealing with money this big, the sooner you start to deal with the problem, the easier it is to deal

with it. And the longer you take to deal with it, the more difficult, the more painful, the more expensive it will be and the more unpleasant our choices will be. Number two, we're still carrying a \$3.7 trillion publicly held debt on our books.

Now, I believe if we were to use the budget surpluses overwhelmingly to pay down the national debt for 15 years and target that money to Social Security and Medicare, it would dramatically improve your economic future, and it would be a great safety protection against the possibility of adverse economic developments beyond our borders which could affect us here. We can also save Social Security and Medicare. We can keep the promises that have already been made. We can provide substantial tax relief, targeted heavily to the middle-class families to save for retirement.

You know, half the seniors in this country would be in poverty today if it weren't for Social Security. But the poverty rate among elderly women is still twice the overall poverty rate of our seniors. Women have longer life expectancies than men. They're more likely to—I expect NIH to change that, by the way, with all the investment we put in. [Laughter] They're more likely, therefore, to spend more years alone and more likely to be in poverty.

We need to have a tax relief package that encourages people to save for their own retirement—you, now. And we can increase Government savings and do it in a way that provides tax relief that also increases private savings for your future, which I think is very, very important. And parenthetically, as you pay down the debt, that leads to lower interest payments for college loans, for mortgage loans, for car payments, for credit card payments. It leads to lower interest rates for business loans, which leads to higher investment and more jobs and a brighter future. So you get a two-for-one thing if you do it. But to be fair, the choice is, you have to give up some of the tax cut that the congressional majority would offer you today, which sounds nice.

Now, my proposal is, save 62 percent of the surplus for Social Security for the next 15 years and invest a modest portion in the private sector so we can increase the rates of return on the Social Security Trust Fund. That takes us to 55 years for the soundness of the program.

Next, I want to extend the life of Social Security to 75 years, which is where we have tradi-

tionally thought it should be, so that young people living in college today—college students today, if we do that, would be covered well into their nineties. I think we should do more to reduce poverty among elderly women. I think we should lift the limits on what people on Social Security can earn for themselves, without having to give back their benefits, in effect. We can do this if we make some other choices and work together. They're clear, and they're not complicated, really. They'll be somewhat unpopular, but we have to do some things to get this done.

Second thing I want to do is to give another 15 percent of the surplus for 15 years to Medicare. If we do this, we can keep it safe and sound until 2020, and I hope we can go further. I think that we should, at a very minimum, cover the greatest growing need of seniors, which is for affordable prescription drugs. This is a big deal. Anybody involved in medical research will tell you that we can actually keep seniors out of the hospital and out of trouble, and therefore lower the aggregate costs of health care over the long run, if we can work Medicare out so we can absorb the front-end investment of a prescription drug benefit.

And by the way, by the time your parents—those of you in your twenties—are on Medicare, it will be more true. And by the time you are there, it will be even more true. So the quicker we get to a health care program that allows people to manage their own health care and stay healthy and use whatever modern medicine develops to do so, the better off we're going to be.

Now, the third thing I propose is that we have a tax cut of over \$500 billion to create USA accounts, Universal Savings Accounts, that would be targeted to middle class families to help them save for their own retirement. Social Security alone is not enough for people to maintain their standard of living. Many people in the years where they're working hard and raising their kids and worrying about sending them to college do not have the resources to save. We want to make it possible through the tax cut to have more people save for their own retirement.

So where are we with all this? The Republican leadership has said that generally it supports setting aside 62 percent of the surplus until we save Social Security. That's good, and I appreciate that. So we have national unity

on that issue. Then we can argue about the details, about what the best way to do that is. But that's where the agreement ends. And I think it's important—they still really haven't made a commitment to extend the life of the Social Security Trust Fund from 55 to 75 years, and you should demand that all of us do that. Everybody here in your twenties, you should demand that we not walk away from this session of Congress without extending the life to 75 years and doing something about the poverty rate among elderly women and letting our seniors get out from this earnings limitation.

Now secondly, they do not agree that we should set aside 15 percent of the surplus to save Medicare and to pay down the national debt even further to lower future interest rates even more, to spur even more economic growth. I think this is a terrible mistake. That does not mean that we won't have to make some tough choices to reform the Medicare program. But we're going to be better off saving more of this surplus, paying down the debt more, and saving Medicare along with Social Security.

Third, we differ on the tax relief. I believe that tax relief is appropriate. I don't think that the whole surplus should be retained by the Government, even for Social Security and Medicare. But when you've got a country with a savings rate as low as ours is and when you know right now that working families need to be saving more for their own retirement, it seems to me wrong to have a tax cut where a disproportionate amount of the benefits will go to people in very high income categories, who have taken care of their retirement fine and who have made a good deal of money in the stock market over the next 6 years, and not target even greater tax relief to middle income families who need to do more to save for their own retirement.

So those are the basic differences. But I just want to hammer to the young people here home the following things: You should want us to save Social Security and Medicare, not only for yourselves but for your families. You heard Tammy Baldwin talking about that. I can tell you that the baby boom generation is really worried, as I said in the State of the Union, that our retirement will cause undue burden on our children and on our children's ability to raise our grandchildren. So if you don't have to worry about that, that is also a direct financial benefit to you.

If you don't have to worry about the medical bills of your parents because we save Medicare, it could be worth a lot more to you if your parents get sick than a short-term tax cut would today—a lot more.

And if we continue this debt reduction and we go as far as Secretary Rubin said—just think about it—having public debt the smallest percentage of our economy that it's been since before we went into World War I. I'll tell you what that will mean in 15 years—just 15 years—and believe me, 15 years passes in the flash of an eye. What it means is that we will only be spending 2 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes on debt service.

And 15 years from now, if the Congress wants to give more tax relief, let them do it; 15 years from now, if we're on the verge of a comprehensive cure for cancer and they want to give it to the National Institute of Health, let them do it; 15 years from now, if we have some other big crisis and we want to have a major investment in education, as we did when we got into the space race, let them do it. We should be willing to give some of these decisions to the future, instead of taking it now, when it looks easy but we'd be squandering a historic responsibility. I am quite willing to leave a decision like that to the future. A lot of you may be here then; I'd like for you to have the option to do what is necessary.

So again I say, underneath all these complexities, there is a fundamentally simple choice. Should our first priority be an across-the-board tax cut now, of a size which will keep us from dedicating a lot of this surplus to Medicare and will reduce our ability to pay down the debt and keep down interest rates and keep up investments over the long run and tie the hands of future decisionmakers? Or should our priority be to save Social Security and Medicare and have targeted tax relief to help retirement savings be built up in middle class families that have not been doing it or that need more, in a way that maximizes our ability to pay down the debt?

Some people in this room have heard me tell this story too many times, but I want to say it one more time. When I was a freshman in college and I took a course in the history of civilization, in the last lecture of the year, my professor at Georgetown said that the distinguishing characteristic of Western civilization was that we had always, at critical junctures,

been driven by what he called “future preference,” the idea that the future can be better than the present and that each individual and society as a whole have a personal, moral responsibility to make it so.

Now, that’s really what this is about. Their idea sounds simpler, sounds good, even sounds fair: 10 percent for everybody. Our idea will give you a stronger economy, will save Social Security and Medicare, will stabilize families, will strengthen the ability of the United States to lead the world, and will make you feel a whole lot better 15 years from now when you’re dealing with both the opportunities and the pain of time and chance that affects us all.

You know, I see a few of the young people here today with ashes on their foreheads. Yesterday was Mardi Gras; for Christians, today is Ash Wednesday. For people all over the world, this is about to be springtime and a season of renewal. This is a time for renewal. I hope we make the right decision, mostly for your sake. And I believe we will.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sharon Brigner, clinical nurse, National Institutes of Health, who introduced the President.

Statement on Senator Frank R. Lautenberg’s Decision Not To Seek Reelection

February 17, 1999

Senator Frank Lautenberg has been a great public servant and a principled champion of the people of New Jersey and the children of America. He has done as much as any other citizen to protect our young people from tobacco, was the author of the national law raising the drinking age, and passed legislation barring those convicted of domestic abuse from owning guns. He has led our efforts to pass a clean environment

on to the next generation. With his hardheaded business sense, he has helped bring balance to the books of the Federal Government, working with me to craft a balanced budget that invests in the education and health care of our people. Frank Lautenberg has been tough, tireless, and tremendously effective. And more than that, he has been a great friend. Hillary and I wish him the best.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iraq

February 17, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Long-Term Health Care in Dover,
New Hampshire
February 18, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Governor; to our panelists. I'd like to thank the mayor, the numerous State legislators who are here, city council members, and county commissioners and others. I'm delighted to be back here and delighted to have a chance to meet with all of you and to hear from our panelists about an issue that I had a lot of conversations like this about in 1991 and 1992 in New Hampshire.

I came here to talk about the health care needs of our people, what we can do to address them, and the special responsibilities we have now as a result of the aging of America. As all of you know, the number of people over 65 is going up dramatically. When the baby boomers retire, we will have double the number of people over 65 we do today. And that imposes all sorts of challenges on our country, on the Nation as a whole, and on the States.

I want to compliment the Governor for the marvelous work that she has done here in New Hampshire, taking full advantage of our children's health program, which, as she said, was part of the Balanced Budget Act. We think it will enable us to provide health insurance to at least 5 million of the 10 million children in our country who don't have it if the States will vigorously implement it. And New Hampshire has done a terrific job. And I also appreciate the work she's done on health access, disability, and other issues. We'll talk about some of that today.

Our panelists today are going to talk about a number of the health challenges we face, the right of patients to have proper health care, and you talked about the right to sue. As you know, I tried very hard last year, and I'm trying again now to pass Federal legislation which would give people the right to seek redress from HMO's if they suffer wrongfully. We want to talk about how hard it is for small businesses still to provide coverage. We want to talk about the health care needs of the elderly and children and people with disabilities.

As I said, all of these health care needs are going to be complicated by the aging of America. They're going to be complicated by the fact

that as we live longer, more and more of us will need some sort of long-term care. And that's why one of the things in our balanced budget is \$1,000 tax credit to help families defray the cost of providing long-term care for elderly or disabled loved ones.

We also, because health care is improving, we'll have larger numbers of people with disabilities who deserve the chance to go to work, if they can work, to have health care, to live to the fullest of their abilities.

I believe that we need to see this in the context of a larger picture. But I would like to say just a word about the discussions that will inevitably be held about a problem that we could—no one would have believed if we had talked about it 6 years ago in New Hampshire or 7 years ago, and that is what to do with the surplus. [*Laughter*] That was an inconceivable discussion in 1991 and 1992 in New Hampshire.

There are all kinds of ideas—let me just say that because we have a challenge with the aging of America, which affects not only those who will be seniors but their children and grandchildren—I can tell you as the oldest of the baby boomers, one of the things that my generation is most worried about is that our aging will impose unsustainable burdens on our children and, therefore, undermine their ability to raise our grandchildren.

That's why, when we talk about saving Social Security and saving Medicare for the 21st century, we're not only talking about the seniors of our country but also the children and grandchildren of those seniors. And it's an economic necessity not only for the seniors but for all of their children as well. And the same thing is true when you talk about doing something about long-term care. But I'll just say that on the surplus issue, which is not primarily what I wanted to talk about today but the first question—you will hear all kinds of debates in the next year about what to do with the surplus. And they'll all be good ideas, but we have to ask ourselves, what should our first priority be?

My first priority doesn't take all of the surplus, but my first priority is to set aside enough

money in that surplus to save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century, strengthen Social Security by doing something about the extraordinary poverty rate among elderly women, who are increasingly living alone in their later years, and lifting the earnings limit on Social Security to help healthy seniors get what they're entitled to and still be able to work if they choose, to save Medicare and to do something to modernize Medicare that I think is terribly important.

I'll never forget the meeting I had in Nashua at the Moe Arel Senior Center there, with the couple that told me they missed a lot of meals every week so they could pay their medical bills. Medicare should have a prescription drug benefit. I feel very strongly about that. And let me say again, this will cost money in the short run; it will save big money in the long run. If people can get proper medication, particularly with the dramatic advances in medical science, what you will see is there will be fewer trips to the hospital, fewer trips to the doctor, people being able to maintain their own health care.

So I hope these things will be done. If we do that, it would require us to save about 77 percent of the surplus for 15 years, and we project now we will have one now. Of course, it will be off from one year to the next. Some years we'll have good economies; some years the economy won't be so good. But there is no built-in deficit in your Government anymore, so over any 10 to 15 year period we can pretty well predict, if we have normal economic performance, ups and downs, what the aggregate savings would be.

If we do that, let me tell you something else we can do. We will pay down the publicly held debt in this country, which was 50 percent of our annual income when I took office—now down to 44—we'll pay it down to 7 percent. That's the lowest it's been since 1917, before we went in World War II. What that means is that instead of spending 14 cents of every tax dollar you send to Washington just paying interest on the debt, which is what we were doing in 1993, when I took office, we'll be only spending 2 cents of every tax dollar for interest on the debt.

So we can deal with the aging of America in a way that gets the debt down, brings interest rates down, keeps the economy going, and strengthens long-term economic health and well-being for America.

So I hope that whatever we do on all the other issues and the details of Social Security and Medicare and all that, there will be a common understanding that our first priority needs to be to keep the economy strong, deal with the aging of America, and invest in the future of this country.

Now, meanwhile, let's come back to the present day. In the balanced budget I have presented to Congress, that has nothing to do with the surplus—in other words, whatever this debate is in the surplus is not affected by the budget I presented this year—we do have a \$1,000 tax credit for people to provide long-term care to the elderly and disabled. This has become a bigger and bigger concern of Americans as more and more people provide this because they think it is the right thing to do or because it is the only thing to do. Whether it is the right choice or the only choice, it is rarely an easy choice, and it is never cost-free.

Last summer at their annual family conference in Nashville, Vice President and Mrs. Gore talked about this whole long-term care issue a lot, and we got into the developing this proposal. And now the Vice President is having forums about this all across the Nation. But the basic problem is that out-of-pocket expenses even for family members providing long-term care can be quite high, and as you know, it's rarely covered by private insurance or Medicare. And for caregivers who hold a job outside the home—which that's the vast majority of caregivers—they may have to take unpaid leave or work fewer hours, which also is a direct drain on them.

Now, we have tried to strengthen Medicare by cracking down on the fraud and abuse; we've saved billions of dollars on that. We've extended the life of the Trust Fund for a decade. But in the next few years, this long-term care challenge for the elderly and for the disabled is going to mushroom. So in our budget, we have the \$1,000 tax credit. We also have a caregiver support program to help put caregivers in touch with each other so they can help each other and to provide technical and other support for them. And we also have taken new steps to help Medicaid pay for home and for community-based care. All of this I think is quite important.

I also believe very strongly that we should pass a national Patients' Bill of Rights, like the one Governor Shaheen has been trying to pass

here. And it's obvious why more and more people are covered by managed care. You're going to see this year the managed care insurance rates start to go up quite steeply after years of being around the rate of inflation. And I think people in managed care programs can benefit from them as long as they don't have to give up the quality of care. If you need to see a specialist, you ought to be able to see one. If you have to change jobs, you shouldn't have to change doctors in the middle of a treatment, whether it's a chemotherapy treatment or a pregnancy or some other kind of continuing treatment. And you should not be denied the right to sue, in my judgment, if you are harmed.

There are other provisions in our Patients' Bill of Rights. I hope we can pass that this year. I believe this is not a political issue anywhere in the world except Washington, DC. If you took a poll in Dover, New Hampshire, I'll bet you there wouldn't be a nickel's worth of difference in the support for a Patients' Bill of Rights among Republicans, Democrats, and independents. We all get sick. We all need doctors. We all need health care. This should not be a partisan issue.

There's another bill there we're trying very hard to pass this year that would affect some of the families in this room and many in the State, and that is legislation proposed by Senator Jeffords, Senator Kennedy, Senator Roth, and Senator Moynihan, that would allow people with health—disabilities to keep Medicaid health insurance when they go to work. I think this is very, very important.

I always remind people—by the way, to the younger people in this audience, saving Social Security is an issue not just for seniors; a third of the money from the Social Security Trust Fund goes to payments to disabled Americans and payments to surviving children and other family members of people who die prematurely. So this is something that we should never forget. When you hear all this debate on Social Security, don't forget that, that it's not just a question of what we pay in and what we get out in retirement; it's also we're insuring all of each other against the vicissitudes and the fortunes of life. And I think that's very important, but this bill is incredibly important.

And finally, we've asked Congress to pass a plan that would give tax relief to help small businesses insure their employees and to help them join together and form more pools to buy

more economical insurance. That is still a very large problem in our country.

When I came here in 1992, people were very concerned about the number of Americans who did not have health insurance on the job. I can tell you that the number of Americans without health insurance on the job has increased since 1992. Now we are insuring more people than we were then because we've extended the Medicare program, and we want to extend it further for people with disabilities who go to work. We're going to try to get 5 million kids into the program that the Governor talked about. But we have to do everything we can to try to help small businesses to afford health insurance for their employees.

Well, those are the things that I wanted to talk about. I hope that there will be broad support for them here; I hope you will tell your congressional delegation you think we ought to have a \$1,000 tax credit; you think we ought to have a tax credit for small businesses to get health insurance; you support the effort to let people who are disabled keep their Medicaid health insurance when they go into the workplace; and you support the Patients' Bill of Rights. These are some of the things that I believe we can get done this year, and I'm going to do everything I can to do it.

Now, let's hear from our panelists. I'd like to start with Beth Dixon, who is a mother of four from Concord, who spent the majority of the last year caring for her father who suffered from Alzheimer's and passed away last March. I'd like for her to tell a little bit about her story and what we could do to help people like her.

[Ms. Dixon, mother of a disabled child, described her experience caring for her father, who had Alzheimer's disease. She said her parents moved in with her, but it was so difficult, even with help from the extended family, that her father finally had to be put into a nursing home. She concluded by introducing her son, Andrew.]

The President. I think we ought to give him a hand. *[Applause]*

You know, I lost an uncle and an aunt to Alzheimer's. And again, it's something we'll have more of as we live longer. The average life expectancy in America is now 76. The young people in this room today, their life expectancy is probably about 83 if the present rates of medical advances continue. But until we find a cure

for this—and we're investing a lot of money in it now, in research—we're going to have to deal with it.

I think when we hear somebody like Beth talk, we may have mixed feelings, but I don't know how that woman did that. I mean, that's what we're all thinking. On the other hand, I think we're all thinking, Beth, it's a good thing extended families can stay together for as long as possible. And I consider this tax credit just a downpayment on what I think our country should be doing.

I think over the long run, as we live longer, we have not just three but four generations of families up and around and doing, we will always have a need for our nursing homes, our boarding homes, our hospitals. But I will predict to you that when my term is over and when people are grappling with this over the next 10 years, that the American people will essentially demand that families get tax relief and other support because you'll have more and more families at least trying to do what Beth did. But this is a big first step because the Government has never done anything to help people in this situation before, and it's high time we did.

I'd like to call on David Robar now, a 34-year-old New Hampshire native who sustained a spinal cord injury which has permanently injured him. Before that, he was a world-class ski jumper, and he's made quite a brave life for himself now, going back to school and learning. I'd like for him to talk about his circumstances and how he might be affected by some of the things I mentioned today.

David?

[Mr. Robar stated that he sustained a spinal cord injury in 1990, but after hospitalization and rehabilitation, he finished his business degree. He said that by working part time, he received personal attendant benefits under the Medicaid program, but if he worked full time, he would make too much money to qualify and would lose the benefit, even though his out-of-pocket cost for personal attendants would be more than his full-time income. He concluded by thanking the President for supporting initiatives to address the long-term care needs of individuals with disabilities.]

The President. I want to emphasize what he said to you. Under present law, he is entitled—and I think all of us are glad he is—to get

attendant care services. He will get them if he stayed home and did nothing. He'll get them, and the cost would be the same. He is permitted to work part-time, and he still gets them. If he works full-time, he loses them.

Now, if he worked full-time, it would cost you less. Why? Because the cost for the attendant services would be no more, but he'd be paying more in taxes to defray the cost of his own services. This is a crazy situation, and it's one of those things that hasn't been done in the past. It's kind of like the prescription drug benefit for Medicare: It cost more money for a year or two because you have to start fronting the money, but over time it obviously will be a big net benefit to us. And not only that, I think our basic respect for human dignity requires us to do everything we can to give people a chance to work.

We worked hard to pass the welfare reform law that said if you're able-bodied and there's a job, you've got to work if you can. When you have people knocking down the doors to work who could get jobs, for us to deny them the right because of some barrier in Federal law I think is unconscionable. And I hope and believe this will pass this year. And you'll be exhibit A. I'm going to talk about you all over America but especially in Washington. And I thank you.

Karen Goddard is a mother of two children and the owner of two maternity and children's clothing stores. She's from Nashua, and she's got an interesting situation with health insurance. I'd like for her to talk a little about them.

[Ms. Goddard said she was a single mother who owned two shops, with four part-time employees. Although she qualified for Medicaid because of her income and her single-parent status, she wanted to get health insurance for her children and her employees, but she found it was too expensive. She noted that friends who owned small businesses were in the same situation. Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire said she was working for State legislation to allow small businesses to form purchasing cooperatives to lower the cost.]

The President. I think that the two things we're trying to do are complementary. But basically, what we need now under the present state of laws, is the Federal Government should provide some sort of tax break to small business,

some financial aid to lower the cost of the premium, as well as facilitate the joining together of small businesses into a larger pool. Because the real problem is, if you've got three or four employees—I know some of them are insured through their spouse's work program—but let's suppose you've got just your one employee who has a child. It's not only prohibitively expensive now, but if you add one child in any of the groups and you're trying to insure two or three employees, you're out of there. I mean, you can't begin to afford it.

So I think the important thing is for us not only to provide financial assistance but to facilitate small businesses going into bigger groups and to cut the costs and the hassle of all the paperwork involved in that. And we're going to try to do that, and I think it will bear some fruit.

Eventually, some provision will have to be made to do more than that, I think, but this is a very important first step. And there are probably millions of people who could get health insurance if we could have a combined State-Federal effort to give a little break on the premium and then to bring the overall cost level down by letting some people like you go into bigger pools. And that's essentially where we're going with this.

I want to now introduce Christine Monteiro, who has four children who have been insured intermittently for the last 11 years, completely uninsured for the last 5 years, and she discovered the child health program that the Governor passed, that we supported back in the balanced budget law. And I'd like her to talk about it, and then I've got a specific question I want to ask.

[Ms. Monteiro said she had four daughters and ran a small business with her husband. In their early years in business, they had been in and out of insurance plans, due to large deductibles and the rapid growth of premiums, and in recent years had no insurance at all. During a visit to her doctor's office, she discovered the Healthy Kids program, without which she could not have afforded recent medical bills.]

The President. Tell me again how you found out about this program.

Ms. Monteiro. I took my daughter to the doctor's, and I asked him about a subsidized or a sliding scale, and then they told me about Healthy Kids.

The President. The reason I ask is that one of our big problems in the larger urban areas—I wish this lady were an exception, but she's not. There are 10 million children out there like her kids—10 million—and any of them can get sick. And one of the problems we've got is really developing a system in a lot of places for people to know.

There are places where people won't even go to the doctor, they're so discouraged. And anyway, if any of you have any ideas about that—I think we have tried—I think most of the States are trying to make sure that the doctors tell people if they actually come to the office that they might be eligible for this, and that's the most practical thing to do. But we also need a lot more outreach because it's conceivable to me that the money we've allocated to this that we're giving the States will cover even more than 5 million kids if we can actually find them and tell them.

And I know this is painful for you to come here, but this is important. The American people need to know this. They need to know, A, this thing, it's here, in New Hampshire, and it's good. And it's in other States. But they also need to know there are a lot of people like you out there that need help that don't have it yet. So thanks for being brave enough to show up. I appreciate it.

I'd like now to call on Stephen Gorin, who is a professor in the social work program, at Plymouth State College, the executive director of the New Hampshire Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, which is the State's most visible patient advocacy organization. He also has a biweekly radio program.

[Mr. Gorin described his encounters with families denied access to specialists, physicians offered incentives to limit referrals, and consumers denied the right to appeal adverse decisions. He noted that due to a loophole in Federal law, an estimated 600,000 New Hampshire residents lacked the means of holding managed care organizations accountable for injury or damages and suggested that the Patients' Bill of Rights would close this loophole.]

The President. You know, the Vice President tells this great joke about these two guys that show up at Heaven, and St. Peter asks the first guy, "What did you do on Earth?" And he said, "I was a lawyer." He said, "I don't know about you." *[Laughter]* He said, "Yeah, but I did all

this pro bono work for poor people. I really did; 20 percent of my time, I did it." And he said, "Well, okay, come on in." And the second guy says that he was a media mogul. And he said, "I'm not sure about you." He said, "But I gave away 10 percent of my money to my church and to my charity every year." And he said, "Okay, come on in." And the third guy's just hanging his head. He's so sheepish, and he said, "I ran an HMO." And St. Peter said, "Well, come right in, no questions asked, but you can only stay 3 days." [Laughter]

He tells it better than I do. But anyway, I'd like to make this point. The reason we need this Patients' Bill of Rights partly has to do with the structure of these HMO's. Keep in mind—let me take you back to 1992. Costs in health care were escalating at 3 times the rate of inflation. That was unsustainable. We were all going to go broke paying for health care. We were already paying a much bigger percentage of our income than any other country in the world was, so we needed to manage the costs.

The problem is, when you set up a group to manage the costs, unless there are standards everybody has to adhere to—that's why a lot of these HMO's actually support the bill of rights. Some of the really good ones support this, because unless there are standards everyone has to adhere to, they're going to be interested in cutting costs. And a lot of the bigger ones, for example, someone shows up for a procedure, and they need a specialist, or they need a certain special procedure, and the doctors says, "Well, I have to refer it to the HMO." Normally the nurse in the doctor's office will call the HMO. Well, the first person you call is not a doctor, and they just know one thing: They will never get in trouble for saying no, right? So then, they have a certain amount of time they have to appeal. Very often, the person at the same level is not a doctor. They know the second thing: They're never going to get in trouble for saying no. Why? Because they know somewhere up the line there is a doctor, and if they mess up by saying no, then they say, "Well, the doctor will fix it." But if they mess up by saying yes, they'll be told they're not saving money.

The problem is, it's like justice. Health care delayed can sometimes be health care denied. That's one of the biggest problems. And I have heard all these chilling stories, I'm sure you

have. By the time people get their procedures approved, it's too late. And the emergency room thing is really unconscionable, particularly—it would apply, like in New Hampshire where most of the communities aren't very big, it would apply more if you were visiting Boston or something and you got hit by a car and you went to the nearest emergency room and they say, "I'm sorry. The emergency room your HMO will reimburse for is 15 miles in the other direction." So we have got to fix this.

Now, the opposition says it will raise the cost of health care. It will, but not much, maybe 8 or 10 bucks a year or something. It would be worth it to you; one trip to the emergency room, it would be worth it to you.

So I think—I can't tell you how important I think this is. I think you're going to have more and more and more of these horror stories unless we pass a national bill which will, at a very minimum, protect the State's ability to do what Governor Shaheen wants to do and say everybody has got a right to the nearest emergency room, to a continuation of treatment, to see a specialist, and to know what all their medical options are.

And again I say, this should absolutely not be a partisan issue. It has been in Washington because of the interplay of the organized interest groups up there, but it's not out in America. And it shouldn't be. You just keep plugging; we'll get there this year, I think.

That is our health agenda for this session of Congress. You see it here embodied in these five panelists and then what the Governor has worked to do on the children's health programs and other things. I would very much like to see the spirit in the country and in Washington, DC, that I felt here in New Hampshire so many years ago when I first came here, to take these health care issues and sort of put them beyond partisan politics and put the people and the families of this country and their interests first.

If we succeed this year in doing that, all of you can know that your presence here made a difference—and especially the panelists. I think we should give them one more big hand. [Applause]

Thank you very, very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The discussion began at 11:30 a.m. in the auditorium at the Dover Municipal Building. In

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his remarks, the President referred to Mayor Will Boc of Dover, NH.

Statement on Senator Richard H. Bryan's Decision Not To Seek Reelection *February 18, 1999*

Throughout his career, Senator Richard Bryan has been a staunch advocate and tireless champion of the people of Nevada. He has been an ardent protector of Nevada's environment and has been a leader in preserving Nevada's lands and treasures. Senator Bryan has played a critical role in promoting rigorous health and safety standards for America's children and consumers. As a distinguished member of the Finance Committee, Senator Bryan has consistently

been recognized for his leadership in promoting fiscal responsibility and has helped ensure a brighter future for Nevadans and all Americans. While his decision to retire must be somewhat bittersweet, I know that he will continue to fight for what he believes in and will continue to be a proponent for America's progress. Hillary and I send our best regards to Dick and his family for every future success and happiness.

Remarks at a State Democratic 100 Club Dinner in Manchester, New Hampshire *February 18, 1999*

Thank you. I want to thank you for a typically reticent Yankee welcome tonight. *[Laughter]* It is wonderful to be back. I have very much enjoyed being with Governor Shaheen and with Bill today, and we've had a lot of time to visit. I want you to know that it gives me an enormous amount of pleasure and pride to see the Governor at her task, to know the victories that you have given her, to know that now she has a Democratic State Senate for the first time in 86 years and that you made a lot of gains in the House and that the Democratic Party is moving in the right direction.

I thank Jeff and Sophia and all the other officers of the Democratic Party, all the legislators and other people who are here. I am glad to be back. I'd like to thank the people from New Hampshire who have been a part of our administration. I'm not sure I can remember all of them, so many have been. But I would like to thank Joe GrandMaison and Stephanie Powers, Ricia McMahon, Terry Shumaker—I talked to him today; I called Terry Shumaker and said, "It's just like the Caribbean up here in New Hampshire; you ought to be here"—

[laughter]—George Bruno, Dick Swett, so many others.

I want to thank—I brought four people back here tonight who slogged through the snows of New Hampshire with me in '91 and '92, Michael Whouley, Jeff Forbes, Paul Begala, and Bruce Lindsey. And they are glad to be here, and we thank you.

You know, the last time I was in this building, I believe, was at the Democratic Convention in the campaign of '92. And I remember there were—the center aisle was open, and everything was crowded, and all the candidates got to have a little demonstration. And in my demonstration, there were a bunch of students who carried a banner down the middle aisle for me; I'll never forget it. And to see this vast crowd here today, celebrating the successes of our party and our Nation and your State, is wonderful.

You know, I didn't know exactly what I was going to say today when I got here. I remember when I first started coming here, people kind of laughed at me when I said that New Hampshire was a lot like my home. All the experts

expected you to send me home. *[Laughter]* Instead, you made me feel at home, and I still do. I love it.

In 1992, when I came here, when Hillary came here, amidst all the economic problems and personal turmoil, people whose businesses had been closed because their loans were canceled, in some cases, people who had never missed a payment; elderly people who were having to choose between food and medicine; young working families who couldn't buy health insurance because their children had been sick—I remember a young girl who talked to me about the pain in her family because her father could not get over the fact that he was unemployed, and he could no longer take care of his family,

In the middle of that difficult time the people of New Hampshire came out to see me and Hillary and listen to what we had to say. You took us into your homes. You shared your struggles and your dreams. And in so many ways, the story of America in 1991 and 1992 was, for me, the personal histories I heard in New Hampshire.

I saw a lot of people today that I met then, that I've tried to keep up with on all the times I've come back here since then. I think, of all the things that were said to me today, the things that meant the most were—well, there were really two things: First, to know that people are doing better and feel better about their lives, their children's future, our country's future.

I got to check in today with Ron and Rhonda Lee Machos, and I made them the poster family for my struggle for health care access because their oldest child, Ronnie, was born with a heart problem. Today I saw Ronnie and Tristen, his little brother, and mama's about to have a third son. But I got a letter from the dad the other day who said, "Little Ronnie is doing exceptionally well. No problems with his heart. Looks like he needs no further surgery. He scored two goals and got one assist in his last hockey game." That's a long way from being born with a hole in your heart. "Younger son Tristen is 7 this year, and quite a pistol"—I saw him today—"and more startling news, Rhonda Lee is pregnant with our third child." Listen to this; this is the point. "One thing we will experience for the first time is health insurance in pregnancy." Those are the kind of stories I wanted to hear after we had a chance to work together to make America a better place.

The other thing I heard that made me feel so good today was that any number of people in various ways said, "We stuck with you because you came to us with a detailed program, and you did exactly what you said you would do, and it worked." Well, today—I didn't do it. We did it. You did it.

Don't ever forget—I was in Dover today, you know, where I coined that now famous line that "if you would stick with me, I would stick with you until the last dog died." And the people of Dover had any number of humorous things to say about that. *[Laughter]* "We've seen a lot of dogs killed, but at least the last one is still living." *[Laughter]* "This dog is limping but still going." I heard it all. *[Laughter]* I heard it all.

Here is the point: If you had listened to the political experts, the dog would have died. *[Laughter]* But instead you held out a lifeline. You decided that the election should go on. You decided that these ideas, that this new direction for our country deserved a fair hearing among the American people. You embraced our cause.

People ask me all the time, "Well, what if this, that, or the other thing had happened, and you hadn't become President?" All I know is, I have never forgotten—as anyone who has worked for me in the White House will tell you—the kindness and the toughness, the humanity and the determination of the people of New Hampshire who would not let our campaign and what we wanted to do together for America die. And I never will.

Now, the point of all that is that every time you hear about something good that's happened in America, you ought to say, "I was part of that." This is a journey we have taken together. In America, there is not a difference between the Government and the people, between those who govern and those who let them govern. You gave me permission to do this based on a contract I made with you and the rest of the American people. And it's been quite a wonderful journey.

When I came here—7 years ago today, we had the New Hampshire primary. The unemployment rate was 7.3 percent. Today, it's 2.9 percent. In the 4 years before I took office, you lost 41,000 jobs here. In the 6 years since, you've gained 77,500. In 1992, business failures were increasing by 44 percent every single year. In the last 6 years, they've dropped by nearly

three-quarters. In 1992, your welfare rolls were among the fastest growing in the country. Today, they are half what they were on the day I took office.

We have seen—as a lot of your police officers said to me today, we have seen new police officers, new teachers, AmeriCorps volunteers, people benefiting from the earned-income tax credit, from the HOPE scholarship—which about 26,000 New Hampshire students will take advantage of this year; 32,000 more are taking advantage of the lifetime learning tax cut to pay for their college education, and on and on. This is what campaigns are really about.

And the test is, do we use the authority and the power and the responsibility given to us by the people to advance their cause? I said over and over and over again in New Hampshire in 1992 and I say again tonight, I was raised to believe that no person can sit on the sidelines and knowingly permit any of his or her fellow citizens to live under burdens that do not permit them to live up to the fullest of their God-given capacity. I always believed if we could create a country in which there was opportunity for every citizen responsible enough to take advantage of it and if we could convince people that we really have to be one community, that we will never be all that we could be unless we care about our neighbors and work together and realize that our welfare is caught up in the welfare of those who may seem very different from us, but underneath it all the diversity of America is our greatest strength, as long as we recognize that what unites us is more important than anything that could divide us. I believe that, and I still believe that tonight.

What I want to say is I believe the reason the Democratic Party is coming back all over America is that more and more Americans believe that—including independents and Republicans—that we ought to be about opportunity, responsibility, and community. We ought to be looking for ways to put people over politics, to put unity over division.

It is not an accident that we've gone from a \$290 billion deficit to a \$70 billion surplus with a bigger one coming this year, that we have the longest economic expansion in peacetime in the history of the country and the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957. This is not an accident. It happened because people like you believed in and embraced certain ideas and then went out and worked like crazy when

the chains were taken off of you to make America work again.

And you should take pride in that, pride not only in your own work but pride in the work you did as citizens, in the work you did in campaigns, in the work you did in talking to your friends and neighbors. This is what makes America work—when the people are put first, when the dreams and the hopes of the American people are put first, and when the problems are tackled instead of just talked about. That's politics at its best, and that's what this building, that convention, all those years ago and this night will always mean to me.

Now, I want to get off this rather passionate political note and say something completely dry and academic, something completely factual, purely historical, wholly nonpolitical. Nobody had more to do with the decisions we made and success we've enjoyed than Vice President Al Gore. I understand he may have been around here recently. He wasn't with me in '92, until I became the nominee. But in '93, as he never tires of telling me, he cast a decisive vote on the economic plan that began to bring our country back. And as he always says, whenever he votes, we win. *[Laughter]*

I do want to say, you know, I have been very fortunate in the people who have served in our Cabinet. I once had a group of Presidential scholars at the White House, and a gentleman who taught at Harvard said, "Mr. President, one of the reasons your administration has been successful is that you have the most loyal Cabinet since Thomas Jefferson's second administration." It was an amazing statement. He said, "I'm a historian. I know."

We have all these people who work in the White House every day, day-in and day-out, whose names you don't know, who never get any glory, who deserve a lot of this credit. We also have a great team of people around the country working. But I have been very blessed by the work especially of the First Lady and the Vice President, and you all know it.

So I came here tonight to say thank you, to reminisce just a little bit, to thank you for Hillary and for me and for all of our administration but not just to say, thank you. Because if you remember in '92, every event we did, every home we visited, every townhall meeting we had that were bursting at the seams—that's the first time I knew I had a chance to get elected President, actually. I went to Keene,

and they said, "We put you in a place that will hold 150, and if 50 people show up, don't be embarrassed. It's a good turnout. It's New Hampshire, nobody knows who the heck you are." [Laughter] And 400 showed up and I said, "Holy moly, something's going on."

Oh, by the way, Mayor Pat Russell and her husband, Ron, are celebrating their 49th wedding anniversary tonight. Let's give them a hand there. Happy anniversary. [Applause]

So I wanted to do that. But remember this: We were really worried about making New Hampshire and America and the lives of ordinary citizens work again. I mean, people just wanted things to work. Do you remember, five out of the seven biggest banks had failed? I mean, people wanted things to work.

Okay, things are working now. So here's the most important thing I came here to say. I came to deliver on what I really owe you tonight. When things start working and people have been through all that you have been through, the temptation is to stop at what we've already said and done, pat yourself on the back, feel good about it, kick back, relax, wait for something else to happen. And I came here to tell you tonight that that would be wrong. That would violate the ideas and the principles on which we campaigned, you and I, in 1992 and upon which we were returned to office in 1996.

Why? Because, yes, America is working, but we are living in a very dynamic world where things that happen beyond our borders can affect how you live in every community in New Hampshire and throughout this country, and when, you know as well as I do, that we have large, long-term unmet challenges facing us in the century that is now less than a year ahead.

And so I ask you to think tonight about what we must do not only to celebrate what's been done and think about the next election, but we need to think, if we want to retain the support of the American people, from the Presidency, if we want to get it back in the Congress, if we want to keep the Democratic Party moving in the right direction in New Hampshire, we have to do a good job for the American people and the people of this State every day for the next 2 years. That is the best politics, to do what is right.

Now, I will not keep you through a whole recitation of my State of the Union Speech—[laughter]—but I want you to know that I worked hard on that for months, and it reflects

the thinking that I have brought to this job for years. I prayed in the early years of the Presidency when we were bailing water out of the ship that we would one day right ourselves and America would be working again, and as a people we could be called to think about these large, long-term challenges. And we would be making a terrible mistake as a political party if we played politics with them, looked only to the next election, and forgot that all of us are charged with the responsibility now that America is working to have America moving forward.

What are those challenges? I'll just mention two or three: The aging of America; the challenge of balancing work and family, as more and more people go into the work force and more and more parents are working; the challenge of giving every child a world-class education; the challenge of dealing with our environmental difficulties while continuing to grow the economy and living more at harmony with ourselves and our neighbors on this planet; and the challenge of dealing with America's obligations to lead the world toward greater peace and freedom and prosperity.

I met a lot of people here with Irish roots tonight, like me, who thanked me for the role that I have been honored to play in the Irish peace process. We are struggling today to keep a new conflict from breaking out in the Balkans. We are struggling today to deal with the challenges of chemical and biological weapons so that our children won't have to face them. We are struggling today to help our friends in democratic Russia keep their democracy alive and restore their economic health.

And one of the things that I did when I was in New Hampshire that I tell you I believe more strongly today than I did then is to say, "Folks, there is no longer a dividing line between domestic policy and foreign policy." The person in the remotest, smallest village in northern New Hampshire cannot be unmindful of America's responsibilities and opportunities in this great wide world. We have to fulfill them, and the Democratic Party should lead the way.

So what does that mean? Let me just mention two things. Let's talk about aging and education, the old and the young. The number of people over 65 is going to double by 2030. People are living longer. The average life expectancy in America now is already over 76. By the time the young people in this room who are under

30 tonight reach their later years their life expectancy, in all probability, will be somewhere in the mid-eighties.

Now, what does all that mean? First of all, let's not kid ourselves, this is a high-class problem, and the older I get, the better this problem looks. [Laughter] So I don't understand all this handwringing; this is a good deal, you know? This is a high-class problem. It is a tribute to our health system, to healthier behaviors, to scientific discovery, and also a fact of the baby boom.

Now, what we have to do is to figure out how, when the baby boom retires and medical costs escalate in the Medicare program, which will happen before the baby boom retires, we can preserve our obligation to our seniors without bankrupting their kids and grandkids. This is an issue which affects everyone, the aging of America. More and more people will take care of their parents as they get older and may need some help doing it. More and more people, if we don't do our job, will feel the squeeze between their parents' retirement needs and their children's education needs.

That's why I have said my first priority in dealing with this budget surplus we have waited for 30 years, and we have worked for 6 years, after 12 years in which they quadrupled the debt of the country—my first priority is to save Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt to strengthen America for the 21st century. [Applause] Thank you.

Now, we will have a real policy debate with our friends in the Republican Party on that issue. They will agree with us that we should save the surplus necessary for Social Security, and then they'll disagree with us on what the best way to spend it is. And that's good. That's a high-class problem. That's the kind of honest political debate we ought to have. But they will not agree that we should also save that portion of the surplus necessary to deal with Medicare, even though it is going to run out of money in 10 years. And we have to save it, reform it, but also, in my judgment—I'll never forget the people I met in New Hampshire who told me this: We ought to add a prescription drug benefit to the Medicare program for the elderly people who need it.

Now, I believe the Democratic position, which is embraced by the leaders of our party in both Houses of Congress, as well as by our administration, is the right one. If we save 77

percent of this surplus over the next 15 years, we can do two things. We can prepare to save Social Security and Medicare; we'll also pay down the national debt.

When I took office, the national debt was one-half our annual income. It had quadrupled in 12 years. I had to spend, the first year I put together a budget, over 14 cents of every dollar you pay to the Federal Government in taxes just to make interest payments. Well, now the debt is down to 44 percent of our annual income. But if you do what I'm recommending here, if the Congress will go along and we save 77 percent for 15 years, we will take it down to 7 percent of our income; the debt service will be 2 cents on your taxes; the rest will go to real things. And within 18 years, the United States of America will be out of debt. This is what we should do.

Now, in addition to saving Social Security and Medicare, we have other health responsibilities. In my balanced budget there's a long-term care tax credit. We have to make sure that we pass a national Patients' Bill of Rights to support what Governor Shaheen is trying to do here in New Hampshire. We have to pass a bill sponsored by Senators Kennedy and Jeffords to make sure people with disabilities can take full-time jobs without losing their health insurance.

And we ought to, while we're helping, deal with the problem of family and work by broadening the number of people eligible for the family and medical leave law. I met people today who said they took advantage of it and what a difference it made for their families.

We ought to raise the minimum wage, and we ought to pass the initiative I have offered to give \$15 billion in private sector capital to rural areas and urban communities who have not yet felt our economic recovery. If we can't fix the poorest areas of America with free enterprise now, we will never get around to doing it.

Now, we also have to remember our children. I'm proud of the fact that we have more people in Head Start, kids in Head Start than ever before, that we have 90 percent of our children immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time, that in the balanced budget law of 1997, 5 million children became eligible for health insurance, and thanks to what the Governor has done here with the child health program in New Hampshire, we are finally reaching those children.

But we have more to do. I'm proud of the fact that we have opened the doors of college to everyone with these tax benefits, and greater student loans and work-study programs. No serious person believes that our elementary and secondary education in every State, in every community, in every school, is what is necessary to give a world-class education to what is the most diverse student body our country has ever had.

Now look, this diversity is our meal ticket to the future. In a global economy, the idea that we have children in our schools from every country on Earth, from every culture on Earth, from every religious faith on Earth, all learning what the basic rules of American citizenship are in action every day and being given a chance to be responsible and to participate in our country and to learn to relate to each other—in a world that is being torn asunder all across the globe, from Bosnia to the Middle East to the tribal wars of Africa, over differences of race and ethnicity and religion—what we are trying to do is a godsend for our future, economically, politically, and frankly in terms of just the quality and richness of our lives.

But we have to do better with education. We have got to do better with education. We have to finish the job we started last year of hiring 100,000 teachers. We have to pass the bill Congress turned down last year to build or modernize 5,000 schools. I'm tired of going to these schools that can't even be hooked up to the Internet because they're so old.

We have to finish the job of hooking all our classrooms and libraries up to the Internet. And thanks to the E-rate that the Vice President and I fought so hard for, a billion dollars in discounts will be available this year to our schools, so every school, even poor schools, can afford for their children to hook up to the Internet.

And I believe we have to bring a revolution of accountability to our schools. For over 20 years now, I have spent a lot of time in classrooms. I've listened to teachers; I've listened to principals; I've listened to students; I've listened to parents. I can tell you that every challenge in American education has been met by somebody, somewhere, and that we still, on the edge of a new century, this so-called information age where people learn what everybody else is doing with blinding speed, we are still not very good at copying from others.

The Founding Fathers would be disappointed that school districts still seem to believe that they can't learn as much from others as they ought to. They set up the States as the laboratories of democracy. When I was a Governor for 12 years—as I told your Governor, back when I had a life—when I was a Governor for 12 years and I could actually stay here and sit around and talk around this table half the night and drink coffee with you, I was proud of the things that my State did first, but I was prouder of the things my State did second.

We have got to install, somehow, the best practices in education that educators tell us work. That's why I believe, based on what I've seen in some of the toughest urban school districts in America, we ought to say when we reauthorize all this Federal aid this year, "You can have it, but you've got to stop social promotion. But you can't tell the kids they're failures when the system is failing them. You have to turn around the failing schools. And you have to give the children summer school and after-school programs and whatever they need."

Look, our kids rank at the top of the world in fourth grade tests in math and science. Then the drop down to the middle in eighth grade tests. And then by the 12th grade, they're ranking near the bottom. Now, the same kids start out—they didn't get dumber as they traveled through life. That is telling us something about ourselves. We can do better. We have to have higher expectations, higher standards, higher accountability for everyone. But we can't tell the kids that they're failing if the system is failing them. We're not doing them any favor passing them along, but we have to lift them up and give them the support they need.

So I ask you to embrace the education agenda, to embrace the saving Social Security, saving Medicare, paying down the debt agenda, to embrace the agenda of bringing economic opportunity to our distressed areas and expanding health care access and doing more to help people balance work and family and dealing with the environmental and other challenges I have outlined. I ask you to do it because the best politics, as has been proven over and over and over again, is doing the right thing for the American people, saying what you're going to do, and if you get elected, doing it, and dealing with the emergencies as they come up, dealing with the challenges as they come up.

In 1998, for the first time since 1822, the party of the President in the sixth year of his Presidency gained seats in the House of Representatives. Now, I believe with all my heart it was because our party went out there with a simple message. They said, "Our concern is you; our commitment is to your future and your children. Vote for us, and we will save Social Security first, before we squander this surplus. Vote for us, and we will modernize those thousands of schools. Vote for us, and we will pass that Patients' Bill of Rights. Vote for us, and we'll get interest rates down, pay the debt down, keep this economy going. We have an agenda. And it's an agenda that will deal with the long-term problems as well as the short-term problems of America."

That's what the Democratic Party represents now: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all Americans. We no longer have a country, as I said 7 years ago, where I worry about me, you worry about you, they worry about them. I didn't want that then, and I don't see that today. We know—we know—we are all in this together. We know that we'll all do better if we do the responsible thing, if all our neighbors have opportunities and if we live together as citizens in one community.

You have all helped to make that the new reality of 21st century America. I want you to be proud of it but not to rest on it. Help your Governor. Help your legislators. Realize the dreams of your children. Don't run away from the work of governing. Stay with the real things that real people care about and the politics will take care of themselves.

Thank you, God bless you, and on to tomorrow. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:23 p.m. at the Armory. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire and her husband, Bill; Jeff Woodburn, State chair, and Sophia Collier, State finance chair, New Hampshire State Democratic Party; J. Joseph GrandMaison, Director, Trade and Development Agency; Stephanie Powers, Director, School-to-Work Initiative, Department of Education; Patricia McMahon, Director, Community Outreach and Liaison, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration; Edward E. (Terry) Shumaker III, Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago; George C. Bruno, former U.S. Ambassador to Belize; Richard N. Swett, Ambassador to Denmark; political consultant Michael Whouley; and Mayor Patricia T. Russell of Keene, NH, and her husband, State Representative Ronald G. Russell.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Jacques Chirac of France and an Exchange With Reporters

February 19, 1999

President Clinton. Is everyone in?

Q. Yes, sir.

President Clinton. As you know, we're going to have a press conference at the conclusion of our meetings. But I just wanted to take this opportunity to welcome President Chirac and the members of his delegation back to the White House. We have had a good working relationship and a warm personal friendship. I'm delighted to see him.

We have a lot of important things to discuss, especially the situation in Kosovo, but also the work we've been doing on the international financial matters and many other things. And we'll be able to discuss them later at the press conference.

But mostly, I just want to welcome him here and give him the chance to make a few remarks, if you would like.

President Chirac. I want to say how happy I am to be with you here and with President Clinton, my good friend.

We're going to have a very interesting day's work together. We'll, of course, first be talking about Kosovo and also a number of other important questions, like the international financial monetary situation in preparation of the NATO summit and a number of other subjects.

And I want to thank President Clinton for his welcome.

Kosovo

Q. President Chirac, do you think that there will be a settlement, a peaceful settlement in Kosovo or military action? Do you think that both sides will make an accord by noon tomorrow?

President Chirac. I hope with all my heart that both sides would understand that their intention is to find an agreement, because the side which would not understand that would then have to bear the consequences. And those consequences would be serious for them but also for their country and their people—as the time for peace has come, and every side must make this effort to make peace possible. And

we are determined, really determined and firm on this.

Q. President Clinton, does Mr. Milosevic deserve more time and, if not, sir, why not?

President Clinton. We'll answer all the other questions at the press conference.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A journalist referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). President Chirac spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Jacques Chirac of France February 19, 1999

President Clinton. Please sit down. Good afternoon. President Chirac and I, as always, have had a very good meeting. We had a lot to discuss, and we have a lot to do together.

Most importantly, today we are working together to end the fighting in Kosovo and to help the people there obtain the autonomy and self-government they deserve. We now call on both sides to make the tough decisions that are necessary to stop the conflict immediately, before more people are killed and the war spreads.

The talks going on outside Paris are set to end on Saturday. The Kosovo Albanians have shown courage in moving forward the peace accord that we, our NATO Allies, and Russia have proposed. Serbia's leaders now have a choice to make: They can join an agreement that meets their legitimate concerns and gives them a chance to show that an autonomous Kosovo can thrive as part of their country, or they can stone-wall. But if they do that, they will be held accountable.

If there is an effective peace agreement, NATO stands ready to help implement it. We also stand united in our determination to use force if Serbia fails to meet its previous commitment to withdraw forces from Kosovo and if it fails to accept the peace agreement. I have ordered our aircraft to be ready, to act as part of a NATO operation, and I will continue to

consult very closely with Congress in the days ahead.

The challenge in Kosovo and the one we have addressed in Bosnia underscore the central role NATO plays in promoting peace and stability in Europe. Today the President and I discussed the 50th anniversary summit, which will be held here in Washington in April, to admit Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as new members, and to set NATO's course for the new century.

The conflicts in the Balkans also highlight the need to strengthen stability across southeast Europe. The United States and France are pleased to announce today that we will pursue a new initiative we hope other allies will join, to increase cooperation with southeast Europe's emerging democracies on security matters, to coordinate security assistance to them from NATO countries, to promote regional cooperation and economic development.

The President and I also discussed our common efforts to reform the global financial system and to support economic recovery in countries that have been so hard hit. Last fall, working with other G-7 nations and key emerging economies, we set out a comprehensive agenda: making financial systems more open and resilient, improving international cooperation on financial

oversight. Just this weekend in Bonn, our finance ministers will address these topics and the creation of a new financial stability forum.

We're moving ahead on promoting sound lending practices and strengthening protections for the most vulnerable members of societies when crisis strikes. We need to do more to reduce the debts of the poorest, most heavily indebted nations, as they seek to meet basic human needs and undertake economic reforms. And I thank President Chirac for championing this cause for such a long time. Our budget makes a significant new investment in that challenge, and we proposed ways to help the IMF, with its existing resources, do the same.

On these issues we're aiming to make real progress by the time of the June G-8 summit in Cologne, Germany. I very much appreciate the President's leadership in this area.

We discussed the continuing challenge of promoting economic recovery in Russia and working with Russia to prevent its weapons of mass destruction, missiles, and technologies from falling into the hands of outlaw nations and terrorists. We will continue our cooperation on securing peace in the Middle East. We talked about the Middle East peace process at some length. We talked about our common determination to restrain Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program.

We want to expand cooperation in Africa, promoting peace in the Great Lakes region, encouraging an African Crisis Response capability. And today we are announcing that we're joining together with African nations in an effort I spoke about first last year in Senegal, building an African Center for Security Studies, to promote peace and democracy.

Finally, Mr. President, I want to thank France for showing leadership by ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. One hundred fifty-two nations have signed the treaty, which would end nuclear testing forever and make it harder for more nations to develop nuclear weapons. Once again, I want to express my hope that our Senate will also provide its advice and consent for ratification this year.

Mr. President, the floor is yours.

President Chirac. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, I want to say how happy I am to be once again here in the United States and here in Washington. I'm happy to be in this country, which is where everything is always moving, this country which constantly surprises

the world, and a country which for a long time I have been very fond of. And when I feel well, I feel happy, and once again I'm happy to be the guest of President Bill Clinton. And I think everyone knows the regard and the friendship I have and I've had for a long time for President Clinton, and I want to thank him once again for his hospitality.

The President has covered, more or less, all the subjects that were on the agenda of our talks, so I'm going to make two remarks only. The first is to say that our agreement on the present problems in Kosovo is an unqualified agreement. It's complete agreement. We're almost at the end of the time allotted for trying to work things out at Rambouillet, and after President Clinton, I would like to say to the two parties and in particular to President Milosevic, who in fact holds more or less the key to the solution, that the time has come to shoulder all his responsibilities and to choose the path of wisdom and not the path of war, which would bear very serious consequences for people who would make that choice, for themselves and for their people. It's a very heavy responsibility that they would be taking if they were to do that.

I've already had occasion to say that, as far as the Europeans are concerned, it is our continent which is involved here, and we want our continent to be at peace, and we will not accept that situation, such as the present situation in Kosovo, should continue.

My second remark concerns a subject which President Clinton has not mentioned but that we have talked about at some time and that for me it's the big problem, for the big issue for the beginning of the next century, and that is what President Clinton raised himself about a couple of months ago, in a talk he gave—the question of humanizing globalization, making globalization more human. Everyone understands that globalization is both inevitable and also it bears progress, and this can be understood every day, ever more. And this is something that must be—a process that must be encouraged. It's a good thing.

But everyone I think can also understand that there are or can be social consequences of this, and it's really our job to control them. And it's one of the big challenges I think of this society in the years to come. And for we, the Europeans, it was really very gratifying to hear the President of the United States put this issue

to the fore of matters that the world has to contend with. And I entirely agree with what he has said. And it's also a question that we have talked about among ourselves.

Otherwise, President Clinton has, in fact, covered everything we have been talking about, so I won't add anything because I entirely agree with him. And of course, I also agree to reply to your questions on these important issues for the whole world.

President Clinton. [*Inaudible*—French and American journalists, beginning with Mr. Hunt [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Kosovo/Iraq

Q. President Clinton, President Milosevic refused to meet with the U.S. Envoy today, Christopher Hill, and said that he would not give up Kosovo, even at the price of a bombing. Is there any possibility that NATO would extend the Saturday noon deadline for reaching an agreement? And what do you say to President Yeltsin of Russia when he said that, "we will not allow Kosovo to be touched?"

And for President Chirac, did you and President Clinton find agreement today on the issue of Iraqi sanctions?

President Clinton. First, let me say I think it would be a mistake to extend the deadline. And I respect the position of Russia, and I thank the Russians for supporting the peace process, as well as the proposed agreement. We had many of the same tensions in Bosnia, where ultimately we wound up working together for peace. I believe that is what will happen.

I would like to go back to the—just very briefly—to the merits of the argument that Mr. Milosevic made. He says that if he accepts this multinational peacekeeping force, it's like giving up Kosovo. I personally believe it's the only way he can preserve Kosovo as a part of Serbia. Under their laws, Kosovo is supposed to be autonomous but a part of Serbia. Its autonomy was effectively stripped from it years ago.

We are now trying to find some way to untangle the injuries and harms and arguments that have come from both sides and permit a period of 3 years to develop within which the Serbian security forces can withdraw, a police force, civil institutions can be developed—we can give them a chance to prove that they can function together.

I don't think, unless we do this, there is any way for the integrity of Serbia ultimately to be

preserved, because of the incredible hostility and the losses and the anger that's already there.

So I'm not trying to—at least from our part, and I believe President Chirac and all the Europeans feel the same way—we're trying to give this a chance to work, not trying to provide a wedge to undo Serbia.

Mr. President.

President Chirac. Well, I entirely share the position expressed by President Clinton. I would doubt that—I'm convinced that the only possibility for Mr. Milosevic, the only way he can keep Kosovo within internationally recognized frontiers, as of course, planned in the Yugoslav constitution, a high degree of substantial autonomy, substantial autonomy—the only way he can keep the situation is to accept the proposals that are made today. Any other solution, I repeat, would involve for Mr. Milosevic some very serious consequences, indeed.

Q. If everything fails tomorrow, what could then prevent a military strike on the part of NATO? If there is no agreement tomorrow, what would then prevent—

President Clinton. I think there would have to be an agreement before the strikes commence. I don't think there is an option. Because keep in mind, part of what we have asked is that President Milosevic do things that he has already agreed to do, as I said in my opening statement. And we would—the NATO nations have decided and have given the Secretary General authority to pursue a strategy which would at least reduce his capacity to take further aggressive military action against the Kosovar Albanians.

This assumes, of course, that he doesn't accept it and that they do, as we discussed. But that would be my position. I believe that is both our positions.

President Chirac. Without a shadow of a doubt.

President Clinton. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]?

Lessons of Impeachment

Q. President Clinton, what lessons have you learned from your 13-month ordeal? Do you think the office of the Presidency has been harmed? And what advice would you give to future Presidents?

President Clinton. Well, of course, I've learned a lot of personal lessons, most of which I have already discussed. And Presidents are

people, too. I have learned, again, an enormous amount of respect for our Constitution, our framers, and for the American people. And my advice to future Presidents would be to decide what you believe you ought to do for the country and focus on it and work hard. The American people hire you to do that and will respond if you work at it and if they sense that you're doing this for them.

Q. And you don't think the office of the President has been harmed?

President Clinton. Oh, I think the Constitution has been, in effect, reratified. And I hope that the Presidency has not been harmed. I don't believe it has been. I can't say that I think this has been good for the country, but we will see. I expect to have 2 good years here.

I think the American people expect the Congress and me to get back to work, expect us either not to have any destructive feelings or, if we do, not to let them get in the way of our doing their business. These are jobs—these are positions of public responsibility. These are—and the United States has great responsibilities to its own people and to the rest of the world. And I don't believe that any of us can afford to let what has happened get in the way of doing our best for our own people and for the future. And I'm going to do my very best to do that. And I think that we should all discipline ourselves with that in mind.

Banana Trade Dispute

Q. My question is to both Presidents. Have you talked about bananas? Because this is an American-European problem but also a problem for France because of the Caribbean bananas. And have you found a compromise? Could President Clinton explain to me why the United States is being so aggressive on this business? Because to my knowledge, and contrary to France and Europe, the United States themselves don't produce bananas.

President Clinton. Yes, we talked about it. [Laughter] And we're being quite strong about it because we do have companies involved, and there are people involved in other countries, not just the Caribbean—Central America, for example—and because we think the trade law is clear. We won a trade dispute. We won. And we have been trying to—there's been a finding here, and we've been trying to work out a reasonable solution with the Europeans, especially

with the British, and others, and there has been no willingness to resolve this.

We don't want to provoke a trade crisis, but we won. And from our point of view—this is one place where we disagree—the Europeans are basically saying, "Well, you won this trade fight under the law, but we still don't think you have a meritorious position. Therefore, we will not yield." Well, when we lose trade fights, we lose them. And if we're going to have a global trading system and a system for resolving disputes—which, most of us believe, normally take too long, anyway—and if we're, all of us, expected to have a reasonable resolution when we lose—and that's what you'd expect the United States to do—then that's what we want from Europe.

We took this matter through the normal chain of events, and we won. And I think most people in Europe believe we shouldn't have won, but sometimes we lose cases we think we shouldn't have lost, too. And therefore, we would like a resolution of this consistent with the finding of international trade law.

President Chirac. I would simply add this, that yes, we did talk about this problem, and President Clinton just said that the United States had companies—corporations involved. And my answer is that we have the actual workers who are involved. And I also added that the banana in the Caribbean was obviously the best, the best banana in the world, and that, therefore, they had to be safeguarded and in the interest of mankind, and I counted on him to understand this. [Laughter]

Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy

Q. I wonder if you could share with us some of your thoughts about the pros and cons of—Senate seat in New York—Mrs. Clinton—

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think it's important that you all understand—I think you know this—this is nothing that ever crossed her mind until other people began to mention it to her. To me, the most important thing is that she decides to do what she wants to do. And I will be strongly supportive of whatever decision she makes and will do all I can to help on this and any other decision from now on, just as she's helped me for the last 20-plus years. If she decided to do it and she were elected, I think she would do a fabulous job.

But I think that it's important to remember this is an election which occurs in November of 2000, and she has just been through a very exhausting year. And there are circumstances which have to be considered, and I think some time needs to be taken here.

I also think that even in a Presidential race, it's hard to keep a kettle of water boiling for almost 2 years. And so I just—from my point of view, this thing is—it's a little premature. And I would like to see her take—my advice has been to take some time, get some rest, listen to people on both sides of the argument, and decide exactly what you think is right to do. And then, whatever she decides I'll be for.

Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, if it appears that the Serbs—they have to be sanctioned because they refuse the presence of NATO troops in Kosovo, have you the assurance that the Kosovo Liberation Army will renounce its demands on independence?

President Chirac. Well, as I said before, the pressure that we are exerting, legitimately, especially we're exercising on both parties, on both sides. And we replied to a question on Serbia because the question was on Serbia, but let's be perfectly clear: A lot will depend on the personal position adopted by Mr. Milosevic.

But it goes without saying that if the failure, the breakdown, was caused by the Kosovars, their responsibility, sanctions of a different kind, probably, but very firm sanctions would be applied against them. We haven't—there's no choice. I mean, we don't have to choose. We want peace; that's all.

President Clinton. First of all, I can entirely support what President Chirac said. But if I could just emphasize that the agreement re-

quires that they accept autonomy, at least for 3 years, and sets in motion a 3-year process to resolve all these outstanding questions. Three years would give us time to stop the killing, cool the tempers. And it would also give time for the Serbs to argue that if they return to the original constitutional intent, that is, to have genuine autonomy for Kosovo, as Kosovo once enjoyed—that that would be the best thing for them, economically and politically. And people would have a chance to see and feel those things.

Right now—after all that's gone on and all the people that have died and all the bloody fighting and all the incredibly vicious things that have been said, you know, we just need a time-out here. We need a process within which we can get the security forces out, as Mr. Milosevic said he would do, before—and build some internal institutions within Kosovo capable of functioning, and then see how it goes. I think that's the most important thing.

And so, yes, to go back to what President Chirac said, yes, both sides have responsibility. Their responsibility would be to acknowledge that that is the deal for the next 3 years, during which time we resolve the long-term, permanent questions.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 168th news conference began at 3:44 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); U.S. Ambassador to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Christopher Hill; and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. President Chirac spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks on the Posthumous Pardon of Lieutenant Henry O. Flipper *February 19, 1999*

Thank you. First of all, I'd like to welcome this distinguished assemblage here: Dr. King and the members of the Flipper family and your friends, Secretary West, Congressman Clyburn, General Powell, Deputy Secretary Hamre, Under Secretary de Leon, General Ralston,

General Reimer, Secretary Caldera. I understand we're joined by Clarence Davenport, the sixth African-American graduate of West Point, other distinguished West Point graduates who are here. Welcome to all of you.

There's one person who could not be here today—Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, I'm glad to see you—the one person who could not be here today I want to acknowledge, and that is Senator Max Cleland from Georgia, who has done a lot to make this day possible. We thank him in his absence.

I welcome you all to an event that is 117 years overdue. Here in America's house of liberty, we celebrate ideas like freedom, equality, our indivisibility as one people. Great leaders lived here, people like Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Lincoln, the Roosevelts, after whom this room is named. All of them deepened the meaning of those words while they lived here. But we must be candid and say that the special quality of American freedom is not always extended to all Americans.

A word like "freedom," to be more than a slogan, requires us to acknowledge that our "more perfect Union" was created by imperfect human beings, people who did not always define freedom in the ways that we would, and in ways that they knew they should. For this word to live for ourselves and our children, we must recognize it represents a difficult goal that must be struggled with every day in order to be realized.

Today's ceremony is about a moment in 1882 when our Government did not do all it could do to protect an individual American's freedom. It is about a moment in 1999 when we correct the error and resolve to do even better in the future.

The man we honor today was an extraordinary American. Henry Flipper did all his country asked him to do. Though born a slave in Georgia, he was proud to serve America: the first African-American graduate of West Point; the first African-American commissioned officer in the regular United States Army. He showed brilliant promise and joined the 10th Cavalry. While stationed at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, he perfected a drainage system that eliminated the stagnant water, and malaria, plaguing the fort. Still known as "Flipper's Ditch," it became a national landmark in 1977.

He distinguished himself in combat on the frontier and then was transferred to run a commissary at Fort Davis in Texas. In 1881 Lieutenant Flipper was accused by his commanding officer of improperly accounting for the funds entrusted to him. A later Army review suggested he had been singled out for his race, but at

the time there wasn't much justice available for a young African-American soldier. In December a court-martial acquitted him of embezzlement, but convicted him of conduct unbecoming an officer. President Chester A. Arthur declined to overturn the sentence, and in June of 1882 Lieutenant Flipper was dishonorably discharged.

His life continued. He became a civil and mining engineer out West. He worked in many capacities for the Government, as special agent for the Department of Justice, as an expert on Mexico for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as a special assistant to the Secretary of the Interior. He died in 1940 at the age of 84.

But even after his death, this stain of dishonor remained. One hundred and seventeen years have now elapsed since his discharge. That's a long time, even more than the span of his long life, more than half the history of the White House, indeed, of the United States itself—and too long to let an injustice lie uncorrected.

The Army exonerated him in 1976, changed his discharge to honorable, and reburied him with full honors. But one thing remained to be done, and now it will be. With great pleasure and humility, I now offer a full pardon to Lieutenant Henry Ossian Flipper of the United States Army. This good man now has completely recovered his good name.

It has been a trying thing for the family to fight this long battle, to confront delays and bureaucratic indifference, but this is a day of affirmation. It teaches us that, although the wheels of justice turn slowly at times, still they turn. It teaches that time can heal old wounds and redemption comes to those who persist in a righteous cause. Most of all, it teaches us—Lieutenant Flipper's family teaches us—that we must never give up the fight to make our country live up to its highest ideals.

Outside of this room, Henry Flipper is not known to most Americans. All the more reason to remember him today. His remarkable life story is important to us, terribly important, as we continue to work—on the edge of a new century and a new millennium—on deepening the meaning of freedom at home and working to expand democracy and freedom around the world, to give new life to the great experiment begun in 1776. This is work Henry Flipper would have been proud of.

Each of you who worked so hard for this day is a living chapter in the story of Lieutenant

Flipper. I thank you for your devotion, your courage, your persistence, your unshakable commitment. I thank you for believing and proving that challenges never disappear, but in the long run, freedom comes to those who persevere.

Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:33 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to William C. King, Lieutenant Flipper's great-grandnephew; and former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.).

Remarks at the NAACP 90th Anniversary Celebration February 19, 1999

I have been friends with Chairman Bond a long time. We have had many interesting conversations; not all of them have been that laudatory. But Julian, I have that on film now, and I'm going to play it—[laughter]—whenever I need a little boost in life, I'm just going to turn that film on. [Laughter]

Thank you. I want to say publicly something I said to Julian Bond privately when he agreed to become the chair of the NAACP. I called him, and I thanked him. And I thank him again. And I thank all of you for what you are doing.

When Kweisi Mfume agreed to become president of the NAACP and leave the Congress, I wept. [Laughter] But he told me, he said, "Now, don't worry." He said, "I'll have a good replacement in Congress"—and he did—"and I need to do this. It's the right thing for my country and for my people." And he, too, has served well. And I'm very proud of our friendship and of the service.

I thank all of you who are helping. When Suzanne DuBose was up here talking about scientists slowing down the speed of light and the rest of us speeding up the speed of justice, I wish I had thought of that myself. [Laughter] That line won't rest. It will be used again and again. [Laughter]

I want to thank Bell Atlantic and all the other companies who are standing with the NAACP. I am delighted to see Bishop Graves and the other officers here. And Bishop, thank you for your friendship.

Most of the people with our administration have been introduced, but I want to thank Secretary and Mrs. West and Secretary Slater and Bill Lann Lee for being here, and Judy Winston, who did such a good job with our initiative on race. I want to acknowledge, also, the presence in the audience of Mary Beth

Cahill, our new Special Assistant to the President for Public Liaison. And I want to recognize Ben Johnson, and many of you know he is the first Director of the White House Office on our Initiative for One America, and I thank him for doing that. Since Bell is so well recognized, there's one other former member of the White House staff here, Eric Eve, who went on for the money and the fame of Bell. I want to thank him.

Ladies and gentlemen, I came here tonight for two purposes. One is to say a simple thank you. Thank you for what you've done for America, and thank you for being my friends. I am grateful. I am very grateful. The second is to say that—as Suzanne said so eloquently—we're in a lot better shape than we used to be, but nowhere near where we ought to be. And what we have to do as a people, as a whole country—but especially you, because you know—you know things about where we are and where we need to go that not every American does, because of the life you've lived and the things you've seen and the work you do. You know that no great nation, and certainly not this one, can afford to say, "Well, we're a lot better off than we used to be, so let's take a vacation from progress. Let's take a vacation from our struggle for liberty and equality. Let's take a vacation from our attempt to spread the reach of prosperity and freedom to Africa, to the Caribbean, to our friends in the Americas."

You know that this is not a time to take a break; it is a time to thank God for our prosperity and our opportunities and make the best use of them. The Sun is shining, and we need to make hay. We need to work while the Sun is shining.

And to do what I would like to do in these last 2 years of my Presidency, just like the last

6, we need the help of every one of your 2,200 branches. We need to forge new coalitions across the lines of race and class and religion. We need to close America's remaining opportunity gaps.

A lot of you have lived in homes when you were younger—and not so well off and prosperous as you are now—[laughter]—where there were literally gaps in the walls or the windows, and you could feel the wind blowing. Well, there are a lot of people still getting blown by those kinds of winds and the opportunity gaps of America.

Kweisi said, as all of you know, that the NAACP was formed 90 years ago. It was founded, as all of you know, I'm sure, in direct response to a riot in Springfield, Illinois. Now, I learned something in getting ready to come here tonight that I did not know. I had always thought it was simply a cruel irony that this riot occurred in Abraham Lincoln's hometown and where he was buried. I learned that the white mob was actually deliberately conducting the riot there, trying to make Mr. Lincoln turn over in his grave. They yelled, storming through the black neighborhoods, "Lincoln freed you; we'll show you where you belong."

Well, quite to the contrary, it was the NAACP that helped to show you where you belong. On any bus, in any lunch counter, in any voting booth, in any school, in the Armed Forces, in the highest echelons of Government and business—you belong everywhere. And so do your friends. And we will never make what Congressman John Lewis so beautifully called the "beloved community" until everybody who belongs can be wherever they belong.

I am very grateful for the work we have done together in these last 6 years. Previous speakers commented on all these folks from our administration and how our crowd looks like America. What I would like history to say is, "They had the administration that looked the most like America and that did the most for America, proving that excellence and diversity and community all go hand in hand."

I am grateful that we have stronger communities, with a dropping crime rate; that there are only about half as many people on welfare as there were 6 years ago; that the doors of college are open to every high school student who will work for it through the HOPE scholarship and the other academic aid that we have provided; that we have the longest peacetime

expansion in history and the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957. I am grateful that the prosperity is wider, with the lowest African-American unemployment rate ever recorded, the highest African-American homeownership rate ever recorded, record numbers of new African-American businesses every year.

But it takes a long time to get it all fixed. Just before I came over here tonight, 117 years too late, I awarded a pardon posthumously to Lieutenant Henry Flipper, who, because of racial prejudice, was wrongfully convicted of conduct unbecoming an officer and dismissed from the Army more than a century ago. He was born a slave. He was the first African-American graduate of West Point. He served with great distinction in the 10th Cavalry. In Fort Sill, Oklahoma, he eliminated the cause of malaria as a civil engineer by digging what is still called "Flipper's Ditch" and is now a national monument. He lived to be 84. He served as an adviser to a Cabinet Secretary; he did all kinds of wonderful work throughout the world. He was cleared of wrongdoing 20 years ago, but he was never, never fully restored in his good name until about an hour and a half ago, when, in the presence of 16 of his family members, several African-American graduates of West Point, General Colin Powell, and a number of others who are here, I signed his pardon.

Now, we don't want the rest of America to have to wait 117 years for justice. And we don't want people to have to wait until they're gone for people to say something halfway nice about them. We don't want to have America outraged, even though we honor the outrage, by another killing like the killing of James Byrd.

We know still, every day there are qualified African-Americans who are turned away from home loans or business loans; African-American drivers pulled over because they look suspicious. Some of you call it the offense of "driving while black." We know every day there are African-American children who are stuck in failing schools when they're entitled to good schools.

So we've been working at it for 6 years, to try to bring a special focus to the need to build one America, and to deal not only with the problems of African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans but the fact that we are now becoming the most diverse democracy in the world—California, 10 percent Asian-American, soon to have no majority race. We started the initiative on race in 1997 to

institutionalize the work of building one America. I appointed Ben Johnson to continue our work in an organized, specific, and concrete way. And I want you to help us do that.

I would like it very much if, after the next Presidential election, the new President is asked repeatedly, "Now who is going to head your One America Office?" I don't want this to be a one-shot deal. I want this to be a journey, not a destination. And I want it to be something that makes us think more and more every day, seriously, about how we're going to build unity out of our increasing diversity, get rid of our old problems, and meet our new challenges. And I want you to help me do that.

I want you to help us, also, to pass this new budget, which helps to close some of those large opportunity gaps: the disparities in education, in jobs, in economic development, in civil rights enforcement, in homeownership, and quality health care.

I came here tonight to celebrate and thank you, not to talk policy, but I want to mention just two areas. First, the economy. We all know that even though we have the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957, there are places that haven't felt much of this vaunted recovery. We all know that even though we have the lowest African-American unemployment rate every recorded—and the same for Hispanic-Americans—it's still quite a bit higher than the national average. And for young, single men, it is still quite high indeed.

Now, if we can't use this moment of unprecedented prosperity to bring jobs and opportunity and enterprise to the neighborhoods and to the people who have not yet felt it but are willing to work for it, we will never get around to doing the job. Now is the time to do that.

So the NAACP is a nonpartisan organization; you do have Republican supporters out across this country who believe in civil rights. And I want you to go get them. *[Laughter]* And haul them up here to Washington, with the Democrats, too, and say, "Look, we want you to pass this new markets initiative. We can put \$15 billion in private investment into neighborhoods in this country that have not seen new investment and new jobs and new opportunity for people by giving the right kind of incentives, the right kind of tax cuts, the right kind of loan guarantees, the right kind of support to business people. And if we don't get around

to doing it now, we will never get around to it." We need to do it now.

I also want to tell you that a lot of farsighted business people have figured out that it would be very good for the American economy. Why? For the first 5 years of my Presidency, 30 percent of our growth came from expanded exports, selling more to other people around the world. Last year we had a good year, but we didn't get 30 percent growth from our exports. Why? You know why, because of the financial troubles in Asia and in a lot of Latin American countries. Now, I think we ought to help our friends in Asia, Latin America, and in Africa to trade with us more so we can grow and they can grow. But in the meanwhile, we've got the most significant untapped market for the growth of the American economy right here at home, in all these neighborhoods that still are not growing as they should.

The second thing I want to ask you to do is to help me give every child in this country a world-class education. I want you to help me finish the job of hiring 100,000 more teachers. I want you to help me finish the job. I want you to help me again. I want you to bring your Republican and your Democratic friends up here and help me convince the Congress not to say no this time to our proposal to build or modernize 5,000 schools. I'm tired of going into these inner-city schools and seeing schools so old we can't even hook them up to computers, with broken windows and peeling plaster. It's wrong. And in many other areas, you go, and the kids are all having half their classes in house trailers because the schools are bursting at the seams. We need to do that. I want you to help me continue our work to hook up every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000. I want to ask you to help me change the way we give out Federal money, to not become victim to a tyranny of low expectations.

I have said many times that I want to end the practice of social promotion, but not for the purpose of punishing the kids for a system that is failing them. And let me just give you one fact—I said this in the State of the Union, but I'm going to say it until I'm convinced every American knows it—last year, in the international test in math and science, a representative sample of American children, by race and income, scored near the top of the world in the fourth grade test. By the eighth grade, they had fallen to average. By the 12th grade, they

were near the bottom. Nobody came and took brain cells out of those kids' heads. They did not get dumber. The system was failing them.

So, yes, I believe we should end social promotion, but we also are tripling funds for after-school and summer school and tutoring programs and sending more college students into the schools to mentor kids when they're in middle school and tell them they can stay in school and go to college and what they need to do to do that. We need to do that.

We are dramatically increasing our scholarship program to tell young people, "If you'll go into inner cities or isolated rural areas and teach school for 3 or 4 years, we'll pay off your student loan. We want you to go out there and give something back to your country."

We have got to change the way we spend the money. The teachers and the parents and the kids are telling us what works; we ought to stop funding what doesn't work and start funding what does. We ought to say that school districts should raise standards for teachers, and we put money in there. There are so many of our teachers out there having to teach courses, with the schools overcrowded, that they don't have college majors or college minors in.

That's what happens in high school. It's not that these people are not dedicated. They are, but they have not had the chance to be properly prepared. And the schools can't get enough teachers to put enough people in the classrooms with the kind of academic background. We ought to help them change that.

And there are school districts with schools that are doing great and schools that aren't doing so well. The school with the biggest—the State with the biggest gain in student performance in the last couple of years is North Carolina, because they adopted a strategy that says, "We've got to turn around or shut down failing schools." When you do that, you almost never have to shut one down. They find a way to turn around.

The great English scholar Benjamin—I mean, Samuel Johnson, once said—I had Benjamin Johnson on my mind—[laughter]—Samuel Johnson said that it is remarkable how the prospect of one's own demise concentrates the mind. [Laughter] We don't want to punish anybody; we want to turn schools around—and there's things in this budget to do that—and to help the teachers and to give the parents more information and to help more districts set up charter

schools and to do things that will work, so that we don't have one size fits all.

I read a story the other day about a school district out West that organized a school just for high school dropouts. Let them come at different hours. Let them have access to computers and special tutors. And all of a sudden, almost all the dropouts came back to school. There are all kinds of different things that can be done to raise the performance level of our schools.

But I think all of you know that we'll never really have one America, and we'll never really get by discrimination, unless we create opportunity in the schools and opportunity in the economy. So I ask you to help me pass these initiatives.

Now, let me just say one last thing. I was delighted to be asked to come tonight, honored to accept. The work that I have been privileged to do as President, and before, in my life to advance the cause of equal opportunity is perhaps the thing I cherish most, of all the things that I and my wife and our administration have been able to do.

You'd be amazed how many times in my weekly lunch with the Vice President, after we get through with whatever business we have to do, we get back to talking about this subject. I guess it's because I grew up in the segregated South. Maybe it's because I met and was influenced by people like some of you here tonight, so many years ago. But part of it is, I know that it's a pure miracle that, starting out from where I did as a kid, I wound up here tonight. A pure miracle.

I once heard a guy say every politician wants you to believe he was born in a log cabin he built himself. [Laughter] But the truth is, we don't build our log cabins ourselves. And not a person standing here or sitting here tonight got here on your own. And most of us get out of this life better off than we deserve, because God is good and so are the people that we get in touch with.

But it really bothers me that there are children in this country who are certainly just as smart, full of as many dreams, with whatever abilities God gave me—that they have them—who may not be able to live out their dreams. And if all of us as citizens have one responsibility, apart from honoring our country and Constitution and laws, it ought to be to make sure

that at the end of our days we have done everything we can to make sure no one we ever touched was denied the chance to live their dreams. We know we'll be better off when that's true. We know we'll all get something out.

I look at these young kids that are here tonight, these young people. I'm kind of jealous, actually. If they'd let me be 20, I think I'd let them be President. *[Laughter]* You know? I think about the life that lies before them and all that they might be. I imagine, 30 years from now, some African-American, Hispanic, Asian female standing here as President of the United States, you know?

But I know that as long as there are Native American reservations where young American citizens live in communities where the diabetes rate is 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 times the national average; as long as there are neighborhoods where kids really don't have a chance to get a world-class education; as long as there are places where nobody's taking care of the pollu-

tion, so the health rates are not what they ought to be; as long as there is anyplace where anybody can't live out their dreams, the NAACP will have work to do, and America will have new ground to break. And together, there is no better cause for our energies and our lives.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:07 p.m. in the Great Hall at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Julian Bond, chairman of the board, Kweisi Mfume, president and chief executive officer, and Bishop William H. Graves, vice chairman of the board, NAACP; Suzanne DuBose, president, Bell Atlantic Foundation; Gail West, wife of Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo D. West, Jr.; Judith A. Winston, former Executive Director, President's Initiative on Race; and Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth.

The President's Radio Address *February 20, 1999*

Good morning. This weekend, Governors from all over our country are here in Washington to talk about the long-term challenges facing our Nation as we prepare to enter the 21st century. Of those challenges, none is more important than educating our children—all our children—to world-class standards. Today I want to talk about how we must work together at every level of government and in every community to make sure our Nation's public schools are the best in the world.

For 6 years now, improving education has been one of our highest priorities. Even as we have held fast to fiscal discipline, replacing an age of crippling budget deficits with a new era of budget surpluses, we have nearly doubled our investment in education and training.

The balanced budget I sent to Washington this month strengthens that commitment to our children's education with even more resources to help States improve accountability, to build or modernize 6,000 schools,* to reduce class

size in the early grades, to start more after-school programs, to connect every classroom and library to the Internet, and to finish the job of hiring 100,000 new highly trained teachers.

This is an education agenda for the 21st century. But with more children entering school than ever before and enrollments continuing to rise, we know we must draw on every resource we possess to strengthen and improve our public schools.

As both a former Governor and a parent, I know the greatest innovations in education do not start in Washington. They start in local schools and school districts, in community councils and parent-teacher groups. They start in States like North Carolina, where Governor Hunt has led the way to improve teacher quality, with performance assessment for new teachers and incentives for veteran teachers to become even more proficient and to become board-certified master teachers.

They start in Michigan, where Governor Engler is supporting greater accountability in

* White House correction.

schools by requiring school districts to send parent report cards on how well their schools are doing. They start in Delaware, where Governor Carper putting an end to social promotion by insisting that students pass State tests before they move to next grades. They start in Pennsylvania, where Governor Ridge is improving school safety with effective discipline codes. They're starting in States like California, where Governor Davis has called on the State legislature to turn around failing schools with a new accountability plan.

As I have said many times, every problem in education in America has been solved somewhere, by somebody, in America. The trick is helping more communities to put those proven solutions to work in their own public schools. I believe the National Government has an obligation to help them do that.

That's why, in my State of the Union Address, I proposed an ambitious new agenda to invest more of our resources in what we know is working and to stop investing in what doesn't. My plan will help every school district to take five steps that are already working in schools around the country, steps advocated by teachers and principals and parents and students themselves: ending social promotion, but investing more money to help students with summer school and after-school programs, so we don't blame students when the system fails them; adopting and enforcing reasonable discipline codes; giving parents report cards on their children's schools and giving parents and children more choice of schools, with charter schools and more public school choice; turning around or shutting down the worst performing public schools; and ensuring that all new teachers are trained in the subject they'll be teaching.

Now, these steps are all based on proven experience. They're common sense. We have to make them common practice in every school district in America.

All across our Nation, we're seeing a grass-roots revolution in education, a revolution in accountability and rising expectations. This year we have a rare opportunity to use our new prosperity to help this revolution spread to every single school district, every classroom, every child.

Now, some in Congress believe the National Government has no business helping communities to improve their schools in this way. But I think strengthening education is a national priority. So I urge Congress to help reduce class size, to modernize our school buildings, to improve teacher quality, to make accountability for results—ending social promotion, reasonable discipline codes, all these other things that I have advocated—make these things the law of the land. If we do this, we can transform our public schools; we can lift our children up; we can give them the education they need to make the most of their lives in an exciting new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 p.m. on February 19 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 20. In his remarks, the President referred to Governors James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina; John Engler of Michigan; Thomas R. Carper of Delaware; Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania; and Gray Davis of California. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 19 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at the Labor Unification Legislative Conference

February 21, 1999

Thank you. I would like to—first of all, thank you for the wonderful, warm welcome—to express my deep respect and support for the IAM president, Tom Buffenbarger, and all of the IAM officers; the UAW executive VP, Ruben Burks—I know Steve Yokich is in Germany now—and all the UAW members here; and the

steel workers' president, George Becker, and all the steel workers here; and of course, everyone up here on the platform with me.

George Becker would give his voice, his heart, and his life for his members. And he nearly gave his voice tonight.

I came here to do a number of things, but I'd like to start with first things first. The first thing I want to do is to say a simple, profound thank-you. Thank you. Thank you for your support. Thank you for the fight you have waged. Thank you for the miles we have walked together these last 6 years.

I also came here to support the merger of these three great streams of American labor, joining into a new river of 2 million strong. Throughout the 20th century, all three of you have been at the forefront in the struggle for human progress in America. The workers at River Rouge and Republic Steel shed their blood for more than their own rights and their own families. Their sacrifice gave all of us collective bargaining and the minimum wage.

The founders and members of your three unions gave us things all working people now take for granted as essential elements in a humane society: vacations, health care, pensions, grievance procedures. You have continued to lead the fight for all Americans, the fight to create Medicare, to civil rights, to protecting our Nation against the Contract With America. The UAW, the steel workers, the machinists have provided the minds and muscles for a progressive society in our country.

Now, in this season of renewal and rebuilding for America, the house of labor is growing stronger. The creation of a mighty new industrial union, not just a merger but a new organization, will set the stage for even greater progress for your members and your families and for all the rest of America in the 21st century.

I believe you have an opportunity and, therefore, a duty every bit as real as that which was seized by the great generations that preceded you a half century ago. The labor pioneers had it hard. They wore their scars proudly. They were not always the easiest of personalities. But in spite of their contentiousness, I like to think that Walter Reuther, Philip Murray, and Thomas Talbot are up in heaven shaking hands at this new merger.

I thank you all for the strong support you have given not only to me and the First Lady and the Vice President and our administration but to our Democratic Party, especially in 1998. I'll never forget the sense of pride I shared on election night with John Sweeney, when he was at the White House, and we realized that for the first time since 1822, the President's party had won seats in the House of Representa-

tives in the sixth year of an administration. You might be interested to know that the last time that happened, in 1822, the other party disappeared. [Laughter] We won't be that lucky. [Laughter] But it certainly is a good incentive to continue the fight.

I want to thank you for your commitment to make your voices heard, to advance the issues and the candidates that are pro-worker and pro-family. For 6 years, as George said, we've been on a journey together to renew our Nation, to restore the American dream. For decades, our Nation was buffeted by the winds of economic change. Wages for working families stagnated; working people fell further behind. Beginning in 1993, together, we put in place a new economic strategy to put our people first. Because of what you have done, America is working again, with the longest peacetime expansion in history, the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957, nearly 18 million new jobs, the lowest welfare rolls in three decades. And finally, after three decades of stagnation, in just the last 3 years wages are rising at twice the rate of inflation.

Things are not all as they ought to be, but clearly, at long last, we have begun to move aggressively in the right direction. Together, as has already been noted, we stood up against the congressional majority that was absolutely determined to strip away the victories and undermine the rights of working people.

I was proud to stand with you also to defeat the "Paycheck Protection Act" in California. I was proud to stop every piece of anti-labor legislation sent to me by the Congress. We knew the "TEAM Act" would undermine collective bargaining, so we said no. We knew the Republican comp-time bill would be unfair to working people, so we said no. We knew that safe pensions and a strong OSHA are vital to working people, so when Congress tried to undermine them, we said no.

After 12 years in which my predecessors exploded deficits and quadrupled our national debt, all the while talking about a balanced budget and accusing my party and our friends in organized labor of being the big, irresponsible spenders, we actually balanced the budget and did it in the right way, while nearly doubling our investments in the education and training of our people, and having big increases in things like medical research.

We're in the second year of surpluses, with years and years more projected in the future. America is working again. But as I said in my State of the Union Address, this is not a time for complacency. For one reason, as all of you here know, especially the steel workers, we are living in a very dynamic and somewhat troubling international economic environment where things can change overnight. For another, in a world that is changing this fast, we have to take advantage of this moment of prosperity to deal with the big challenges facing America in the 21st century. We cannot rest until America works for every American, until prosperity extends to every working family in every community. America must do more.

Among other things, we must remain a great industrial nation. So I'd like to talk to you tonight about three aspects of our challenge. First of all, before the baby boomers retire, and with life expectancy increasing at a dramatic rate, with people over 80 being the fastest growing part of our population in percentage terms, we must use this moment and this surplus to save and strengthen Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century.

Now, here in Washington there is now a great debate about what to do with the surplus and how it should be applied, and whether, to Social Security and Medicare. I won't take time tonight to talk about the competing visions of Social Security and how we should deal with that, but I will work with you on that. What I want to talk about is, what should be our first priority with the surplus? I believe it should be to save Social Security and Medicare, and in so doing, to pay down the national debt that was quadrupled in the 12 years before I took office.

Now, I am pleased that even though we will have our disagreements about what to do with Social Security, the Republican leadership in Congress has agreed that we should set aside 62 percent of the surplus to save Social Security. I think it's important that we do it in the right way: We should put 75 years of life on the Trust Fund; we should do something about elderly women whose poverty rate is twice the rate of seniors; and we ought to lift the earnings limit so that seniors who want to work can do that.

Now, unfortunately, we do not agree on whether to set aside another 15 percent of the surplus to save Medicare. Of course, we will have our disagreements about how Medicare

should be reformed. I think it should be reformed and kept solvent for 20 years, and also, we should add a prescription drug benefit to the Medicare program. And I don't want to kid you. I think because of the numbers of people that are going to retire in the baby boom generation, and because we're all living longer, and because of medical advances which at least in their early years are more expensive, we will have to make some further reforms in Medicare, even if we do what I want.

But if we set aside 15 percent of the surplus for the next 15 years for Medicare, we can at least guarantee that it's all right till 2020. If we don't, we'll be faced with possible changes in Medicare that could undermine the universality of the program and its absolute reliability for seniors and for the children and grandchildren of seniors who don't have to pay those out-of-pocket medical expenses. So this is a huge issue.

Now, our friends in the other party say that we ought to just reform Medicare and maybe shift some of the costs to seniors—who may not be able to afford it—and maybe get away from Medicare as a defined benefit program. I am against that. I do not want to see Medicare turned from a defined benefit program into a defined contribution program.

But think of what we can do if we set aside part of this surplus, which will allow us to pay down even more of our debt and put 20 years on the Medicare Trust Fund's life, and then we can figure out how to make what other changes need to be made to strengthen the program and how to add the prescription drug program.

Now, that will cost more money in the short run, but over the long run, adding the prescription drug benefit will cut down on doctor visits; will cut down on hospital costs; will cut down on critical care costs, because with all these advances in medical research, people will be able to stay healthier. The best way to cut down on the cost of the Medicare program is to keep seniors healthier for longer periods of time, and the medicine will help us to do that.

I believe the American people should have some tax relief out of this surplus, but I think we should save Social Security and Medicare first. Then I think we should focus the tax relief on helping working people and the middle class begin to save from their first day on the job, so they will have a piece of this enormous

wealth that America has enjoyed in the last 6 years. That's what our USA accounts, our Universal Savings Accounts, will do.

So the choice the American people will face is our plan, which invests the surplus for tomorrow and focuses the tax relief on working families and the need to save, and theirs, which spends a lot more of the surplus today. Ours favors savings; theirs favors consumption. Ours focuses tax relief on the middle class, and theirs—well, theirs is a Republican tax plan. [Laughter]

I think at least this administration and our leaders in Congress ought to be entitled to the benefit of the doubt, based on the performance of the economy in the last 6 years. Their economic theory gave us 12 years of rising deficits and declining incomes. Our economic strategy has given us growth and surpluses. When I took office, the national debt had risen to one-half our annual income. If we adopt my plan for the surplus, in 15 years, it will be just 7 percent of our annual income. That's the lowest it's been since right before we entered World War I in 1917.

What that means in practical terms to you is that when I took office, we were spending over 14 cents of every dollar you paid in taxes just to make our interest payments on the debt. In 15 years that will be down to 2 cents on the dollar. The rest can be spent on you and your children and your future. And within 18 years, the United States of America would be debt-free.

Think of it: If we just have the discipline to do the right thing—and I'll say more in a minute why it's good for the economy—we could save Social Security for 75 years, save Medicare for 20 years, and get the United States of America out of debt. I think that is the right thing to do.

But I don't want to pretend that their plan won't sound good, sound sweet, and sound simple. All I ask you is to look at the performance of our country in the last 6 years and give us the benefit of the doubt and support us. Let's save Social Security. Let's not let Medicare be dissolved. Let's not let it be changed fundamentally in its character. And let's pay down this debt to keep America's economy strong.

Now, the second thing we have to do is to keep the economy growing and to deal with crises as they occur. We have to have a strategy to keep the global economy working for Ameri-

cans, as well as to increase the economic development here at home.

For the first 5 years of my Presidency, 30 percent of our economic growth came from increasing exports, and manufacturing employment in America increased. But last year, because of the global financial crisis, which has left Russia, most of Asia, in a deep recession, and has slowed growth dramatically in most of Latin America, the manufacturing sector in our country was hit very hard. We saw many, many jobs lost, and we know many more than those that were lost are still threatened. Industrial America is hurting now.

I have worked hard to limit this global financial crisis, to try to right the things that are out of whack, to help our trading partners return to economic growth in a healthy way so that they could buy our products instead of dump on our markets. We need a 21st century financial and trading system that limits the cycle of boom and bust, that strengthens social safety nets, that works for ordinary working people and their families in every country. In short, the United States must lead a crusade to put a more human face on the global economy.

While we are doing that—and I expect to spend an enormous amount of time this year working on that, so that we can reduce the likelihood that we'll have years in the future like the last year has been—we cannot let other economies' difficulties be a justification or an excuse for them to violate trade laws and engage in unfair trade practices.

Make no mistake about it. It was not economic difficulty and the declining value of currency which made foreign goods cheaper, which precipitated the present crisis in steel. This was not an ordinary economic event. We know it was the result of unfair trade practices. We have used tools that are unprecedented in this kind of dispute to respond.

The Secretary of Commerce speeded up consideration of the dumping cases. We just announced that both Japan and Brazil have been dumping steel into our markets. We've put them on notice that the surge in exports is unacceptable, and this means that anyone who imports steel from Japan or Brazil must pay large deposits or post substantial bonds to the U.S. Customs Service. Paying these duties will likely reduce further unfair steel imports from these countries.

We've also made it clear to Korea in no uncertain terms that they cannot fill the void with unfair trade practices, and so far they have been responsive, though we'll continue to watch it closely. As you know, we're in negotiations with Russia on a comprehensive agreement to reduce their steel exports to the United States.

The goal of all these actions is to get imports back to their pre-crisis level when our steel industry was competing just fine with everybody in the world. And again, if we have a fair policy and we don't have unfair penetration, that will happen. Now, I know that for a lot of hard-pressed plants, workers, families, communities, these trade laws work too slowly. But we are accelerating the pace at which they will work to the maximum ability to do so. December numbers show a 32 percent decline in steel imports across the board, a 67 percent decline in hot-rolled steel.

Now, I would just like to make one observation about that. For all those people who said that all these imports were just the product of ordinary economic activity and, therefore, we shouldn't do anything, the fact that they could cut hot-rolled steel exports from their countries to us 67 percent in one month pretty well destroyed the argument that it was ordinary economic activity that led to them in the first place.

In the case of Japan, we have made it clear that if their exports don't return to pre-crisis levels, we're prepared to take appropriate action, including self-initiation of trade cases, something that is almost unprecedented. I will work very closely with you as we move forward. This has been a tough year for the steel workers and for many other manufacturing workers. We need to do more. And we will keep at it until we turn the crisis around.

The challenge we face, however, goes beyond steel. We have to make sure that the world economy works for everyone. As George said in his opening remarks, we've had some disagreements about this in the past. Trade has divided Americans for a long time. I want you to know, however, that I am determined to do whatever I can to find common ground on this issue that will enable labor and business, environmentalists and government in the United States to work together.

I support open markets because it has given us higher incomes and more jobs, and for the first time in anyone's memory, now the United States has the lowest unemployment rate in the

industrialized world, even lower than Japan. No one can remember a time when that was the case. It's been a very, very long time.

Now, the right kind of trade is good for working families. And when a financial crisis hits our trading partners, we can see the devastating effect it has on them and on others here at home. But again I say we can't allow international economic competition or adversity elsewhere to become a race to the bottom here at home or in any other country.

My goal has got to be to level the world up, not level it down. That means we have to press for more open markets that have stronger safeguards for workers, not weaker ones, for health and safety, for children, for a clean environment. A trade that honors the rights of workers and the dignity of work, that respects core labor rights. We have to do that.

We should do more not only through the trade framework but with the international labor organizations to raise labor standards around the world and to lead the world community to conclude a treaty that bans child labor everywhere in the world.

Now, if we save Social Security and Medicare, if we can keep the economy going in the midst of all these troubles, the third thing that we have to do is to make sure that the economy works for all of our people and that adversity can be quickly overcome. If we can't do it now, when will we ever do it? That's why we ought to increase the minimum wage again. Ten million working families need it, and we ought to do it.

That's why we should expand the family and medical leave law to cover 10 million more workers and their families. It is not broad enough in its coverage. If we can't afford it now, when will we ever get around to doing it?

And that's why we have to recognize, also, that there are people in this country, in urban communities and rural areas, who have not felt any upturn in the last 6 years. That's what my new markets initiative is all about.

You know, we have all kinds of devices to help encourage Americans to invest in developing countries overseas, that aren't present here. One of the things that I have proposed is an "American Private Investment Company," modeled on our Overseas Private Investment Corporation, that would enable us to give both tax credits and loan guarantees to people who

would invest in high unemployment areas in America, to put in new plants and new businesses, to create new markets and new jobs.

Let me just give you an example of how it would work, because I'm going to need your help to pass this. New York City—while America has a 4.4 percent unemployment rate, the unemployment rate in New York City is about 9 percent. Now, when you consider how low it is in some places in New York City, that means in a lot of big urban centers, it's well over 10 percent. If this whole plan passes, and a group of people got together, for example, under these laws that I have proposed, to spend \$300 million and open a plant in a high unemployment area in Brooklyn or the Bronx, or they wanted to— to use Congressman Rangel's favorite example—they wanted to rehabilitate Yankee Stadium instead of moving it away and hire construction workers who live in the Bronx to do it—suppose they wanted to do that. Under our plan, if this law passes, they put up \$300 million; the first \$100 million, they get a 25 percent tax credit for. The second \$200 million, they'd have a loan guarantee for, which means they'd only have \$75 million at risk for the \$300 million investment.

That's a good deal. The best untapped markets for American business are here in America, and it will lower everybody else's threshold of anxiety; it will create economic opportunity. It's good for the steel workers. It's good for the machinists. It's good for the auto workers, because if those people have jobs, they'll buy more of everything. And I want you to help me pass it.

I also ask you to help me strengthen our education system, to finish the job of cutting class sizes by putting 100,000 new teachers into our schools, to pass our proposal to build or modernize 6,000 schools.

And I ask you to do something that will be quite controversial. I hope you will support me in this. Every 5 years, we pass an authorization law which sets the terms under which we give our tax money back to public schools. And it's about \$15 billion a year now that we give to schools to help them do their work. We now know—from teachers, from principals, from parents, from students themselves, from worlds of research—what works in the schools and what doesn't. We know that every problem in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere. But we know something else: Our

kids, a representative sample of our kids—represented by race, income, and region—scores at the top of the world in the 4th grade math and science tests, drops to the middle of the world by the 8th grade, and is nearly at the bottom by the 12th.

Now, those children do not get dumber as they get older. That means we are not doing well enough by them, and we have to do better. We have to make sure all these kids can read well when they're in elementary school no matter what their family background or where their folks came from.

So I say, we need to change the terms in which we give out this money, not because the Federal Government makes it up in a room somewhere but because the schools have told us what works. We ought to end social promotion, but we ought to do it by saying we want to end social promotion, but we don't want to declare the kids failures because the system's failing them. So we ought to provide more funds for summer school programs, for after-school programs, for tutors—keep the kids out of trouble, off the streets, in the schools learning, but make sure they know something when they go from grade to grade.

The teachers organizations have asked us repeatedly to make one requirement that every school has not only a written, reasonable discipline policy but can prove it's being enforced. That's important.

They ought to identify schools that are failing and turn them down or shut them down. Every State that's done this has found that they hardly have to shut any schools down, because they get turned around once they know that they're going to be shut down unless they do turn around.

These are elemental things that have worked in community after community after community. I think parents ought to get a report card on every school, every year, that their children are in. I think if we do these things, you'll be amazed at the results we'll have 5 years from now, when we have to reauthorize this aid again.

But this will be real controversial. Some people will say it's too tough on the kids that come from poor backgrounds. I think that's selling them short. They can do just fine, if they have good schools. And I'll tell you something, if they get out of school without a good education, the world's going to be real tough on them. And so we need to help them.

And then some of our friends in the other party will say, “Well, here’s the President trying to micromanage the schools. We just want to give them the money. We’re not trying to tell the schools what to do.” Well, that would be true if I had just sat in my office one day and come up with this and thought it sounded good. This is what the people at the grassroots level have said and done and proved works. And it is simply wrong for us to keep subsidizing failure when we can invest in success. So I ask you to help us.

Just two other things, very quickly: I want you to help me this year do what we didn’t do last year and pass a strong, enforceable Patients’ Bill of Rights. Now, a lot of you know—a lot of you know, or you’re about to find out in very difficult ways, that after years of moderate inflation in health care costs those premiums are going up again, even for managed care. And if you’re going to pay for health care, you ought to be able to get health care. If you need to see a specialist, you ought to be able to see one. If you have options for health care, you ought to know what your options are. If you’re in another town and you get hit in an accident, you ought to be able to go to the nearest emergency room, not one that’s halfway across town. If you’re in the middle of treatment with a doctor, you ought to be able to continue the treatment even if you change health care providers. These are elemental things.

The last thing I want to say, if you want the economy to work for everybody—I want to come back to something I said before—I know this is an alien concept; if I had been running for President in 1992—and many of you did so much for me—and I said, look, you vote for me and 6 years from now I’ll be coming back to you telling you what great things will happen if we pay down the national debt, you would have decided that I needed a trip to a doctor, not to be elected President. But we can talk about that now.

We want the economy to work for everyone. You don’t know what’s going to happen beyond our borders. I am doing my best to turn this situation around, to do everything I can to make sure we don’t have another year like the year we just had in the global economy, with all the trade problems and other things that came down on us. But if, God forbid, we continue to have these kinds of problems, don’t we want the strongest demand we have here at home?

Don’t we want to be able to—and if we do more to protect our markets from unfair trade practices, then it still means that we’re going to have to generate more economic activity here at home.

If you pay down the debt, what will happen? Interest rates will stay down, much lower than they otherwise would, no matter what happens around the world. That means lower home mortgage payments; it means lower car payments; it means lower business loans; it means lower student loans; it means lower credit card payments. It means greater investment in the American economy, more jobs, and lower prices and higher consumption. That’s what it means.

Now, I do not know what is going to happen everywhere in the world in the next 2 years, much less after I’m gone. But I know this: If you’ll go along with this and you’ll help me do this, for the next 15 years, every single year the interest rates in America and the economy in America will be in better shape, no matter what happens, than they would have been if we don’t do it and we give away this money right now. So I ask you to help me do this. This is a right thing to do for the United States of America.

Finally, let me just say there are a lot of changes going on in the world. No one can predict the future with any certainty. Tell you the truth, it’s all worked out a little better, until this last rough patch in the road for us, than I thought it would when I was running. But I knew we were doing the right things.

One of the things we know is, if we put the American people first—if we think about how people can balance work and family, if we think about how we can preserve the dignity of work, if we think about how we can give every child the right to live up to his or her God-given capacity—if we do the right things, then in the tough times we’ll do better than we otherwise would have, and in the good times we’ll soar.

The American labor movement has helped this country to do the right things year-in and year-out, decade-in and decade-out. In joining together, I am convinced you have done the right thing for your members and their families for the 21st century. And I am convinced that you will do the right things for America.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:45 p.m. in Hall A at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to R. Thomas Buffenbarger, international president, International Association of Machinists (IAM); Ruben Burks, secretary-treasurer, and Stephen P. Yokich, president,

United Auto Workers (UAW); George Becker, president, United Steel Workers Association (USWA), who introduced the President; and John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO. The IAM, UAW, and USWA had pledged in 1996 to unify by the year 2000.

Remarks at the National Governors' Association Dinner *February 21, 1999*

Good evening. Governor and Mrs. Carper, Governor and Mrs. Leavitt, ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to the White House.

Two of my proudest possessions, which I have over off the Oval Office, are an original printing of the proceeds of the first Governors' conference, held at the invitation of President Theodore Roosevelt—formerly Governor of New York—in 1908, and the subject was the conservation of America's natural resources. The second is a picture taken on the front steps of the White House of the President and all the Governors in that year, with a letter signed with the picture by every serving Governor in 1992—some of you signed it—to me on the occasion of my election as President.

I see the picture every day. I see the book every day, and it reminds me of how much I enjoyed being a Governor and how much I very much enjoyed these Governors' meetings.

Six years ago, when I took office, I pledged a new era of partnership with the Governors. I have done my best to deliver on that pledge. I found that, when being a Governor, that it was easy to do the job when the economy was working than when it wasn't. *[Laughter]* So I hope you have found the same. I pledged to work on eliminating the deficit, and now we are into our second year of surpluses. I pledged to work with you on welfare reform, and I know all of you are very proud that the welfare rolls are about half the size they were in 1993. I pledged to work with you and your communities on crime, and the crime rate is at its lowest level in 25 years. I pledged to work on a cleaner

environment in a way that would permit the economy to continue to grow, and together we have made progress on that and many other areas.

I also pledged to continue the practice I adopted as Governor of stealing the best ideas from other States I could possibly find. *[Laughter]* Among other things, we have adopted Georgia's HOPE scholarship and many other ideas that many of you brought into being.

For all these things, I thank you. I thank you for the work you continue to do. I thank you for the model you continue to set. In 6 years, I have concluded what I suspected when I came here, which is that Washington works best when it works as Governors and as the National Governors' Association work: across party lines; focusing on ideas, not ideology; on people, not politics; on unity, not division. For all that you do to build that kind of America in the 21st century, I thank you.

I look forward to our meeting tomorrow, and I ask you to join me in a toast to Governor and Mrs. Carper, Governor and Mrs. Leavitt, the Governors, their spouses, and our beloved country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to National Governors' Association Chairman Gov. Thomas R. Carper of Delaware and his wife, Martha; and NGA Vice Chairman Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah and his wife, Jacalyn.

Remarks at the National Governors' Association Meeting *February 22, 1999*

I know we're beginning a little late, so I will get right into my remarks and try to truncate them a little bit so we can have the maximum amount of time for discussion. Let me begin by saying that Hillary and I were delighted to have you here last night. We had a wonderful time. This room is in a little different condition than it was last evening, but I hope both events will prove to be enjoyable.

Let me say that I have been a participant in one way or the other in every Governors' meeting since 1979, for 20 years. I had the privilege of serving with 150 of my fellow Americans as Governors over a 12-year period. One of the best has passed away in the last few months, Governor Lawton Chiles of Florida. And I wanted to mention him both because he was an important member of the NGA and because he had the good sense to go from Washington back home, instead of the other way around.

I wanted to thank Governor Jeb Bush for his proposal to set aside some of the tobacco settlement money in Florida for the foundation named in Governor Chiles' name, for the benefit of the children of the State. Those of us who knew and cared for Lawton are profoundly grateful for that. And I wanted to mention with the remembrance of him because he gave so much of his life, and the older he got, the more he gave to the future of our children. I know we have a lot of things to do today, but I'd like to spend my few moments talking about the education of our kids.

As I said in my State of the Union Address, the prosperity the Nation now enjoys gives us a rare opportunity and, I believe, a profound obligation to do more to ensure the education of all of our children. At a very important time, we have, as Secretary Riley never tires of saying, the largest school population and the most diverse one we've ever had. We have more overcrowded schools and more old and disrepaired schools than we have ever had. And we have more opportunities to seize the benefits of the well-educated population than we have ever had.

The budget that I sent to Congress this month, after the State of the Union, calls for spending \$1.4 billion to help States and school

districts hire new and better trained teachers. That's a 17 percent increase over the budget I signed last fall, and it moves us considerably closer to our goal of hiring 100,000 new teachers over the next 7 years—now the next 6 years. It calls on Congress to pass our tax proposal to build or modernize 6,000 schools, which is a huge problem in many of your States. It triples our budget for after-school and summer school programs to \$600 million. That's enough to help local schools keep a million children in the schools and off the street during the hours when parents work and juvenile crime soars.

I had an interesting discussion last night with Mrs. Leavitt and Mrs. Kitzhaber about the importance of keeping young people in school, later in the school day. It includes new funds to stay on track to hook all our classrooms up to the Internet and to reach our goal of 3,000 charter schools by the year 2000.

I think it is very important that we invest more money, as we have more children, and as we are going to have to replace a large number of teachers who will be retiring, and make sure that they have been adequately prepared. But I think it's also important that we candidly assess how we invest the money we are now spending. The Federal Government already is investing \$15 billion a year in public schools. This year we have to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. I believe we should change the way we spend the money we are already spending. I don't know how many times I've heard Governors say that over the last 15 or 16 years about State funds.

The idea behind the "Education Accountability Act," which I will send to Congress next month, is to say after, now more than 15 years of education research and efforts since the issuance of the "Nation At Risk" report, and the 10th year after the Governors and President Bush issued the "Goals 2000" report, it is time for the Federal Government to invest in those things which Governors and school districts and principals and teachers and students and parents have proved are critical for raising student achievement, which is the theme of your conference.

It says that school districts accepting Federal money must end social promotion, turn around or shut down failing schools, ensure teachers know the subjects they're teaching, have and enforce reasonable discipline codes, and empower parents with report cards on their schools.

I say again, we did not dream up these ideas in Washington. We learned them from North Carolina, where Governor Hunt has led the way in improving teacher quality with performance assessments, incentives for veteran teachers to become even more proficient, a strategy to turn around or shut down failing schools; in Pennsylvania, where Governor Ridge is improving school safety with effective discipline codes; in Delaware, where Governor Carper is putting an end to social promotion by insisting that students pass State tests before they move to the next grade; in California, where Governor Davis has asked the legislature to turn around failing schools with a new accountability plan; in Michigan, where Governor Engler is supporting greater accountability by requiring school districts to send parents report cards. And I could mention every Governor in this room in some specific or another, because these ideas represent the best practices in education reform today, proven in the laboratories of democracy at the State, city, and school district level.

Many of you have proposed one or more of these ideas in your state of the State addresses. In his state of the State, Governor Engler endorsed all five of them and said he didn't understand how anyone could disagree. I'm with him.

Some people already are trying to frame this debate here in Washington, however, in partisan or ideological terms, and try to force everyone to take sides, when I'd like to use it as an opportunity for us to debate, discuss, and come together.

You'll hear some people say the Federal Government shouldn't be involved at all in public education, just send us the check, and we'll take care of the rest. In 1787 our Founding Fathers declared that all new territories had to set aside land for public schools, establishing at the birth of our Republic the principle that public education, though a State and local responsibility, is a national priority. In 1862 President Lincoln created the land-grant college system. In 1917 Woodrow Wilson mandated vocational training in public high schools. In 1958 President Eisenhower created the new program to help public

school teachers improve math and science instruction in the aftermath of *Sputnik*.

None of these Federal actions undermine the ability of State and local government to run their schools. Each was a necessary response to the challenge the Nation faced at the time. I believe we are at a similar moment of challenge today. And it should lead, I believe, in the direction of all the work that has been done by Governors since 1983 toward what works to raise student achievement.

Some will say the Federal Government should be giving States more flexibility, not demanding more accountability. I think it's a false choice and the Federal Government should be giving you more of both. You know from your own interactions that flexibility and accountability can achieve the right ends working with local governments.

Since I've been here, our administration has cut regulations in elementary and secondary education programs by two-thirds, granted 357 waivers so that States and school districts can have the flexibility to try new approaches. We don't have any business telling you whom to hire, how to teach, how to run schools. I have vigorously supported more school-based management and more flexibility for you. But let's not kid ourselves. We are not doing our children any favors by continuing to subsidize practices that don't work and failing to invest in practices that do.

We shouldn't have a local option for schools to fail, year-in and year-out. Governors have recognized that for years. If you go back and read the "Goals 2000" statement, that—there's still a few of us around this room that were there back then—that the Governors hammered out with President Bush and his Education Department, and the allocation of responsibilities under that statement, it is clear that there has long been a recognition of our joint responsibility to raise student achievement. And I was thrilled when that became the topic of your endeavors this year.

There may be some who say there's now no longer any need for the Federal Government to assist on these accountability measures, because States and school districts are doing it on their own. I have no doubt that these ideas eventually will spread to every State and school district in America. The question is, how long will it take to happen?

Our Federal system, our laboratories of democracy, are great at inventing new ideas and testing them out. At least in the area of education, we're not so good at spreading the best of those ideas around in a comprehensive and timely fashion. It took over 100 years for laws mandating compulsory, free elementary education to spread from few States to the whole Nation. That pace of change might have been all right in the 19th century; it won't do for the 21st. We don't have the luxury of waiting and continuing to subsidize failure.

Now, let me just give one example of that, and then I'll turn it over to your chairman. In 1986, the NGA issued a report called "Time For Results," with task forces chaired by Lamar Alexander, Tom Keane, Dick Riley, and me, urging the Governors to intervene in low-performing schools and school districts and to take over or close down academically bankrupt schools—1986. In 1987, nine States had the authority to do that. In 1990, the NGA issued a report, "Educating America: State Strategies for Achieving National Education Goals." In 1988, 18 States offered assistance or intervention in low-performance schools. In 1998, NGA policy supported State focus on schools and reiterated the 1988 policy that States should have the responsibility for enforcing accountability,

including establishing clear penalties in cases of sustained failures to improve student performance. In 1999, 19 States have procedures for intervening in failing schools, 16 for replacing school staff or closing down the school.

This is tough politics. I don't know that I could have passed this through my legislature. I do know that if we have the reauthorization of the Federal law this year and we're sending this out, and all we do is to say we ought to do what the NGA said we should do 13 years ago, that will accelerate the pace of reform in education, and I think it's a worthy thing.

I hope we can pass it. I want to work with you. And it is not inconsistent with our shared commitment to better flexibility in education.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Governors Jeb Bush of Florida, James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina, Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania, Gray Davis of California, John Engler of Michigan, and NGA Chairman Thomas R. Carper of Delaware; Jacalyn Leavitt, wife of NGA Vice Chairman Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah; and Sharon Kitzhaber, wife of Gov. John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon.

Statement on Industry and Education Leaders' Recommendations on Technology in the Classroom

February 22, 1999

I am delighted that the CEO Forum on Education and Technology, a group of leaders from industry and education, has developed a strong set of recommendations to ensure that teachers can effectively use technology in the classroom. If technology is to realize its potential as a powerful new tool to help students achieve high academic standards, teachers must be as comfortable with a computer as they are with a chalkboard.

That is why my \$800 million budget for educational technology includes over \$100 million to give both new and current teachers the training they need to integrate technology into the curriculum. I look forward to working with the CEO forum and other leaders in industry and education to give every child and teacher in America access to these high-tech tools for learning.

Statement on a Meeting of the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan *February 22, 1999*

I welcome the successful meeting over the weekend between Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee and Pakistani Prime Minister Sharif. I commend the two Prime Ministers for demonstrating courage and leadership by coming together and addressing difficult issues that have long divided their countries.

The two leaders committed to intensifying their efforts on key matters, including: containing their competition in nuclear arms; preventing nuclear or conventional conflict between them; resolving territorial disputes including

Jammu and Kashmir; refraining from interference in each other's internal affairs; fighting terrorism; promoting political freedom and human rights; and working together to improve the lives of their citizens through economic growth.

South Asia—and, indeed, the entire world—will benefit if India and Pakistan promptly turn these commitments into concrete progress. We will continue our own efforts to work with India and Pakistan to promote progress in the region.

Remarks at the Democratic Governors' Association Dinner *February 22, 1999*

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the warm welcome. I thank Governor O'Bannon for his kind introduction. I thank him and Governor Patton for their leadership of the Democratic Governors. I am delighted that all of them are here tonight, and I want to pay a special compliment to Tom Carper for his leadership for the National Governors' Association this year. And I might add, a special compliment to all the Democratic Governors who showed up here in Washington with an agenda for the NGA to put the children of this country first and put education on the front burner and not let it get mired in the partisan politics. They deserve an enormous amount of credit, and I thank them.

I want to thank Katie Whelan, Jennifer Rokala, Mark Weiner for their work for the DGA. And I'd like to thank the leaders of our national party who are here tonight: Governor Romer, Mayor Archer, Congresswoman Sanchez, and Joe Andrew—whom we stole from Indiana; thank you very much. I thank the Members of Congress who are here: Senator Akaka, Senator Bayh, Senator Dodd, Congresswoman Mink, Congressman Hoyer, and goodness knows who else is here; former Democratic Chairman Don Fowler and all the former Governors who are here: Governor Waihee, Governor Miller of Nevada, Governor Bayh—a twofer.

Let me also say one other thing by way of introduction. I am profoundly grateful to the NGA for putting together, courtesy of my good friend Frank Greer, that magnificent film on Lawton Chiles, one of the best, ablest people I ever knew, and I thank you for that.

When Rutherford B. Hayes became Governor of Ohio, he described his position in this way: "Not too much hard work, plenty of time to read, good society, et cetera." Hasn't changed much, has it? [*Laughter*] After he became President he said, "I am heartily tired of this life of bondage, responsibility, and toil." Well, I don't think he was right about either job. And I'm proud of the work you do and grateful for the role that all of you played in giving me a chance to serve you as President. It is not bondage or toil, although it is responsibility.

Nearly everybody who has had this job has written something like that. And it makes you wonder if they complain about it so much why they work so hard to get it. There is no place on Earth, I think, as President Kennedy once said, where a person is called upon to reach deep into what you believe and what you think should be done, and then given the opportunity to marshal the resources of the country to move forward. But I think it is clear to all of you who have worked with me in the past that much of the success that this country has enjoyed,

that we were a part of—and I certainly don't claim responsibility for all of it—but whatever success we have been able to enjoy in this administration is in no small measure the result of the fact that I had a chance to serve as a Governor for a dozen years. And I thank the people of my State for giving me that chance and all the Governors who worked with me.

In 1992 we said that we were bringing a New Democratic philosophy to the country. All it really meant was that we were going to bring Democratic ideals of opportunity for all, and a community of all Americans, and the Governors way of work—putting new ideas over old ideology and putting people over old-fashioned Washington politics. It turned out to be a pretty good theory.

All of you know that we've gone from a record deficit to a record surplus, that we have the longest peacetime expansion in history, the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957, now the lowest unemployment rate of any industrial country in the entire world. We have opened the doors of college to all Americans who are willing to work for it, provided immunizations for over 90 percent of our children for the first time in history. We're in the process, with your help, of providing health insurance to 5 million of the 10 million children in America who don't have it. Our country is working again and for that, and for the role all of you have played in it—not only the Governors and their staffs who are here but all the others who are here, from the labor organizations and the education groups and the business groups—I am profoundly grateful.

What I would like to just take a couple of minutes to talk to you about tonight is the urgency of the Governors being involved in dealing now with the great long-term challenges of this country. The easiest thing to do when things are going well is to say, "We worked hard to get here; let's take a break." I might say that every time our country has done this—you go back through the whole history of America—every time we have done this, it has gotten us into trouble. And we can ill afford to do it now when the world is changing so fast and when even amidst our own prosperity, as all of you know, there is a lot of trouble around the world. Virtually all of Asia is in recession. Our neighbors in Latin America, our fastest-growing markets, all have had their economic growth dramatically reduced because of the

global financial trouble. There are a lot of threats to our security lurking out there in nooks and crannies of discord the world over.

And I asked the American people in the State of the Union, and I ask the Governors here tonight, to join me in making the most of this opportunity that we have, because of our prosperity and equally because of our national confidence, to look at the long-term challenges of the 21st century. We have a chance to guarantee for the next several decades that these challenges we know about now can at least be met. No one can foresee for sure what will happen 10 or 20 or 30 years from now, but we know that if we deal with the problems that we know are out there now, if we seize the challenges we know are out there now, that our successors will have an easier path and our country will do a better job with more of its children.

We have to deal with the aging of America. There will be twice as many people over 65 in 2030 as there are now, and I hope I'm still one of them. You know, a lot of people go around wringing their hands about the problems with Social Security and Medicare. This is a high-class problem. We have this problem because we're living longer and staying healthier. The fastest growing group of Americans in percentage terms are people over 80. So I have asked the Congress to set aside 77 percent of this projected surplus for 15 years to save Social Security and Medicare and to improve them.

If we do that, we will also be able to pay down the national debt so that in 15 years, instead of half our annual income, which is what it was when I took office, it will be 7 percent of our annual income. That's the smallest percentage it has been since 1917, before this country entered World War I. Instead of spending 14 cents on your tax dollar to pay interest on the debt, which is what we were paying in 1993, we'll be spending 2 cents. And if future Congresses have the discipline to stay on this track, we could actually be a debt-free nation in 19 years. Just think of it and what it would mean for our children.

We can save Social Security. We can do something about the inordinate rate of women on Social Security who are still living in poverty. We can lift the earnings limit that now is imposed on people on Social Security, which I think is a mistake, since we have more and more older people who are healthy, who are strong, and who want to work. We can add

20 years to the life of Medicare and add a prescription drug benefit with some significant, but doable, reforms if we will have the discipline to set aside 77 percent of this surplus. That leaves us plenty of money to have tax cuts. I think we should have them dedicated to helping middle class people save for their own retirement, to have more investment in education, and to pay for our military needs. We can do all of that.

Now, the easy thing to do—we'll say, "Well, we've got this surplus, we waited 30 years for it, let's just give it away. It will be popular." There are a lot of Americans who could use all the money now. But it would be a mistake. And believe me, if you look at all this turmoil around the world—and the Governors that are going on the trade missions, that are seeking foreign investment, that want to do more business, you understand this. I don't know—and I'll say more about this in a minute—I don't know whether the United States can rectify a lot of these problems in the global economy in the next couple of years; I'm going to do everything I can to get that done. But I know this: If we have the debt going down, we'll keep interest rates down and investment high; if things go wrong overseas, they will be better than they otherwise would have been; and if things turn around overseas, our boom will be greater than it otherwise would have been if we have the discipline to do this. And I implore you to help me.

The Governors—Democrat and Republican alike—complained for years and years that everybody in Washington talked about balancing the budget, and no one ever did anything about it. And after I got here and I saw all the blood that was on the floor after the '93 economic plan, I understood why nobody did anything about it. Dick Riley, my Education Secretary, another of our former colleagues, used to always tell me after that, when I'd be moping around, he'd say, "Just remember my old saying: 'let's change; you go first.'" [Laughter] But we're here now, and we don't want to turn around. We want to keep going.

You know we have to do something about the children and families in 21st century America. We have more kids in our schools—they have more diverse backgrounds; more of them come from parents who don't speak English, or whose first language is not English—than ever before. A lot of them are going to school

in trailers or in school buildings so old they can't even be hooked up to the Internet. I thank you for your support of our agenda to help you hire more teachers, to help you build or modernize schools. I ask you to continue to support our efforts to raise the standards. Governor Carper had the right slogan for this year's Governors' meeting: raising student achievement. We ought to end social promotion, but help the kids with after-school programs and summer school programs. We ought to turn around the failing schools. We ought to give the parents the report cards. We ought to do what it takes for educational excellence.

We also ought to do more to help working families afford quality child care. One of the great ironies is when we fought very hard for welfare reform—the Democratic Governors stood with me in insisting that we get billions of dollars in that welfare reform bill for child care—that we keep the guarantee of medical care and nutrition for the kids. The welfare rolls have dropped by nearly 50 percent. The people that are left are harder to place. We can't just let them be thrown into the streets. So a lot of you are using your surplus funds to put more money into child care and more money into training. It is an irony that a lot of people who have never been on welfare, but who have young children, cannot afford their child care needs.

In our balanced budget this year, we have a comprehensive program that will allow millions of children to have comprehensive child care while their parents go to work. And succeeding at home and work ought to be America's family mission for the 21st century. I ask you for your support for that and for our efforts to expand the family leave law, to raise the minimum wage, to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, to do more to support equal pay for equal work—a bigger and bigger issue among working husbands, as well as working women. All these things need to be done if we are going to have the proper balance between work and family, so that our parents can do their job if our schools do theirs.

We have to build the right quality of life for the 21st century. We talked a lot at the Governors' meeting today about the livability agenda that I put forward with the leadership of the Vice President, Carol Browner, Rodney Slater, Dan Glickman, to try to help our communities manage their traffic problems, their

toxic problems, their need for more green space with no Federal mandates, and a lot of empowerment. I hope you will help me pass that.

And finally, as the Governors get more and more and more involved in the global economy—and you’ve been leading us that way for 25 years now—I hope you will help me in my continuing effort to convince the Congress and the country that there is no longer a clear dividing line between our interest beyond our borders and our interest within our borders. I’ll just give you one example.

I want to keep this economic expansion going. I am convinced that to do it we have to have more economic growth at home and more economic growth abroad. Governor Patton invited me to Kentucky’s Appalachian region to push my America new markets initiative—tax credits and loan guarantees to get people to invest in the high unemployment areas of America. Mayor Archer here, in Detroit, got one of our first enterprise zones, and the unemployment rate in Detroit is now one-half of what it was in 1993. Detroit’s unemployment rate is about at the national average. We can do that in rural areas and urban communities all over America.

And then we have to reach out beyond our borders to create a financial system and a trading system that works for ordinary people in the 21st century; to have labor standards, environmental standards and more open markets; to make it possible for money to go into places, but to make honest loans and open loans and protect against these wild fluctuations that have not only hurt overseas countries, but have hurt American farmers, have hurt our companies like Boeing, and have been a killer for the steel industry. We have got to put a human face on the global economy, but we cannot run away from it. The Governors know that.

And I ask you to help to build a national consensus for that approach—not for running away, but not for saying, “Well, we’ll just open things up and forget about how it affects ordinary people.” In the end, the test of all of our efforts as Democrats is, are people out there in the country, who never come to a fundraiser but get up every day and work their hearts out and raise their kids and do everything they’re supposed to do, are they going to be better off if this policy prevails? That is the heart and soul of what drives our party. And if we can deal with the aging of 21st century America, the challenges of children and family

in 21st century America, the challenges of our environment in 21st century America, the security challenges of 21st century America, we’re going to do just fine.

We can only do that if we deal with one last challenge, which I believe today more than any other thing is the distinguishing difference between the two parties. And that is, we believe that 21st century America must be one America, united, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Every night for the last several nights, I have made a call to the Secretary of State, who is over in France trying to broker a peace agreement in Kosovo, trying to avoid another horrible ethnic slaughter in a country right next door to Bosnia. And you know what we went through there. Every week I try a little harder to use the time I have remaining to get a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. In the last several weeks, I have exerted what efforts I could, so far without success, to avoid a brutal, murderous conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, to minimize the other tribal wars in Africa.

Now, after years of work, we’ve hit another snag in the peace process in Northern Ireland, and we are doing our best to try to get by this last tough thing. All you have to do is to read the papers to know that there are continuing tensions between India and Pakistan, between Greece and Turkey, that have old, deep ethnic and religious roots. All over the world, in the so-called modern world, ancient animosities are driving people to the point of war and are keeping people down. Ordinary people in other countries, the kind of folks we try to represent here, cannot build a normal life because their leaders are determined to continue conflicts based on racial, religious, or ethnic lines.

And it’s why we have to guard so hard against that sort of thing here at home. We think we’re doing great now and we can indulge ourselves in conflicts that we know better than to pursue; that is wrong. And we have to honestly say the great test of our democracy, in the end, is whether in good times and bad, America not only tries to do good abroad but to be good at home. In the end, we will be judged by that. We have to be a country where we all serve together, which is why I’ve worked so hard for AmeriCorps. We have to be a country

where we're pushing back constantly the frontiers of discrimination, which is why I have supported so strongly the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act."

And we have to be a country that relishes our racial, our ethnic, our cultural diversity and says we celebrate all this, but we know that underneath what God gave us all in common—in spite of all of our differences—is more important; that the framers of our Constitution so long ago were pretty smart when they talked about the inalienable rights given to every human being. And if we recognize that, then we ought to be able to find a way to live together.

I have done everything I know to do for 6 years to move us toward that one America. Should we have differences; should we have arguments; should we have elections; should we have discussions? Of course we should. But when you leave here tonight, if you don't remember another thing I said, you just remember this: No country throws away its common values and common humanity, even for an instant, without paying a price. And every night—every night—I thank God that we have the chance to be a force for peace, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Kosovo to Africa. I ask for the opportunity every night to make one stab to work out the problems between Greece and Turkey on Cyprus, to try to bring India and Pakistan closer together. And I thank God every night that we have not been cut apart by those things.

But America is growing more and more diverse. One of our new Governors here, Gov-

ernor Davis, while he is Governor—while he is Governor—may preside over a State that has no majority race. Now, this is a good thing in the world of the 21st century if—but only if—America not only preaches our doctrine to people abroad but lives by it at home.

The Democratic Party in the 1990's has constantly been for opportunity, for change, and for community. I like to joke that at the end of the 20th century, looking back on over 200 years of American history, our party leaves this century and enters the next as not only the party of Jefferson and Jackson and Franklin Roosevelt but also now the party of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. And I am very proud of it. I want you to stay proud of it. And I want us to live by it.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:58 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Governors Frank O'Bannon of Indiana, DGA chair, Paul E. Patton of Kentucky, DGA vice chair, Thomas R. Carper of Delaware, Gray Davis of California; former Governors John Waihee of Hawaii, Bob Miller of Nevada, Evan Bayh of Indiana, and Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Katie Whelan, executive director, Jennifer Rokala, national finance director, and Mark Weiner, treasurer, Democratic Governors' Association; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair-designate, and Donald L. Fowler, former national chair, Democratic National Committee; and media consultant Frank Greer.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

February 23, 1999

The President. I'd like to make a very brief statement, and then we'll take a couple of questions. And as you know, you'll get to ask the leaders questions after the meeting, and we've got a lot of work to do. But I think it's important to—first of all, I want to say how pleased I am to have the whole leadership here, how much I appreciate their coming down. We've

got a lot to discuss, and I'm looking forward to it.

Kosovo Peace Talks

I'd like to make just a couple of comments about the peace talks at Rambouillet on Kosovo. They made a lot of progress; they've got about a 40-page document which describes in greater detail than ever before what the nature of an

autonomous Kosovo within Serbia would be like. And that's the good news.

There are still some important disagreements. The Serbs have still not agreed to a NATO-led multinational force to try to maintain the peace over a 3-year period. The Kosovars still want some sort of assurance of a referendum at the end of the 3-year period, and neither side will agree to the other's position on that. And so we're working through that today, hoping for a resolution.

I talked to Secretary Albright last night. Whatever happens today and however they agree to proceed, I think it's very important that the Serbs exercise restraint on the ground and that the Kosovars respond in kind. They've made a lot of progress, and they don't need to let this thing get away from them. And we'll keep watching it, and I expect there will be more news on it as the day breaks.

Q. Will you extend the deadline again, sir; is that it?

The President. No, I don't know. That's up to the parties. I hope that they'll be able to resolve what they're going to do today. I think there will be some sort of resolution about where to go from here today, and we'll just have to see.

Q. But no bombings?

The President. Well, whether NATO bombs or not, the Secretary General has the authority in his pocket now. That depends upon the actions of the Serbs. And what we need is continued restraint. But as I said, they made a lot of progress; they had these two big differences, each side having one condition the other won't agree to. So we'll just have to see where we go today.

Q. Mr. President, Senator Lott expressed concern about a costly, open-ended, no-defined-

peacekeeping mission. What kind of reassurances can you give him on that point?

The President. Well, I think that what we learned in Bosnia was that we shouldn't set a date certain and later find out we can't meet it and have people feel that they've been misled. I don't want to do that. So I think the important thing to do is to have an exit strategy based on benchmarks, on developments. And then if the Congress agrees with the benchmarks, that those are reasonable standards, then I think we can have an open relationship that has some credibility in the agreements between the Congress and the executive branch.

In terms of paying for it, I think in this fiscal year, whatever we have to do, we would need emergency funding because we're in a fiscal year where the Defense budget is already set. In the years ahead, I would expect that we would have to work that into the budget, and I think that's what the Congress leaders—Congress, as far as I know in both parties—have expected us to do, because they don't want the Pentagon to have to absorb these costs away from readiness and taking care of our people in the military.

Cooperation With Republicans

Q. Mr. President, these Republican leaders all voted to oust you from office. How can you work with them?

The President. We all took an oath, and I think we intend to follow it. We owe it to the American people, and I'm looking forward to it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to NATO Secretary General Javier Solana. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Kosovo Peace Talks February 23, 1999

The peace talks in Rambouillet, France, are a significant step forward in the search for a fair and lasting peace in Kosovo. In the last three weeks, the negotiations have produced more progress than we have seen in the decade

since Kosovo's autonomy was stripped away by the Government in Belgrade.

By agreeing in principle to a strong plan that would provide substantial self-government for the people of Kosovo, the negotiators on the

Albanian side have shown courage and leadership. The agreement by the Serb side to substantial autonomy for Kosovo also represents an important, but incomplete, recognition that only by allowing the people in Kosovo control over their day-to-day lives can there be a lasting peace.

The Kosovar negotiators have asked for time to consult with their constituents before formally signing the peace plan. I believe that the Kosovar Albanian people will strongly support what their negotiators have done, because the agreement represents the opportunity for a better life after years of repression and fear. The Serbs should be prepared to return to the negotiations on March 15 with a commitment to

sign the full agreement—including the indispensable provisions on the withdrawal of most Serb security forces from Kosovo and the deployment of a NATO-led peace implementation force.

In the meantime, it is imperative that all sides avoid provocations that would imperil this progress. NATO Secretary General Javier Solana retains the authority given to him by the NATO Council to act if necessary.

I want to thank Secretary Albright and all her negotiators for their tireless efforts that led to hopeful developments, and commend British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook and French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, the cochairmen of Rambouillet, for their leadership.

Remarks on the “Insure Kids Now” Initiative

February 23, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Let me begin by saying how very much I appreciate all of you here who are a part of this historic day. I thank my longtime friend Governor Carper for his generous remarks and his great stories. He almost broke my concentration, though. I’ll spend the rest of the day trying to remember what my first answer was to whether there was a noise when a tree falls in the forest. [Laughter]

I thank you, Governor Leavitt, for your outstanding leadership and your concern for our children. I’d like to, again, acknowledge the presence of Governor Angus King of Maine and Mary Herman; Governor and Mrs. Knowles of Alaska; Governor Vilsack of Iowa; Mrs. Rosselló from Puerto Rico; Mrs. Underwood from West Virginia. And I thank all the members of the Governors’ conference who are here.

There’s one private citizen here I would like to acknowledge, and that is Bud Chiles, the son of the late Governor Lawton Chiles of Florida, who has been very active in this endeavor, as well. I thank him.

We have a distinguished bipartisan delegation from the United States Congress here: Senator Hatch, here supporting his Governor from Utah; Senator Specter from Pennsylvania; Congresswoman Diana DeGette from Colorado; Congresswoman Anna Eshoo from northern Cali-

fornia; Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee from Texas; Congressman Bart Stupak from the upper peninsula of Michigan. He is the only person in the room who thinks it is warm outside today. [Laughter]

I’d also like to thank the Smith family for coming, and I hope the boys weren’t too embarrassed to stand up. They look very healthy to me, and that’s reassuring. [Laughter] And I’d like to thank these beautiful children for being here—over here, and their families. When you think about what this is all about, just kind of look over there.

I want to thank the National Governors’ Association. I want to thank Secretary Shalala, who is indefatigable. If I ask her to do something, sooner or later I will come to regret it—[laughter]—because she will do it, and I will wind up doing whatever it is I’m supposed to do to make sure it gets done. She is not only the longest serving person in her position ever, she is also the most energetic, and that is no disrespect to her predecessors. I have never known anybody with as much energy as she has, with the possible exception of her mother, who I understand is still winning tennis tournaments in her eighties. [Laughter]

I’d also like to thank the First Lady, without whom I probably would not know very much about these issues. When I met her in 1971,

she was already obsessed with them. She took an extra year when we were in law school to work at the Yale Child Studies Center and the Yale University Hospital so that she could put her legal learning to work to help the health of our children.

When you talked about our home State having 38,000 people signed up, we have less than one percent of the population. That means if everybody was doing that well, we'd already have 4 million kids signed up for this program, and that is in no small measure due to a group called the Arkansas Advocates for Families and Children, which Hillary founded over 20 years ago now. So I thank her for all that she has done.

When the Congress passed the bipartisan balanced budget in 1997, it was a truly historic act, and most of the publicity that surrounded that endeavor came from the sheer relief the country felt that finally we had done something about the deficit. But it's important to point out that there were a lot of very important provisions within that very large law, but none more important than the \$24 billion allocated to provide health insurance. We estimated at that time—to up to 5 million kids, which we estimated at that time were about half of the uninsured children in our country.

It is inconceivable that a country with as much economic prosperity as we now enjoy, and the best health care system in the world, would leave 10 million—now nearly 11 million—children without health insurance. We know many of them are eligible for Medicaid, but their parents don't know it. We know there are a lot of hard-working families now whose incomes are too high to qualify for Medicaid, but they apply, or qualify, for the Children's Health Insurance Programs now that the States are operating around the country. But they don't know it.

Now, we knew when we signed this law into effect—I'll never forget Donna Shalala telling us that, you know, we can pass this law, but we've already got—at that time—over 3 million kids eligible for Medicaid who don't sign up and don't know it. So we knew then that, to make the tree heard in the forest, to extend the Governor's metaphor, to make the health insurance program more than an empty promise, we'd have to somehow get the word out to parents.

Last week—you've heard all these stories—last week I had an incredible experience at a

health care forum in New Hampshire. I met a woman named Christine Monteiro, who has run a small business with her husband, a solar energy business, for 11 years. And like all small businesses, she had her ups and her downs. But the hardest times came when her kids needed health care and they couldn't afford the health insurance.

She found out about it the way we don't want people to have to find out about it, even though better that she found out than not. She had to take repeated visits to the doctor, with her child. And finally, a health care worker at the medical clinic told her that she might be eligible for New Hampshire's CHIP program. She applied immediately and found that her daughter's visits were all covered, and she saved up to \$1,000 a month for a very serious illness for her child.

Christine and her family were lucky. Not everybody, even who would come into a medical facility, might know. This should not be a matter of luck. We're here because all of us, in our various roles in life, recognize that we have an obligation to use every possible tool, every possible response, to reach more of the hard-working families like those you've heard about and seen today.

Government has a role to play. Secretary Shalala talked about it. Our national campaign is called "Insure Kids Now." We've already heard about the remarkable National Governors' Association effort, working with our administration and Bell Atlantic. The national toll-free number—I'm going to say it again—I like to say toll-free numbers, you know. There's some chance it'll get on television if I say it—[laughter]—one of the few things I can think of to say that is subject to absolutely no controversy. [Laughter] I could stand up here for 10 minutes and just repeat the toll-free number. I'll say it again: 1-877-KIDS-NOW. Not hard to remember and important not to forget.

As you've heard, because of the work of the NGA, you can get State-specific information. Because when the Congress set this program up in the Balanced Budget Act, and we strongly supported this, we realized we couldn't possibly design a program in Washington that would cover all the different circumstances that existed from State to State. So all these programs were set up and then approved State by State. So this is very, very important that we get this information out to people in the form in which

it is most usable. And again, I want to thank Governors Carper and Leavitt for their leadership in this critical past year, and all the other Governors for their support.

Secretary Shalala told you about some of the things we're doing at the Federal level to reach more uninsured children. But let's be frank: To reach them all—to reach them all—everyone who can touch the life of a child or the child's parents needs to be involved in this effort.

Today we're here to announce an unprecedented commitment, from media to business, from the health care industry to grassroots organizations, all over our Nation, to inform families of these new health insurance options. We begin with an all-out media campaign to reach as many families as possible. NBC is unveiling a new primetime PSA to raise awareness about Children's Health Insurance Programs. Epatha Merkeson, one of the stars of NBC's "Law and Order," who appears in the PSA, is here with us today. Thank you very much for being here.

ABC and Viacom/Paramount will soon begin airing a PSA the First Lady made to inform families about the "Insure Kids Now" toll-free number. They have representatives here. I thank them. The National Association of Broadcasters will make the First Lady's PSA available to all of its member stations. Black Entertainment Television and Turner Broadcasting will also run the ad.

Before I go forward, I'd like to just unveil the two PSA's here for the first time. Let's take a look at them.

[At this point, the public service announcements for the "Insure Kids Now" initiative were shown.]

The President. I'd also like to thank the representatives from Univision here. They will run a PSA in Spanish, made by HHS.

And we're not stopping there: Major corporations, from Kmart and Ralph's Grocery to

McDonald's to General Motors; from the American Medical Response to Blue Cross/Blue Shield Association to Pfizer, all of whom are represented here, will help make sure that the "Insure Kids Now" toll-free number appears on grocery bags and restaurant placemats, on school buses and in doctors' offices, even on the toothbrushes that dental hygienists give their patients. And with the help of organizations like America's Promise, the United Way, and a host of community-based groups, families will hear about health insurance from the people they trust the most, from teachers and principals, doctors and nurses, rabbis and ministers.

Ultimately, of course, parents must take responsibility for their children's health. Our message must be: What you don't know about your children's health insurance options can hurt them. It's up to you to find out if your child is eligible for this health insurance. So call the toll-free number: 1-887-KIDS-NOW.

Working together, we can reach those kids. Look at those kids there. There's over 10 million of them. They deserve to be as healthy as we feel today. And we can do it for them.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 3 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Thomas R. Carper of Delaware, chairman, and Gov. Michael O. Leavitt, vice chairman, National Governors' Association; Gov. Angus S. King, Jr., of Maine and his wife, Mary J. Herman; Gov. Tony Knowles of Alaska and his wife, Susan; Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa; Irma Margarita (Maga) Rosselló, wife of Gov. Pedro Rosselló of Puerto Rico; Hovah Underwood, wife of Gov. Cecil H. Underwood of West Virginia; and actress S. Epatha Merkeson. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Radio Remarks on the "Insure Kids Now" Initiative February 23, 1999

As every parent knows, nothing is more important than keeping our children healthy. So I have very good news for working parents. Even if you can't afford private health insurance,

it's now possible to get help with doctor bills, medicines, and hospital care for your children. If your children are uninsured, please call 1-877-KIDS-NOW—1-877-KIDS-NOW. With a

little help, your children can get the care they need to grow up healthy and strong.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 2:54 p.m. in the Oval Office on

February 22 for later broadcast as a public service announcement. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 23. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on the Verdict in the James Byrd, Jr., Murder Trial *February 23, 1999*

When James Byrd, Jr., was murdered, it was my hope that people would join together across racial lines to demonstrate that an act of evil like this is not what our country is all about. That hope was fulfilled over the past 8 months, as citizens across the country expressed their outrage and grief over this tragedy and their determination to ensure that justice be done.

I hope that the verdict rendered today by 12 citizens in Jasper, Texas, will bring some sense of closure to the family and friends of Mr. Byrd. The First Lady and I offer our prayers for them and our hope that their memories of Mr. Byrd's life will sustain them in the difficult time ahead. The jury has spoken. Our work for racial reconciliation and an end to all crimes of hatred in this country will go on.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on a Western Hemisphere Drug Alliance *February 23, 1999*

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to provide the attached report on a Western Hemisphere Drug Alliance in accordance with the provisions of section 2807 of the "Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998." This report underscores the Administration's commitment to enhancing multilateral counternarcotics cooperation in the region.

Strengthening international narcotics control is one of my Administration's top foreign policy priorities. Because of the transnational nature of the Western Hemisphere drug trafficking threat, we have made enhanced multilateral cooperation a central feature of our regional drug control strategy. Our counternarcotics diplomacy, foreign assistance, and operations have focused increasingly on making this objective a reality.

We are succeeding. Thanks to U.S. leadership in the Summit of the Americas, the Organization of American States, and other regional fora, the countries of the Western Hemisphere are taking the drug threat more seriously and responding

more aggressively. South American cocaine organizations that were once regarded as among the largest and most violent crime syndicates in the world have been dismantled, and the level of coca cultivation is now plummeting as fast as it was once sky-rocketing. We are also currently working through the Organization of American States to create a counternarcotics multilateral evaluation mechanism in the hemisphere. These examples reflect fundamental narcotics control progress that was nearly unimaginable a few years ago.

While much remains to be done, I am confident that the Administration and the Congress, working together, can bolster cooperation in the hemisphere, accelerate this progress, and significantly diminish the drug threat to the American people. I look forward to your continued support and cooperation in this critical area.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 23, 1999.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana

February 24, 1999

President and Mrs. Rawlings, distinguished members of the Ghanaian delegation, my fellow Americans. Mr. President, Hillary and I are delighted to welcome you and Mrs. Rawlings to the United States. Nearly a year ago, your country gave us a greeting I will always remember. On that great day, it was over 100 degrees Fahrenheit—[laughter]—and we had a half million people in Independence Square in Accra. We thought we should arrange a similar meeting here today. [Laughter]

Actually, for the South Grounds of the White House, we have a large crowd of people, young and old, from all parts of America, including a significant number of people whose roots are in your country. And in our hearts, our welcome is warm. In Independence Square, before the largest crowd I had ever addressed, I learned the meaning of *akwaaba*, your word for “welcome.” It was also written on billboards and on posters, and unforgettably written in the faces of all the Ghanaian people we saw. Mr. President, Mrs. Rawlings, it gives me great pleasure to say to you this morning, *akwaaba*. Welcome to the United States.

Our trip to Ghana marked an important step forward for Africa and the United States, symbolizing a new beginning for both of us, a partnership built on mutual respect and mutual benefit. On our part, it signaled to the world our respect for Africa’s achievements and aspirations after centuries of colonialism and decades of cold war. On Africa’s part, it signaled your readiness to work with us to forge a better future of open societies and shared responsibilities.

Mr. President, under your leadership, Ghana has continued to flourish. It remains a vivid example of what democracy and open markets can do for the African people. Over the past 5 years, your economy has grown steadily. You have an independent judiciary, a lively Parliament, a thriving civil society.

Ghana is a partner with other African nations, seeking to preserve peace in the region, in Liberia and Sierra Leone, where you support the ECOMOG regional peacekeeping forces, and through your partnership in the Africa Crisis Response Initiative. You also send peacekeepers

to other spots far from home, from Lebanon to the former Yugoslavia. And for that, we are grateful.

The United States needs strong partners like Ghana. It is no secret that hard challenges lie ahead for Africa. Recent headlines have described the continuing upheaval caused by terrorism, civil war, military aggression, the senseless cruelty suffered by innocent people caught in a web of violence. Clearly, there remains much to be done. But equally clearly, these headlines do not tell the full story of Africa, of more than 700 million people who want what people the world over want: to work, to raise a family, to live a full life, to bring a better future to their children.

A year after my trip to Africa, it is important to highlight what the headlines often don’t: the hard work of the African people toward these lofty goals, the progress we are making in spite of setbacks. In Ghana, as in other African nations, we are deepening our link through growing trade and investment, air travel, and Internet access. I look forward to discussing this progress with the President and to talking about how we can build on it.

Something else of far-reaching importance is happening in Africa, something unthinkable last year when I visited Accra. Three days from now there will be a democratic Presidential election in Africa’s most populous country, Nigeria. For 28 of its 38 years of independence, Nigeria has been run by military dictators. Now it has a chance to start anew.

The friendship between Ghana and the United States grows deeper every year. Ghana received our very first Peace Corps volunteers in 1961, and nearly four decades later, new Peace Corps volunteers still make a difference there. Across a wide range of common endeavors, our nations cooperate and learn together. More and more Ghanaians are coming to America to help us build our future. More and more Americans visit Ghana and the rest of the continent to understand the history that binds us together.

Mr. President, your visit underscores the debt all Americans owe to Ghana and to Africa for the brilliant contributions that African-Americans have made and continue to make to the United States.

The writer and crusader W.E.B. Du Bois was a citizen of both Ghana and the United States. Near the end of his life, he wrote his great-grandson that his very long life had taught him two things: first, that progress sometimes will be painfully slow, and second, that we must forge ahead anyway because, and I quote, "the difference between 100 and 1,000 years is less than you now think." He concluded, "doing what must be done, that is eternal."

Mr. President, you have done so much of what must be done. It will live eternally, and

we will be eternally grateful for the friendship between our two nations. Let us extend it in the new century for the new millennium.

Mr. President, Mrs. Rawlings, welcome to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where President Rawlings was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Nana Konadu Agyeman-Rawlings, President Rawlings' wife. The President also referred to the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Rawlings.

The President's News Conference With President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana

February 24, 1999

President Clinton. Mr. President, distinguished members of the Ghanaian delegation, it's been a real pleasure for me to welcome President Rawlings back to Washington to advance the partnership between the United States and Ghana.

On my visit to Africa last spring, I said the United States wanted and very much needed a new partnership with Africa. We face stiff challenges: a border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea; civil wars in the Congo, Angola, Sierra Leone; famine and disease causing heartbreaking human loss. But it is important not to forget how far Africa has come since the days of apartheid and authoritarianism.

In a few days, we'll have an election in Nigeria to elect a President and to give the largest, most populous country in Africa a chance to chart a new course. Over half the countries of sub-Saharan Africa already have democratically elected governments. It is clearly in our interest to have a broad and constructive partnership.

Since Kwame Nkrumah led Ghana to independence in 1957, Ghana's example has inspired other nations to take control of their destinies. Over the past decade, Ghana has continued to lead the way, with a growing economy, with

peacekeeping forces in west Africa and around the world, with its efforts to strengthen democracy at home.

Today President Rawlings and I are broadening our partnership. We're encouraging multi-lateral African forces to respond quickly to outbreaks of violence. We're providing more training for Ghana's battalion in the new African peacekeeping enterprise, the African Crisis Response Initiative. We're supporting Ghana's active role in stemming violence in west Africa through ECOMOG's regional peacekeeping force, as it seeks to stop the carnage that has racked Sierra Leone.

For our part, we have contributed logistical and medical support for peacekeeping troops there, and we will continue to do so. In fact, I want to increase our support for ECOMOG, and I hope Congress will support my proposal to do so. In the last 18 months, we have also provided over \$75 million in humanitarian assistance to refugees and victims of violence.

President Rawlings and I also agreed on a number of steps to increase trade and investment between our nations. Tomorrow our U.S.

Trade Representative will sign a trade and investment framework agreement with her Ghanaian counterpart. It will be only our second such agreement in Africa. Next month, here in Washington, 9 members of my Cabinet will meet with ministers representing more than 40 African nations to discuss ways that we can work together to expand development. I also hope Congress will soon take the next step by passing the "African Growth and Opportunity Act."

Finally, the President and I will continue to work together to fulfill the promise of democracy in Africa. Ghana already invests a phenomenal 40 percent of its budget in education. Today we announced that we will be sending new Peace Corps volunteers to help link Ghana's classrooms to the Internet. We're also working with Ghana to crack down on child labor, to train judges and lawyers mediating disputes, to fight HIV and AIDS while infection rates are still low there, to build a reliable power supply for the future, to study and preserve Ghana's elephant population and their environment, and to prepare for fair elections in the year 2000.

This partnership, indeed, covers a lot of ground. Our investment in Ghana and Africa is one of the most important we can make for the new century. This year we will offer over \$800 million in economic support to Africa. We will augment this with a healthy program of bilateral debt forgiveness for Africa's strongest performing economies. Over a 2-year period, counting what we did last year, that bilateral debt forgiveness will be almost \$500 million.

Africa cannot overcome all its challenges overnight. But make no mistake about it, there is a new Africa, growing proudly alongside its ancient traditions. Ghana is not the largest country in Africa, but it continues to lead toward tomorrow by the force of its example, by its commitment to democracy, by its steady economic progress, by its cooperation with its neighbors, by its willingness to take risks and make contributions for peace. Ghana is lighting the way forward, and we are proud to be here working to strengthen our partnership.

Mr. President.

President Rawlings. Thank you very much. Thanks for some parts of the good news. I wish you had told me about it earlier on. [*Laughter*]

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen of the press, this morning, at the ceremony on the White House lawn, I set out a rather modest

agenda for my visit to the U.S. I'm happy to note that the discussions that we've had so far have been instructive from both sides. President Clinton has shown to us his sincerity and determination to forge ahead with a new era of cooperation with Africa.

We all agree that his trip to Africa last year represented the high point of official U.S. attention to and recognition of our continent. And I hope that Africa will continue to feature prominently on the foreign policy agenda of the U.S.

It is rather unfortunate that the stereotype image of Africa as a continent full of conflict, lack of democracy, et cetera, et cetera, continues to dominate the international media. And yet, there are many positive developments taking place on our continent. For example, in the past 5 years, some 21 African countries have achieved positive GDP growth rates, with 12 of them—including Ghana—reaching 45 percent a year. Democracy has taken root in many African countries, with emphasis on good governance.

And many of our countries have done the right things to create a favorable climate for foreign investment. In fact, Africa has demonstrated real promise as a destination for investment. Ladies and gentlemen, listen. The statistics show that between 1990 and '94, the average annual return on U.S. direct investment to Africa was 28—28—percent. This, compared with 11 percent in Europe, 12 percent in Latin America, and 14 percent in Asia—the Pacific areas.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude my very brief and introductory remarks by saying that Africa is a continent in transition. It is a continent facing challenges, and some of these have their roots in the bipolar politics of the cold war. But Africa could very well be the continent of the future. As you know, the Secretary-General of the U.N., Mr. Kofi Annan, put it succinctly the other day when he said that the conflicts and problems of Africa were caused by human action and can, therefore, be ended by human action.

We're here, ladies and gentlemen, as I said earlier on, to invite the United States of America to be part and parcel of that human action, to address the problem of hunger, poverty, debt, and conflict. Thank you.

President Clinton. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, what we will do is, we'll take alternating

questions, one from the American press, one from the African press, and we'll begin with Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Independent Counsel Statute/Allegations of Misconduct

Q. Mr. President, would you like to see the independent counsel statute expire in June? And what is your reaction to recent allegations by an Arkansas woman, apparently of something she claims happened many years ago?

President Clinton. Well, my counsel has made a statement about the first issue, and I have nothing to add to it.

On the independent counsel law, I think that, as you know, we've been—I think you know, I think it's been public that we've been asked to testify, the White House Counsel has been invited to testify next week. And I presume sometime between now and then I'll have a chance to talk to them about what they intend to say.

I think for right now what I would like to say, because I have been, to put it mildly, closely involved with the operation of the statute, that I think I would like to leave the maximum amount of time for others to make their opinions known and to feel free, without any reference to anything we might say, to do that. I would encourage people who have views to make them known. And I was particularly struck by the change in position of the American Bar Association and by the size of the vote in favor of that different position. And I think it's just something that Congress should look at.

Q. Excuse me, but you do have some ideas about—

President Clinton. I do; I do have some—

Q. —the loss of confidentiality.

President Clinton. I do. I have some ideas about it. But I think it would be better for me at this time to say less so that others can say more. The Counsel will be testifying at some point next week. But now I think the important thing is that everyone feel free to express their opinion, and I don't think mine should, in effect, cast a shadow or illuminate what others might wish to say between now and the time we make our statement.

Peacekeeping Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Q. My question is for both Presidents. There is a conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo—[inaudible]—is trying to negotiate a peaceful settlement. In the case that it reaches the point where it needed the contribution of troops for a peacekeeping force in the Congo, is, first, Ghana going to contribute troops to bring peace to the Congo? And also, is the United States going to contribute money and logistics for the peacekeeping in the Congo?

President Rawlings. If I may—do you mind, sir? You are no doubt aware that we have more than enough problems on our hands on the West Coast of Africa, and for the past—what—10 to 15 years or so, we've been involved in the conflict issues in west Africa, mainly between Nigeria, Guinea, and Ghana. We've managed to find the appropriate solution to the problem in Liberia, and today we find ourselves also in Sierra Leone.

I must admit, though, that much as we've enjoyed some form of assistance from some of our Western allies, I don't think the assistance that has been provided has been adequate, and it's something we've always brought to their notice. But in our recent discussions with the Cabinet, under his leadership, they've made it quite clear that they'll do everything possible to assist us to be able to deal with some of the problems in west Africa.

As far as the issues to do with the Congo is concerned, I believe the U.S. is doing what you can by way of providing the necessary assistance to South Africa and a few other countries to find a solution to the problem in that part of Africa.

Should they be asking for troops from Ghana to serve in, what do you call it—Congo-Brazzaville—

Q. The Democratic Republic of Congo.

President Rawlings. Thank you very much. I have to say that our resources are stretched to the very limit. We have problems back at home. And if the U.N. or the international organizations and countries would want to assist us, we have a number of troops who would be prepared to assist, to provide a peacemaking as well as the peace—what do you call it—peacekeeping effort in that part of the country. Okay?

President Clinton. My answer to you sir is, first of all, I think we all have a stake in a resolution of the problems of the Congo. And if there were an appropriate peace signed that we felt to be consistent with the rules of the international community and the long-term stability and welfare of the people of the Congo, as well as its neighbors, I would certainly do my best to support any necessary force to maintain the peace for a period of transition, including logistical and other support.

I'm sure you know this, I mentioned it in my remarks, but for some years now, we've been trying to help establish an Africa Crisis Response Initiative, and help to support it financially, that would, in effect, go beyond the efforts of ECOMOG in west Africa, to deal with the whole continent. And when I was in Senegal last year, I actually went out to a training operation of the Africa Crisis Response Initiative, and I met with some of the soldiers, and I talked with our people about what we were doing together.

So I would be pleased. I also went to Rwanda last year and met with the leaders of the surrounding countries, the Great Lake countries, including Mr. Kabila. At that time, we were trying to—I was hoping we could avoid the bad year we've had in the Congo.

So if there could be an internationally recognized agreement, consistent with international law, that required a peacekeeping force, and we were asked to provide some sort of support, logistical and otherwise, I would be inclined to do so.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Kosovo Peace Negotiations/U.S. Foreign Policy Interests

Q. Mr. President, two questions. Last Friday you said it would be a mistake to extend the negotiating deadline for Kosovo. What made you change your mind in less than 24 hours? And how do you respond to former Secretary of State Kissinger, who says that Kosovo should be protected by European troops and not American troops? He wrote this week, "Kosovo is no more a threat to America than Haiti was to Europe, and we never asked for NATO support there."

President Clinton. Well, this is a good way to have a six-question, instead of a three-question press conference. [Laughter] Let me try to disaggregate those things.

First of all, what they did in the peace talks was to reach an agreement that they had gone as far as they could, but they did not want to give up and disintegrate into violence. So when we agreed to extend, we were basically agreeing to what both parties wished to do. It seems to me that if your objective is to get people to get together to make peace and they say, "We think this is what we need," I think that's the right thing to do.

Now, the Kosovars have agreed in principle to the agreement. They want to go home and have time to sell it between now and the middle of March. The Serbs have agreed, except they don't agree to having a multinational, NATO-led peacekeeping force because they say there's a big difference between Kosovo and Bosnia. Bosnia was an independent country in which the Serbs had interests; Kosovo, they say, is a part of their country, so this erodes their sovereignty. The problem is that we believe, and all others, including the Europeans, who have been involved in this process, believe that unless there is some sort of multinational force, we cannot keep the peace.

So they've agreed to work on this between now and March 15th, and they're giving us some time to work on it to try to make it work, and I'm committed to do that.

Now, second point: I would say there is a difference between the interests of Europe in Haiti and the interest of the United States in Kosovo. And I don't mean—this does not diminish the importance of Haiti. We've worked very hard to save democracy in Haiti, and to support that country. But our country, for 50 years, has recognized that what we wanted in Europe was a Europe that was democratic, peaceful, and undivided. At the end of the cold war, we finally had a chance to achieve all three. But with the disappearance of repressive regimes and the threat of the cold war conflict, a lot of old ethnic, religious conflicts reasserted themselves.

Does the United States have an immediate, selfish interest in what happens on some lonely road in Kosovo to some poor farm family driving a wagon, with horses that are underfed because they haven't been able to get food? No. We have—I would argue we have a humanitarian interest. One of our major papers yesterday ran a gripping picture on the front page of a whole line of refugees moving out.

But the United States does have a direct interest in whether there is instability in the Balkans. And I would say to Dr. Kissinger, I think we're moving in the right direction. We want Europe to assume more of its own defense. And if you compare where we were in Bosnia—how long it took to get there, what our role was, our contribution in the beginning of the Bosnia operation—to where we are in Kosovo on this military proposal—how much more quickly it materialized, and our contribution, only about 14 percent, I think, of the total—I think we're moving toward more of an independent European force, but supported by the United States, because we have a very large stake in anything that upsets the stability of central Europe.

Support for the President's Africa Initiative

Q. It's obvious that Africa does not play a major role in terms of the minds of the people of the United States, as we can gather now that no questions have been asked about Africa.

President Clinton. You shouldn't take it—it often happens with Asians and Latin Americans and—[laughter]—and it's really my fault because I don't let them ask me enough questions on other occasions, so I'm forcing them to use this opportunity to pepper me. I apologize. [Laughter] So go ahead.

Q. It's obvious that you and your Government have very good intentions towards Africa. But how are you going to "conscientize" Congress and the American people to be able to support your efforts in Africa?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, that's a very good question. We talked about that at great length in our meeting today. We spent as much time on that as anything.

Let me say, I see this as a multiyear effort, long-term effort. It started when we had the first-ever White House conference on Africa here. And we're about to have this ministerial, as I said, next month, with at least 40 African nations represented—very high levels. I was the first President ever to take a really long trip to sub-Saharan Africa and to go to six countries.

We're trying to increase both—not both, all three—aid, trade, and investment and bilateral debt relief. We are working on demining activities, which is very sensitive and important in many parts of Africa. We're working especially hard on health-related issues and particularly HIV and AIDS, where that's a big problem.

And meanwhile, we're trying to lift the profile of Africa in the United States. There is actually quite a lot of interest among ordinary citizens here. The Africa trip I took last year, particularly since it got off to such a good start, when a half million people showed up in Accra—[laughter]—and most of our people—Presidents are not used to having half a million people. [Laughter] If I get 10,000 or 20,000 here, it's a big show. [Laughter].

But the point is, it captured the imagination of the American people. And we also had a good delegation from Congress there. And tonight, at the state dinner, we will have a delegation from Congress, a sizable delegation, which will include both African-Americans and non-African-Americans. It will include both Democrats and Republicans.

This is not going to be—we were isolated from Africa for a long time, except for cold war concerns, as you know. And we are trying to have a broad, deep, full relationship now. And it is simply not going to happen overnight; we're going to have to work at building it.

But I want you to be encouraged. I think we're moving in the right direction. And I have been very heartened by the genuine interest I have gotten from Members of Congress, from both parties and all kinds of backgrounds. I have been trying to tell them that this is a phenomenal opportunity, as well as obligation, for the United States; we've been missing it, and we don't need to miss it anymore. And I think that we're moving in that direction.

President Rawlings. It is true that when this issue came up I did a lot of talking about, engaging about this issue, almost sounding like a priest. [Laughter] And at the end of it, the response I got was that there are other ones that you should be talking to this way. I mean, those who you should be talking to this way were outside of this room, outside of this Cabinet. And in other words, they are very much in agreement with our perceptions about Africa's problems, what the problems are and what the solutions ought to be. So in effect, it's hard to take this message outside of that Cabinet, to the broader American public, to Members of Congress, et cetera, on both sides of the aisle.

President Clinton. To be fair, what the President said here in his opening statement in some ways is the most important thing you can say to Americans who are not involved in Africa.

This is not simply a continent with problems; it's a continent with promise. Our investments in Africa, American investments in Africa, have earned a rate of return more than twice the rate of return earned by American investments the last 5 years in Europe, Asia, or Latin America. That is quite a stunning statistic.

And you can say, "Oh, well, it's because it's just the beginning of investment;" or, "Oh, well, the best opportunities are there." You can make all the excuses you want; 30 percent is 30 percent. [Laughter] And that's real money, you know? Even by the standards of the last 5 years, that's a hefty rate of return.

I did tell—after the President was pounding on me to do better by Africa, I did say, I said, "Reverend Rawlings, you're preaching to the saved." [Laughter] "You should just pass the plate, you know." He was preaching to the saved. [Laughter] But it's a very important point. I don't blame him, or you, for asking this question.

But you have to understand, too—I know the cold war has been over 10 years now; I know that. But I also would call your—I would like to say one other thing, briefly, I said to the delegation earlier. The end of the cold war presented the United States with a new circumstance that required us to take an approach different from the approach we had taken for 200 years. For 200 years, our principal involvement with other countries was commercial or cultural, unless attacked. Then in the 20th century, we got into World War I because our ideals were offended and because our allies were in trouble in Europe. We immediately withdrew from the world, with disastrous consequences. One of the reasons that we had the Great Depression and we had World War II is that the United States in its idealism walked away from the world.

So then we had World War II, and then we had the cold war, a reason for America to stay in the world. For the last 10 years, it is the first time in the history of the United States that we have had a sustained, comprehensive commitment, bipartisan, to have a larger role in the world—in peacetime, without our existence being threatened—which means we learned something from what happened between World War I and World War II, and we understand that America is a country where people here come from everywhere, and we know we have unique responsibilities because of the

blessings we enjoy at this moment in history. But it is a new moment for us, and we are still learning how to do it.

That is not an excuse. I know when you see a child die of AIDS, or you see a child step on a mine in Angola, or you see an economic opportunity going unfulfilled, or you think that we could help you to end a war more quickly, I know it's frustrating. But our friends in Africa have to understand what we have been doing for the last 10 years is unique in more than 200 years of history for us. And I think we'll get it right and do the right thing, but it requires a certain departure that I think most people who don't know the history of our country have difficulty accepting.

Go ahead, Larry [Larry McQuillan, Reuters].

President Rawlings' Budget/Iraq

Q. President Rawlings, your domestic critics say that your budget proposal for the coming year has been unrealistically optimistic, and I'm just wondering if you might like to take this opportunity to respond to that.

And President Clinton, on Iraq—[laughter].

President Clinton. I thought you were going to ask me the first question. [Laughter] Go ahead.

Q. There's been another incident again today. And this certainly seems to be an ongoing recurrence. And I'm just wondering if, perhaps, you can clarify for us what the U.S. policy objective is on Iraq? And have we given up all hope of any kind of arms inspections again?

President Rawlings. Please. I don't think there's anything unrealistic about what the Minister of Finance—and it's not just the Minister of Finance, but it's the whole Cabinet, under the chairmanship of the Presidency, myself, as well as the Vice President, do a very thorough examination of the pros and cons of what's coming in and what's going out, et cetera, and on the basis of which, we do a very thorough examination of what will come and what will not. And it's on the basis of this that we come out with the budget statement for the country.

And please accept it when I say that we've gone through an experience where, unlike governments of the past, we did not make the mistake of—what do you call it—taking politically expedient moves just to deal with some economic problem. Because ultimately it's going to catch up with us, and this is what has happened

in the past. And this is a lesson we learned more than 10, 15 years ago.

I mean, it's been very difficult for us in the past, every time we've had to read the budget, but then we take the trouble to educate our people about what it entails, what it means, what the difficulties are going to be, et cetera.

But you've got to keep in mind that the minute our people under—very often—I think I understand where you're coming from—very often, whenever people do not understand or appreciate what is being churned out in a broadcast, then of course, I mean, they wonder what you're talking about. But if you can reduce it to the lowest denominator and then they understand what it all entails, they are all for you. That's half the problem; that's half the solution that's solved. And that's what we do, not just with our civilian counterparts, the workers in the factories, but soldiers, officers, et cetera, in the barracks, et cetera. The minute they understand it, that's half the problem.

Now, if you're telling me this on account of what you are reading on the Internet, it's unfortunate that we're not as quick, as efficient to correct misimpressions—is that the word?—or distortions on the Internet, as others do ahead of us. I wish we were just as efficient as they are on the Internet—[laughter]—then you wouldn't be asking me this question. [Laughter]

We have a Finance Minister—wait a minute—who started off as the Energy—he made a success of it—no, before the Energy—Transport and Communication; he made a success of it. From there we moved him to Lands and Forestry; he made a success of it; from there to Energy—no, Energy and to do with the gold mine—Mines and Energy; he made a fantastic success of that one. And that's how he ended up as the Minister of Finance. A man of integrity, earnestness, he sits with a cross-section of the people, from the top right down to the bottom—workers, union leaders, et cetera—and lays everything on the table.

And that is what we need in Africa. That's what we've been doing in Ghana. That's how come we've survived this long, because we don't hide anything from anybody. We lay everything on the table.

So if you're putting this question across to me, please, attribute it to those who just cannot accept the earnestness, the sincerity of this government. Is that okay? [Laughter] No, if I

haven't finished, please feel free, you can come back.

President Clinton. On Iraq, you asked two questions. Let me take the second question first.

No, we have not given up on the prospect of restoring inspections. But since Saddam Hussein terminated his cooperation with UNSCOM and then the military action was taken by the United States, Great Britain, with the support of our allies, they have continued to defy the U.N., and that's where we are now. That brings us back to your first question.

What's going on with these incidents is that under the United Nations resolutions, which are still in place, the no-fly zone still exists. The no-fly zone has to be patrolled. When it is patrolled by American and British pilots, from time to time, as you pointed out, there have now been several instances when Israeli air defense—excuse me, Iraqi air defense weapons have been fired at our airplanes. And they're trying, obviously, for the symbolic victory of shooting one of these planes down, and perhaps trying to intimidate us from enforcing the no-fly zone, which we're still bound to do under the United Nations resolution.

Now, in response to that, we have certain rules of engagement which permit us to take out the air defense. And we have done quite a lot of it. I noticed there was one column in the press in the last week—I think it was Mr. Seib's [Jerry Seib, Wall Street Journal] column—but anyway, it was a column which pointed out that a significant amount of damage, perhaps as much damage or more, has been done to the air defense network since the end of the last military action than was done during the military action, where we had a lot broader range of targets we were going after.

And I regret this, you know. I regret this. I wish he would stop doing that. I wish he would make an agreement with the United Nations to let the inspections go back. We have shown that we are not interested in hurting the Iraqi people. We have been for broader rules for meeting the nonmilitary needs of the people of Iraq, and we will continue to work at that.

But these little encounters—each of them so far has been relatively small—are as a result of the fact that we are still, notwithstanding the fact that the inspectors aren't there, bound to enforce a no-fly zone which still exists under the U.N. resolutions.

Debt Relief for African Nations

Q. This question is to President Clinton. In recent years, there's been much talk about the need for debt cancellation, and the general feeling among African countries is that this is one surest escape route towards economic development. I would like to hear your comments on it.

President Clinton. I'm sorry. I'm hard of hearing. Could you repeat—the debt cancellation issue?

Q. Yes.

President Clinton. Well, I believe that debt relief is appropriate, in Africa and in certain other places, particularly in view of the countries in—some of the countries in Asia that have been so hard hit by the financial crisis. I think that debt relief, frankly, though, only works if it is accompanied by a longer term commitment to a sound economic policy.

If you look at the astonishing results that Ghana has produced over a period of years—steady growth, good years and bad years; some years are better than others—but you've enjoyed steady growth. You've had a steady political environment that has also become steadily more democratic, not steadily more repressive, moving in the right direction.

I think that it is unlikely that a lot of these countries can really resume significant growth without debt relief. But I do not believe debt relief alone will bring them their growth. That's my position. I'm for more debt relief. The United States is sponsoring—as I said, we will have, in Africa alone, almost \$500 million in debt relief this year and last year, if Congress approves my proposal. We also have contributed another \$50 million in this budget as our contribution to a larger international debt relief effort.

And I think we can do more. But it is essential for some countries, but it is not enough. So we need debt relief plus trade and investment, plus aid, plus good economic policies within the country. You have to have all of them, I think, to maximize African growth.

Let's take one more. John [John King, Cable News Network].

Cooperation With Congress

Q. Sir, both the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader left their meeting with you yesterday and refused to answer directly when we asked them outside if they could

trust you after the events of the past few months. Was that your sense in the meeting? And if that is the case, how do you hope to accomplish anything in your final 22 months?

President Clinton. Well, the answer is, that was not my sense. I thought it was a good meeting. Because of what they went through with their own Members, that's a difficult question for you to ask them. And no matter what answer they give, it causes them more problems than it solves. You guys are great at asking me those questions, too.

But I mean, keep in mind, they're the leader of—they have to lead their caucuses in the House and the Senate. So that sort of question, at the time when some of the nerves are still raw, any answer they give makes it more difficult for them, potentially, at least, within their caucus or within the country, depending on what answer they give.

So I think the answer ought to be, the answer they ought to give and the answer they ought to have deeply imbedded in their minds and hearts is that their feelings are not important here—just like my feelings are not important. We have an oath to fulfill, a responsibility to fulfill. We were hired to do the public's business, and they expect us to do it.

You know, it would be hard to imagine a year that was more strained than last year, and we got a lot done. It was a good year, legislatively. We continued—we passed our second balanced budget; we passed the legislation to provide for 100,000 teachers, with almost a third of them paid for in the downpayment, and lots of other things.

So I think we're now in a period—this is early in the legislative calendar; they have a new leader in the House; they have a lot of work to do; they have to get a budget resolution through. And then we have probably, oh, I don't know, 8 or 10 bills that I can conceive of us getting agreement on—I mean, really significant bills, a lot of them—between the two parties.

And then we've got these big questions of what to do about Social Security, Medicare; whether I'm right, they're right, something else is right on the tax cut issue. There are big questions out here. And I believe that we will all do our duty in the end; that's what I think. And I just think we need to—if we focus on the American people and doing our duty, and not on whether we're mad or happy, disappointed or elated about the events of the last

year, then all this in the course of time will work itself out. And the American system will be validated.

We—if you take a position like the ones we’ve taken, it is simply wrong for you to think about what your feelings are. Your responsibility is to fulfill your oath and do what the public needs. And if we focus on that, we’ll be just fine.

Dual Citizenship

Q. President Rawlings, I think I’m on the wrong side of the room. I apologize, but I have a question for you.

President Rawlings. I understand. Actually, I was actually briefed that most of the questions would be directed at the President. [Laughter] I was made to understand that, don’t be surprised if most of the questions are related to American domestic situations and not the fact that I’m here from Africa. Thank you. Carry on, please. [Laughter]

Q. Well, I’ve heard that Ghana is offering some sort of dual citizenship to African-Americans. Is that true? What does it mean, and what’s the reasoning behind it?

President Rawlings. It’s very true. Sorry, do you mind if I—is it something connected to the question?

President Clinton. Answer this one, and then if you want to call on him, it’s fine.

President Rawlings. Very soon, our Parliament will be passing the bill to grant black Americans their dual citizenship, as far as Ghana is concerned, and you’ll have the right of dual abode.

Q. What does it mean?

President Rawlings. What does it mean?

Q. Yes.

President Rawlings. You wouldn’t need a visa; you wouldn’t need whatever it is to enter my country. You will have the freedom to move around as any fellow Ghanaian, and that will not deny you your American citizenship, either.

Q. What’s the reasoning behind it?

President Rawlings. What’s the reason behind it?

Q. Yes.

President Rawlings. Do German-Americans, do Israeli-Americans—are they denied the right of their citizenship back at home? No, no, please, if I’m wrong, can you correct me?

Q. I don’t know. [Laughter]

President Rawlings. Quite frankly, I mean, I could go on and on. But the point is that, I mean, you’re our kith and kin. If others can

refer to themselves as Jewish Americans or German-Americans or Irish-Americans, whatever it is, Italian-Americans, and you’re calling yourself African——

Q. Americans.

President Rawlings. ——whatever it is. [Laughter] I mean, where do you come from? After all, I mean, my continent is the mother of——what do you call it?——not all continents but humanity and civilization as we’ve come to know today. I mean, is there any reason why you should not have the right to enjoy the citizenship of where you come from?

President Clinton. I’m just sorry I can’t do it. [Laughter] I don’t qualify. [Laughter]

President Rawlings. No, no, wait a minute, sir. Hold on, Mr. President. [Laughter] No, no. You’re not going to explain this for me. [Laughter]

Let’s put it this way. I’m rather surprised that you’re asking me this question. I should be asking you, I mean, how on God’s possible——whatever it is——could you be asking me a question like this? [Laughter] Because, I mean——

Q. Would it be dual loyalty?

President Rawlings. Well, I guess that’s what we have a bit of—we don’t have any problem with that. I think—when I look into that issue, I have a problem with you, because you’re demanding loyalty to the American Constitution, and yet I cannot demand the same kind of loyalty to my country. And this is where I’m beginning to have a problem. But nonetheless, there’s no reason why I will deny my fellow black African the right to enjoy the citizenship as I enjoy as an African.

President Clinton. Let me just try to—the general rule is that dual citizenship laws are, by definition, controlled by the citizenship conditions of both countries. And it’s not unheard of for Americans to have dual citizenship.

Interestingly enough, after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the breakup of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, we’ve had American citizens who had roots, for example, in the Baltic States. One went home to his country and became the Ambassador. I don’t know if he had to give up his American citizenship, or not. It would be a function of the law. But there are—and the laws operate differently in different countries. But almost all countries allow some form of dual citizenship.

Now, second thing is, the President didn’t mention this, but if Ghana does this, it certainly

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

world. It also gave us the opportunity to get to know Ghana.

It has become the subject of some raw humor in the White House that I never tire of telling people that we had a half a million people in Independence Square in Ghana. About—[*applause*—thank you. Every time the Vice President gets a good news story these days, I say, “But have you ever spoken to a half a million people?” [*Laughter*]

Let me say also, Mr. President, we all know that you have so many friends in the United States, quite a few here tonight. I want to mention, though, an astonishing fact that I learned about a friend of Ghana and yours who is not here tonight—also a friend of mine, who performed here for the Prime Minister of Great Britain—Stevie Wonder. He spends considerable time in Ghana, and actually, Mr. President, he has boasted in the United States that he’s flown your airplane. [*Laughter*] I hope you wore a seat belt. [*Laughter*] With a story like that, he may be planning to run for office soon.

I want you all to know I have spent an inordinate amount of time thinking about President Rawlings’ political predicament. Listen to this: He was elected President by his fellow citizens in 1992. He was reelected in 1996. He loves his country, and he loves being President of his country. His Constitution prevents him from running again in 2000. [*Laughter*] Mr. President, I feel your pain. [*Laughter*]

It seems to me the only response for two slightly scarred but energetic warriors like us is to renew our commitment and dedication in these remaining 2 years of our service, to make them count every day for all our people, so that when our citizens choose new leadership for a new century, we can know that we have done our best to pave their way.

So let us tonight commit together to work on the things that matter to real people and to the children and their future: to strengthen our democracies; to broaden the reach of our economies; to make education and health care better and more widely available; to protect our environment; to work to convince others to seek peaceful solutions to conflicts within and among the nations we can reach. And let us commit to making the bonds between our two nations stronger than ever.

Mr. President, Nana, it is a profound honor for Hillary and for me to have you here. And we now ask all of you to join us in a toast to the President and the First Lady and the people of Ghana.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:03 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nana Konadu Agyeman-Rawlings, wife of President Rawlings; and musician Stevie Wonder.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba

February 24, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba’s destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in inter-

national airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 1999, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 24, 1999.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Administration of the Coastal Zone Management Act February 24, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit the Biennial Report to Congress on the Administration of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for fiscal years 1996 and 1997. This report is submitted as required by section 316 of the CZMA of 1972 as amended, (16 U.S.C. 1451, *et seq.*).

The report discusses progress made at the national and State level in administering the

Coastal Zone Management and Estuarine Research Reserve Programs during these years, and spotlights the accomplishments of NOAA's State coastal management and estuarine research reserve program partners under the CZMA.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 24, 1999.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25.

Remarks to the Community in Tucson, Arizona February 25, 1999

The President. Thank you. Thank you. I was just wondering if Esther would agree to go back to Washington with me. That was amazing. [Laughter]

Thank you for your wonderful welcome. I had no idea when I got here that I was coming to a place so large or so beautiful or completely full, with a good crowd outside. And it's a real testament to your good citizenship. You can't imagine, as Congressman Kolbe said, what this weather looks like to us. It has been freezing in Washington. And I come here—and I'm sort of a sports fan—you've got three teams in spring training; you've got this great golf tournament going on here; and here you are with me. Thank you very much. I'm very grateful.

I'd like to thank Mayor Miller for meeting me at the airport and being here today. And he and his wife met me, and it's her birthday today—I hope she's enjoying this unusual celebration of her birthday.

I thank County Supervisor Sharon Bronson for her remarks and her presence here today. And Congressman Kolbe, thank you for crossing district and party lines to be here with us today. We appreciate it very much. I thank you good friend, Ed Pastor, and his wife, Verma, for their friendship and support and leadership over the years. I thank him for that.

I know Attorney General Janet Napolitano and several legislators and tribal leaders and others are here. I thank them for being here. I think the Director of the Pima County Council on Aging, Marian Lupu, is here. I was told before I got here that Linda Ronstadt and CeCe Peniston are here, and if they are, thank you for being here. And if they're not, I'm giving them free publicity. That's okay, too. [Laughter]

You know, I'm delighted to be back in Arizona; I'm delighted to be here. Ed told me that I am the first President to come to Tucson since President Ford. If that's true, the others didn't know what they were missing, I can tell you that. I'm not sure, but I believe this is the first time I've had the opportunity in Arizona to thank the people of Arizona for their support for the Vice President and me in 1996, and I'm very grateful for that.

This State is living proof that the great era of westward expansion did not end a century ago; it is still going on. And when I look out here at all of you, I am reminded that when America looks to the west, it still sees the future. We see in Arizona the glimpses of America's future, and the seismic shifts in population, and growth you are already undergoing.

The mayor mentioned Hillary—the one thing—I wanted to say this: the one thing Hillary said to me this morning, only half kidding, before I left—I said, “You know, look at this. This speech begins by saying, Arizona is the mirror of the future, all these shifts in population.” She said, “Yeah, there’s another way it’s a mirror of the future, too. The women are in charge at last.” I think my political career just got in there under the wire. That’s what I think. *[Laughter]*

Let me say to all of you, we’ve had a good time today, and I am delighted to be here. But I do want to take a few moments to have a serious discussion with you about what I believe we should be doing in this last year of the 20th century. And I think it is terribly important, because the United States is so fortunate today to have the longest peacetime expansion in our history and the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957 and all the other economic indicators you know well. We’re in our second year of budget surpluses after 30 years of deficits. Welfare rolls are about half what they were 6 years ago. We are so fortunate.

But the tendency is for people in public life and positions of responsibility and for citizens at large, after having gone through difficult and challenging times, when things get a whole lot better and ordinary folks can finally begin to feel it, to see it in the highest homeownership in our history, for example, the tendency is to say, whew, and to relax, and to basically just enjoy this moment or to think about other things, or to get distracted. And I believe that would be an error.

And I ask you to come here today to join with me in thinking seriously about our future, because this prosperity we have and this confidence we have gives us not only an opportunity but an obligation to try to deal with the long-term challenges America faces. That’s what I attempted to talk to the American people about in the State of the Union. I want to mention a few of them today and then focus on the ones that have already been discussed.

There’s one other person, though, I will not forgive myself if I don’t introduce, a native of Arizona and a very important member of my personal White House staff, Mr. Fred DuVal. So I wanted to introduce Fred. Thank you very much.

One of the big challenges you face in Arizona that all America will have to face is, how do

we preserve the environment as we grow the economy; how do we maintain what you all came to California—I mean, to Arizona—for in the first place? *[Laughter]* While you have sustained records—economic growth. If you moved here to Arizona, if you’re not like Esther and you weren’t born here, if you moved here, it puts you in an awkward position to say you wish other people would stay home, doesn’t it? So the question is, how do we sustain growth as a country, knowing we’re going to put more pressure on our natural resources, and knowing we have local problems like preservation of green space, other natural heritage, quality of water, quality of air, not having toxic sites, and that’s all somehow connected to a lot of global problems like the warming of the climate?

This is a major challenge. I know that you are working on it. When the mayor met me at the airport he gave me a shirt that I’m going to try to wear out to spring training when I leave you—on the Bellota Ranch, which you have preserved, I think 10 or 12 miles from here—the kind of thing we ought to be doing more of.

And so one example of what we’re trying to do to help you deal with the future is the livability agenda that I talked about a little bit in the State of the Union, that the Vice President and I developed, that will give communities new tools and new resources to deal with whatever the major challenge is in any community to making it more livable, whether it’s reducing traffic congestion or saving green space or promoting smart growth.

We also have to recognize that we’re not yet giving all of our children a world-class education, so in the State of the Union I talked a lot about how we can build a 21st century education for every American child, from putting more teachers in the schools, to building or modernizing 6,000 schools, to having more summer school and after-school programs, to having more charter schools and Internet hook-ups for all of our classrooms. These things are very important. And Arizona has growth challenges and diversity challenges there as well.

We talked a lot about—in the State of the Union, I talked a lot about the need to bring economic opportunity to the communities and the people that still haven’t been part of the recovery, whether they’re in urban areas or isolated rural areas or Native American reservations. We have a program now—if we can’t get

investment in there now when unemployment is low and when money is ample, if we can't get private investment to prove free enterprise will work for all Americans who will work, we'll never get around to doing that. So I think that is a very important thing for us to do now, and I hope you will support that.

But for the next few years, all of these major challenges will be overshadowed by two great decisions: How do we deal with the aging of America; and what are we going to do, now that we finally have a budget surplus, what are we going to do with it? And I want you to think about that.

You know you are on the cutting edge of the aging of America. Here in Pima County alone, there are an enormous number of people over 65; the number has doubled just since 1980. The number of Americans over 65 in the entire country will double within 30 years. Life expectancy is already 76 years-plus in America. If you get to be 65 years old, your life expectancy, on average, is already over 80, well over 80. People over 80 are the fastest growing group of Americans. Esther's just one of the crowd there—[laughter]—and her family.

So what does all that mean? Well, it means that before you know it, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. It means even before that, there will be many, many more people on Medicare, and the older you get, the more you tend to access health services. And even staying healthy often costs money.

If you look at that, when the baby boomers retire—we had to wait two generations. It's not until—this group that's now in the schools today is the only group of Americans more numerous than the baby boom generation. I'm the oldest of the baby boomers, I was born in 1946—

Audience member. Me, too. [Laughter]

The President. It looks better on you. [Laughter]

And those of us in the next 18 years are the so-called baby boom generation—we retire, there will be two people drawing—working for every one person drawing Social Security. And even before that, as I said, there will be great pressures put on the Medicare program because we're living longer, and we have more access to high-tech medicine, but we access it more.

Another thing that's important for you to remember is that Social Security is not just a retirement program; it's an insurance program.

One-third of the investments that are paid out in Social Security go to people who become disabled or to the survivors of people who die prematurely from accidents, disease, and other things. And when you think about what you're getting out of Social Security, particularly if you're not drawing it yet, don't forget that every year you have the equivalent of a term insurance policy that's issued every year against disability or death. All over America, I meet people who literally would not be able to get along were it not for these benefits.

So here's the problem: Everybody likes Social Security; everybody likes Medicare; and we can't sustain the programs unless we make some changes, both changes in the structure of the program and investing more money.

Now, thank goodness we now have a surplus. We're in the second year of surpluses, and we project that, on average, we'll have them for at least another 25 years. That doesn't mean that we won't have bad economic years, but on average, year-in and year-out, we'll have them, and that's good.

Now, in the State of the Union Address, as Esther said, I proposed setting aside for 15 years 62 percent of the surplus for Social Security and 15 percent of it for Medicare. And I'd like to talk a little about that. I propose to do it in a way that will enable us to pay down the national debt with the surpluses but as we pay the debt down, to commit the money that we're using to pay the debt down when it comes back in, when it's manifested in the out-years, to commit future years money to Social Security and Medicare.

Now, if we do that, every young person in the audience should be for that, not just because it would guarantee that you would get Social Security and Medicare but because if you pay the debt down, as I'll say more about in a minute, it will immeasurably strengthen the American economy. And keep in mind, it is the strength of our economy that is enabling us to have this whole conversation today. If we still had 8 percent unemployment and a \$200 billion deficit, we'd be letting somebody else think about this down the road.

Now, I want to say, first of all, that I am very encouraged that there are more and more Members of Congress like the two here, Ed Pastor and Jim Kolbe, who are committed to seeking reasonable solutions to these challenges, and who want to set aside—there seems now

to be broad agreement among leaders and rank-and-file members in both parties of Congress to set aside the lion's share of the surplus to save Social Security.

There seems to be, now, some movement in the Republican majority away from having a large across-the-board tax cut if it would take away from the surplus' ability to save Social Security. We don't yet have that kind of agreement on setting aside some of the surplus for Medicare, and I think we should. And I'm going to keep pushing for that, because I think it's important—and I'll explain more about that in a moment—because I think we have to have both Social Security and Medicare fixed by the end of this year.

Now, I can tell you—if you look at what this surplus is projected to be over the next 15 years, if we did what I asked, there would still be a substantial amount of money out of which you could have targeted tax cuts, which I think the best are the USA accounts, the savings accounts I proposed, because most people need help saving for their retirement. But you could have a targeted tax cut; you could have investments for defense, for education, for medical research. There's still money there.

But keep in mind: When you save money, if it doesn't materialize, you just didn't save quite as much as you meant to. Once you give the tax cut, the money is gone. So we're giving it back to you, and it was all your money in the first place. And that's good. But if you want us to fix Social Security and Medicare, you should want us to make sure that we invest enough to do that. And if we do it—*[ap- plause]*—thank you.

Now, let me just tell you basically what I propose to do. What I propose to do is to take 62 percent of the surplus, commit it to Social Security, and pay the debt down. And what I believe we should do is to invest a modest amount of this in the private sector, the way every other retirement plan does. The Arizona State retirement plan does; every municipal retirement plan does; every private plan does. But I don't want to see the Government having too much influence over the stock market, so I proposed to set up a totally independent board, like every other retirement plan has, that no politician can have any influence over, and then to limit the aggregate amount of our investments to about 4 percent. It would never get over 4 percent over the next 20 years.

There's some differences about that, but if you do it, you'll increase the rate of return on Social Security. When only two people work and one person draws, you have to find some way to do it. Mr. Kolbe's got a different way he thinks is better.

But here the point I want to make: If you set aside 62 percent of the Trust Fund for Social Security, it will extend the life of the Social Security Trust Fund to 2050, maybe another year or two, depending on how much longer the economy stays in good shape.

But there are three other things we need to do, and I want you to think about it. Number one, historically, to have a good retirement system with Social Security, we've always thought we ought to have it alive for 75 years. Number two, the rate of poverty among single elderly women is over 18 percent, nearly twice the general rate of poverty among seniors, and we need to make some adjustments in the program to lift them out of poverty, I think. Number three, I think it's a mistake, when more and more seniors are living longer and living healthier, to continue the earnings limitation on Social Security, that limits what people can earn. And interestingly enough, if you lift the earnings limitation, it actually costs the Trust Fund money in the short run because a lot of people start collecting their Social Security. But within a matter of a few years, it starts making money, because even retired people who earn income pay taxes on it, so after a certain period it will actually start replenishing the Social Security Trust Fund.

Now, to do that, to do that we will have to make some other changes. And to do that, we will have to make some changes that will be perhaps somewhat controversial, that will have to be made in a bipartisan fashion. But the changes won't be nearly as dramatic, nearly as big, and nearly as troublesome as they would be if we didn't commit the surplus in the first place.

So I hope that you will support this idea of committing the surplus and then you will tell—we're down in Ed's district now—tell him that you know he wants to preserve Social Security; you know he wants to take care of the people that have to be taken care of; and you will trust him to go up there and make some decisions that may be somewhat controversial today; but 10 or 20 years from now we'll all be thanking goodness that the Congress of the

United States was willing to do what it takes to save Social Security for 75 years. And I think that's important.

Now, let me say furthermore, on Medicare, here's the problem. We've made a lot of changes in Medicare to try to cut down on fraud and abuse, and there was a bunch of it. Right now, the Trust Fund in Medicare is stable for 10 years; that's the good news. Here's the bad news: Ten years is not enough. We ought to stabilize it for 20 years.

And as probably most of you have noticed, inflation in the cost of health care has gone way down the last few years. Health insurance premiums have not been going up very fast; we've got them back in line with inflation. When I became President, for many years before that, health insurance premiums had been going up at 3 times the rate of inflation. But a lot of the savings, the easy savings that could be squeezed out for managed care—and some not so easy, which is why I'm for the Patients' Bill of Rights—a lot of those savings have been squeezed out. So this year, it is estimated that health insurance premium costs will increase about 7 percent, whereas the general rate of inflation will be just a little over 2 percent.

So you can see that that's a real problem. We can't sustain the present budgeted costs of Medicare. We're going to have to put some more money in it. If we put 15 percent of the surplus aside for Medicare for 20 years—15 years, we could take the Trust Fund out from 2010 to 2020.

Now, I would also like to see us begin to work into Medicare a prescription drug benefit, which I think would dramatically improve it. But keep in mind, the program doesn't have enough money now. We've got to be careful how we do it, because you could spend a whole lot of money in a hurry and give people who may not need it the benefit. But if you think about it, we're spending—we've had a remarkable bipartisan consensus. You know, you wouldn't think we ever agreed on anything, I'm sure, out here. *[Laughter]* Once in a great while we all agree on something. And one of the things that we've had real agreement on ever since I've been in Washington, for the last 6 years, has been to dramatically increase spending for medical research.

And some of the findings are breathtaking. We've uncovered the genes that give a strong predisposition to breast cancer. We've done

nerve transplantations in laboratory animals from legs to spines that have actually cured broken spinal cords in laboratory animals, just unbelievable things that have breathtaking potential for the future. But if we're investing all this money to try to come up with medicine, for example, that helps to keep people well or to cure conditions that were formerly incurable, that dramatically improve the quality of life, we want to be able to bring those into the lives of the American people.

And if you're worried about people, in effect, as we get older, putting enormous burdens on the hospital costs, which is all the money is—you know, hospital and doctor visits—if we can work out the right sort of prescription drug benefit, we'll actually save money over the long run because people will stay out of the hospital, they'll stay out of costly medical care, they will stay healthy. So we have to work hard to kind of get this right.

So again, my proposal is, set aside 15 percent of the surplus for Medicare, take the Trust Fund out to 2020, but recognize we're going to have to make some changes there for the same reason we have to make some changes in Social Security and especially if we want to add a prescription drug benefit for the people who really need it.

Now, that's the general outline of my proposal. But I also want to emphasize, if you save the surplus for 15 years—we save a little over three-quarters of this surplus for 15 years and used it to buy into publicly held debt and to pledge the future revenues to Social Security and Medicare, here's what would happen. We would go from a national debt that today was quadrupled between 1981 and 1993—we quadrupled the debt, and it was 50 percent of our annual income—today it's down to 44 percent of our annual income. In 15 years, it will be down to 7 percent of our annual income. The last time it was 7 percent of our annual income was 1917, right before we went into World War I.

What does that mean to you in practical terms? This is where I want the young people in the audience to listen. It will mean that the Congress that meets 15 years from now, instead of having to take 13-plus cents of every dollar you pay in taxes right off the top to pay interest on the debt, we'll be spending 2 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes to pay interest on the debt.

In the early years, most of the difference will go to fix Social Security and Medicare. But over time, that's a huge amount of money that can be invested in the needs of future generations. It can be providing for tax cuts; it can be providing for anything out in the country when we get this debt off.

But what I want the young people to understand here, especially is if we start paying this debt down and we go all the way, if we stay on this trajectory we could be debt-free for the first time in 2018. That's just 19 years from now. And in the meanwhile we'll have lower interest rates, higher investment, more investment in new business and new jobs, home mortgage rates will be lower, credit card payments will be lower, car payments will be lower, student loan rates will be lower, and the economy will grow faster. Now, I want you to think about it. Why will that happen? Because the Government will not be going in and taking up a bunch of money every year to finance the deficit. So interest rates will go down, savings will go up, investment in our future will go up.

So this proposal is good for younger people for two reasons: This is not—for one thing, people on Social Security now don't have to worry; it's going to be fine for 30 years. You don't have to worry. Now, you do, most of you on Medicare, have to worry because it's not going to be fine after 10 years if we don't fix that.

But every American of every age should care about this. Why? Well, for one thing, I can tell you as the oldest of the baby boomers, I spend a lot of time—I stay in touch with the people I grew up with, a lot of them. Most of them are just middle-class people, the kind of people who live here in Tucson. And my whole generation is obsessed with the thought that our retirement, because we're such a large group, would put an unacceptable burden on our children and their ability to educate and raise our grandchildren. And if we fix Social Security and Medicare, then our children will have more of their disposable income in those years to build their families, their quality of life, and their children's future. That's why this is not just a seniors' issue.

Secondly, if we pay down the debt, the major beneficiaries of those changes will be the younger people. You know, there's been a lot of trouble in the world economy the last couple of years. Last year it was terrible. I have worked very hard to try to turn it around. I will do

everything I can this year to make some major strides forward, because a lot of our prosperity depends upon the prosperity of our trading partners. But our ability to control what happens beyond our borders is somewhat limited, as all of you understand. I can tell you this: If we pay this debt down, whatever bad times come in the future won't be as bad as they would have been by a long shot. And whatever good times come in the future will be much better than they would have been because of this.

So I say again, I haven't tried to give you a traditional political speech today; we're just having a talk. And I appreciate how—I very much appreciate how quiet you've been and how you've listened to this.

There are some promising signs in Washington. I met with the leaders of both parties in both Houses, a couple of days ago. There's some indication that there is—I think there is an agreement that we have to use the lion's share of the surplus to save Social Security. There is, I think, some movement toward reaching some consensus about the nature of tax cuts, if they ought to be targeted and benefit the people that need it most and try to not get in the way of saving Social Security. We're not there on Medicare yet, and the Medicare problem will come sooner.

But we need to hear—the people of this country need to make a decision. And this is maybe a fairly complicated scenario I've laid out for you. I know it would be a lot more popular to say, "We've got a surplus. It's your money. I'm just going to give it back to you." And then you could all cheer; and I could go home; we'd go watch baseball or do something else. *[Laughter]*

But what I want to say to you is, this is a high-class problem. This is nothing to wring your hands about. The reason we have this Social Security and Medicare problem is because we've got the best medical science in the world and because we're all living longer. This is not an occasion for handwringing. The older I get, the better I like this problem. *[Laughter]* This is a high-class problem.

But we have a responsibility to the future. This country's still around here, after more than 200 years, because whenever the chips are down and we had to make a decision about what kind of country we were going to be and what kind of future we were going to have, we did the right thing. And we kept going forward.

And the decisions that we make, not just in the Congress and the White House, but as a people, about whether we're willing to take on the challenge of securing Social Security for the 21st century, whether we're willing to do the same thing for Medicare, and whether we're willing to save a substantial part of this surplus to do those things and to pay this debt down, will shape, in large measure, what America is like for the young people in this audience and their counterparts throughout the United States.

This is a wonderful time to be in the United States. We can all be grateful, because the truth is that no one, not even the President, could have predicted that the results of our attempts to reduce the deficit, to bring interest rates down, would have produced these results. And no one can claim sole credit for it. This is a shared achievement of the American people. And we should be proud of it.

So as we go back to Washington and we go back to work, I ask you here—and I ask you to talk to your friends and neighbors in Arizona—when you're on your phone with your friends and family members throughout the

country, I want you to tell them about this meeting today. And if you don't remember anything else, just remember, if we save about three-quarters of this surplus for Medicare and Social Security and if we pay the debt down with the surplus and then if we have the courage to make some decisions that may sound a little tough—to save Social Security for 75 years, fix Medicare for 20 years, and get the debt down to where it's virtually nonexistent—America is going to be a stronger, better place.

These programs will be there. These programs will be there for the next generation of Americans, but America will be there—America will be there—brighter, better, stronger than ever before.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the Music Hall at the Tucson Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to senior citizen Esther Don Tang, who introduced the President; Mayor George Miller and his wife, Roslyn; Verma Pastor, wife of Representative Ed Pastor; and entertainers Linda Ronstadt and CeCe Peniston.

Radio Remarks on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

February 25, 1999

This year, we have a remarkable opportunity to work together across party lines to bring true progress to America's public schools. I welcome the idea of greater flexibility for States and school districts, and I urge the Senate to pass the so-called ed-flex legislation, because it provides for greater flexibility and greater accountability. But we must do more to give our children a world-class education. That's why I also strongly support the amendment to the legislation proposed by Senators Kennedy and Murray to continue the national commitment we began last year: to hire 100,000 new teachers and to reduce class size all across America. Studies con-

firm what every parent already knows: smaller classes make a big difference, from improved test scores to improved discipline. The Senate should pass the Kennedy-Murray amendment and give our Nation's children the individual attention they deserve in the classroom and the better future only a good education can bring.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 2 p.m. in the Tucson Convention Center in Tucson, AZ, for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on the Death of Virginia Foster Durr *February 25, 1999*

Hillary and I are deeply saddened to hear of the death of Virginia Foster Durr. Throughout this century, America's long march toward freedom and justice has been the achievement of countless Americans—black and white—who risked their lives to lead us closer to our most cherished ideals. A white woman born to privilege in the Deep South, Mrs. Durr refused to

turn a blind eye to racism and intolerance in our society. Her courage, outspokenness, and steely conviction in the earliest days of the civil rights movement helped change this Nation forever. Hillary and I feel honored to have known and been inspired by this truly great American. Our thoughts and prayers are with her friends and family.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Military Personnel to Kenya and Tanzania *February 25, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On August 10, 1998, I reported to the Congress that two teams of U.S. military personnel had been deployed to Kenya and Tanzania to assist in the provision of security for our embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in the aftermath of the terrorist bombings at those sites. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about the continuing deployment of U.S. military personnel in Kenya.

The military personnel that deployed to Tanzania have since redeployed. Military personnel have remained in Kenya, however, to assist in provision of security for our embassy and American citizens in Nairobi. The need for this addi-

tional security support will continue until renovations are completed to provide a secure and permanent embassy facility in Nairobi.

I have continued this deployment of U.S. Armed Forces pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action to assist in embassy security and the security of American citizens overseas.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial and Congressional Campaign Committees Dinner in San Francisco, California *February 25, 1999*

Thank you. Well, thank you very much. First of all, let me say to our host and his family and to all the rest of you, I have had a perfectly wonderful time here tonight. And I think that's important. I say that because a lot of you go to a lot of these events, and I don't know that

you always have a perfectly wonderful time. [Laughter] But we've had a wonderful time.

I think all of you know you're here to do something of surpassing importance, and I want to say that, as I was looking at the previous speakers and those who were introduced who hold public office, I was sitting here silently

thinking to myself, I am very proud to be a member of my political party.

I am the beneficiary, as no one else here is, of all the work that these Members of Congress have done. I know things about them all that we don't have time even to go through. I've had conversations with Senator Baucus about the environment or how we ought to relate to Asia over the long run. I've talked to Senator Torricelli at all hours of the night, usually at my instigation, I might add, about all manner of issues. Senator Boxer and I are members of the same family in more ways than one, and I was profoundly grateful that the people of California reelected her by such a handsome margin. And Hillary and I both felt privileged to be able to come out here last year and to campaign for her, for Gray Davis, for all the Democrats who were elected. Congressman Bonior, Congressman Miller, Congressman Kennedy—you know, I used to be like Congressman Kennedy, too young to hold office, and I looked younger than I was—[*laughter*]*—but he's a marvelous leader for our Democratic House Campaign Committee—Congresswoman Eshoo; Congresswoman Lofgren, who was, I must say to all of you, a lion on the House Judiciary Committee and a great leader there; Congresswoman Woolsey.*

I want to say what Bob Torricelli said about Nancy Pelosi is right. I have been on both sides of issues with Nancy Pelosi; there is nothing more humbling than to have her look at you and tell you why you're wrong. [*Laughter*] You know? You just—she doesn't have to do like those really conservative Republicans who invoke God all the time. She just looks at you, and you know God is on her side. [*Laughter*] She never has to say it, you know. And if she really disagrees with you and she gets those—her eyes seem to get bigger and bigger and sadder and sadder, and you don't know whether she's going to cry or hit you right between the eyes. [*Laughter*] There are few people in public life I admire more for marrying their heart with their mind than Nancy Pelosi. You should be very proud of her, and I know you are. But she has really done a great job.

And Dick Gephardt and I, 11 years ago, had a dinner in the kitchen of the Governor's mansion composed of cold McDonald's french fries, not quite as nice as the one we're having tonight. [*Laughter*] He came to visit me in Arkansas, and Jane was there. Hillary was there. We

stayed up half the night talking. It was really the first time I'd ever had a chance to get to know him. And I can honestly say that with every passing week, every passing month, every passing year of working with him, my admiration and affection for him has grown.

And he has done something a lot of people couldn't do. The Democrats were in the majority a long time, and I want to talk about how we came to be in the minority in a moment. But they were in the majority a long time, and psychologically it was very difficult for people who had been in the majority a long time to go into the minority. And a lot of people, frankly, just got—they just quit. I'll say this for the Republicans, they don't quit. Strom Thurmond and Jesse Helms don't quit, right? [*Laughter*] And a lot of our guys, they had a hard time, so they just—they resigned. They left their careers.

And Dick Gephardt realized that because he believed, as did I, as did all those in this room tonight, that we didn't want America to look like what we thought would happen if the "Contract With America" prevailed. And we didn't agree with it. And we thought that in the end, the American people would support the decisions we've made which cost us the Congress in 1994. And so he rose to the occasion in a way that I think was awesome, even to people who had a lot of confidence in him and admired him. And I can tell you that after the next election, when he becomes the Speaker of the House, every person in this room will be very proud that you were here tonight and that you made a contribution to it. And I thank you.

Now, when the mayor came in tonight, I told him I would be for him or against him, whichever would help most in his election. [*Laughter*] And typically, he asked for one of each. [*Laughter*] But I want to thank the mayor for always making me feel at home in San Francisco. I thank Art Torres for his leadership of our party. I thank all of you.

I wish I could think of something to say that you can say to somebody else that would spread the word beyond the circle of friends we all have. But as I was going through this magnificent home tonight, and Bob Torricelli said something that I wish I could have said, because he said, "All of you are here because you believe that your country will be better off if you help other people who have things that you already have—to acquire things that you already have."

I believe that the things, in this time at least, that distinguish our party are things for which this home, this city, and this State are metaphors. We don't know who laid this stone in the floor. We don't know who did the marbling work on these beautiful columns or who painted the walls or put the glass in the ceiling. I don't know who painted that wonderful painting of Nijinsky in the other room. But I know one thing: Every one of them—we don't know any of them—they had different gifts, but they were very special. And we're all better off and enriched tonight because they had a chance to manifest their gifts. But we're also better off because they had the chance to manifest their gifts together. The house was built by the gifts of many people, some of whom are completely anonymous. The magnificent furniture, the inlaid work on the desk, the things I saw—I don't have any idea, some of those people have been dead more than 100 years. But every one of them had a gift, and when you put them all together, you have quite a home.

San Francisco and California, they're places where everybody can feel at home, where the diversity, the richness, the texture of what will be 21st century America is already evident, and where ideas are prized, no matter what their source, and where people don't fear change as long as the change occurs in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. That's basically what we think America ought to be like, all day, every day.

When Nancy quoted the prayer of Saint Francis and talked about all the places I brought peace to, I thought, there are three places that I have made no progress. I've made no progress, although I've tried, in trying to get Greece and Turkey to get along. I've made no progress in trying to resolve the tensions between India and Pakistan. And I'm not sure I've made any progress at all in bringing peace to Washington, DC. [Laughter]

But I will say this: This country knows one thing after 6 years, that all the things that used to be said by the other party about the Democrats turned out to be wrong. They said we couldn't be trusted to govern; we couldn't manage the economy; we couldn't deal with crime or welfare or foreign policy or defense. And the country is in a lot better shape.

The interesting thing is that it turns out that if you believe everybody has got a gift to give, that the gifts will only manifest themselves to

the maximum degree if we give them together, and that Government ought to be about bringing out the best in people and trying new ideas and moving forward, it turns out it works. It works.

But it wasn't always evident. The reason these Democrats are in the minority tonight is because in 1994 it was not evident to the American people that the tough votes they cast for the budget bill in '93 and the crime bill in '94, the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, and bringing the deficit down and, at the same time, saying we had to increase our investment in education—it wasn't apparent in 1994 that the results would be what they turned out to be.

But the American people, if you give them enough time, nearly always get it right. That's why we're still around here after more than 200 years. And in 1998, for the first time since 1822, the party of the President in the sixth year of a Presidency won seats in the House of Representatives, while being out-spent by \$100 million, because of what they stood for and because of the record that together we had made and the progress the American people have made.

And I'm not running for anything anymore. I might run for the school board some day. [Laughter] I'm here because I believe that what we stand for has not only helped America to come to where we are now as compared to where the United States and California were in 1991 and 1992 but because I believe that now the real question is, what will we do with this moment of prosperity and confidence? And I'd like to be pretty candid with you tonight and tell you what I have absolute confidence we should do and what challenges are out there that I haven't quite figured out exactly how to solve yet. But I am sure that having people in the majority who believe everyone has a gift, we have to give them together, and we ought to be bringing out the best in people in public life, are the people that ought to be mapping the path of the 21st century.

We have to deal now with a surplus. If somebody had told you in 1992, "If you vote for Bill Clinton, 6 years later he'll be coming back, and they'll have this big fundraiser, and he'll be saying, the biggest challenge we've got now is how to deal with the surplus," you would have said, "I will not vote for that man. He's nuts." [Laughter] "He's kidding." But let me just ask you to think—yes, America is doing

well; yes, California is doing well. But we have some big challenges. And if we expect to win in 2000, we have to show, number one, that in the next 2 years we're doing everything we can to fulfill the mandate the voters gave us in the '98 election and, secondly, that we are still looking to the future.

We've got to deal with the aging of America, the retirement of the baby boomers, the fact that we're all living longer. Our life expectancy up over 76 years now. If you live to be 65 in America, your life expectancy is over 80 years now, soon to be over 85. In the year 2030 we'll have twice as many people over 65 as we do today. We'll have only two people working for every one person on Social Security.

The Democratic Party, out of its compassion and its sense of obligation across the generations, created Social Security and Medicare, and they will both be stressed mightily by the rising cost of health care, the fact that we're living longer and using more health resources, and the fact that the demographics of the baby boom retirement will put great stresses on us. We now project a surplus for the next 25 years. There is a way to deal with the aging of America that will use most of the surplus to save Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt.

We will also have to make reforms in Social Security and Medicare, some of which may be somewhat controversial. But if you believe that we have to be together, then that's what we've got to do. I was in Tucson today, speaking to a big community group, and person after person after person came up and told me that they were literally alive because of these programs.

I was introduced by an 82-year-old Chinese-American woman who is, near as I could tell, about 4'8". She made Barbara Boxer look like a basketball player. [Laughter] And she was magnificent. She was a community leader in Tucson and was born in Tucson—a native of Tucson, Arizona—who talked about being a breast cancer survivor and the mammography she got because of Medicare and because we had pushed that and changed the system.

So who do you trust to change this program, and are we going to do it, and how are we going to do it and be faithful? We have to do it. And we do it not for the people on these programs now—they're going to be fine—but so that the baby boomers, like me—and I'm the oldest of the baby boomers—do not have to go to bed every night worried that we are

bankrupting our children and undermining their ability to raise our grandchildren.

And now is the time to think about it—now, years ahead of time, when we have the resources, when we have the ability, before the crisis arises, before it threatens to weaken the American economy just to find some sort of solution. That's the first thing we have to do.

The second thing we have to do, as others have said, is to recognize, frankly, as so many of you have done in many ways, that we will never be the country we ought to be in the 21st century until every child gets a world-class education. We will never be. And I think that means, among other things, continuing our work for better prepared teachers, smaller classes, hooking up all the classrooms to the Internet. We're up to 50 percent, by the way.

When the Vice President and I came here for our first NetDay a couple of years ago, only about 8 percent of the classrooms in America were connected to the Internet. We're up to 50 percent now, and we will make our 100 percent goal shortly after the turn of the century. And that's a good thing. But we need to build or modernize a lot of schools. We've got all these schools where the kids are going to schools in house trailers, or they're going to schools in buildings so old they can't even be wired for the Internet. Many of our cities, the average age of the school building is 65 years or more. And a lot of those buildings are magnificent, but they take some money to modernize and to prepare.

I want to end social promotion, but I don't want to declare the children a failure when the system is failing them. Senator Boxer's great passion has been getting us more after-school programs. We now have in this budget enough money for a million children to be in after-school programs in the United States if it passes. This is an important thing.

We have to recognize that there is much more we have to do to balance work and family. Today in Arizona, three different people came up to me and thanked me for the family and medical leave law, the first bill I signed as President. But millions of workers are not covered. They ought to be covered.

We ought to pass the child care initiative Senator Torricelli talked about. You'd be amazed how many people are out there struggling to work and having so much of their wages eaten up because they cannot afford quality child care.

We've seen the welfare rolls drop in half, but the truth is that there are some people who are off the rolls who aren't working, and others who would leave the rolls gladly if they could only afford the child care. And we have a child care initiative that we ought to pass.

Balancing work and family will be one of the signal issues of the 21st century. More and more, two-parent families will be working. More and more, single parents will have to work. We owe it to America, those of us in positions of responsibility, to lead a country where every person who wants to work or has to work and who has children can succeed as a parent and a worker. If we ever get in a position where we accept the proposition that anybody in this country ought to have to choose, then we have lost, because we are diminished by either choice. And yet, every day, people do choose. And every day, people who are working who have children are making choices sometimes they're not even aware of. And it erodes the fabric of our common society, and we have to do a better job.

We have to have a commitment in the 21st century that we manifest now to bring this economic recovery to people in places that haven't seen it. There are cities in this country now that still have huge census tracts with double-digit unemployment, rural areas with double-digit unemployment, Native American reservations where, even though we now have the lowest unemployment rate in the entire industrial world, there has been no new investment, and there have been no new jobs.

I have given the Congress an economic package which will provide incentives to create new investments and new markets here at home. We ought to do that. Every one of you ought to want every American at least to have a chance to participate in this recovery. Now, when our economy is the strongest in at least a generation, if we can't bring economic opportunity to people who haven't had it now, we will never get around to it. If we can't prove that free enterprise can work in places it hasn't reached now, we will never be able to prove it. And I hope you will support that.

We talked a little about the remarkable sense of community you have here. One of the things that I want to do—and I was met by someone from the chamber of commerce at the airport who is an architect, who had a copy of a publication the Vice President put out on our new

livability initiative—\$1 billion to help communities deal with traffic problems, the need for green space, the need for managed development, \$1 billion to set aside lands in perpetuity.

We have gotten ourselves tied in knots too often in our country trying to make the choice between our economic growth and the preservation of our environment and the quality of life. We have decided to try something different—to put some money out there to acquire some land that's available on the market and to help communities figure out how to grow and preserve green space, how to grow and deal with traffic congestion, how to deal with these things. I think this is very important.

So, these are some of the things that are on the agenda for us in this year, along with the very important peacemaking work I hope we will be continuing to do in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, in Kosovo, and in the places I mentioned where we've had no progress, including Washington, DC. [Laughter] There are two challenges I want to ask you to think about, because there are people in California that I think are uniquely qualified to do it.

In order to keep the American economy growing over the long run, we have got to restore growth to the global economy. For the 6 years I've been President, in the first 5 years, 30 percent of our growth came from sales of American products overseas. Now, last year, we had very good growth, but it didn't come from overseas. We were able to generate enough activity within our borders and basically hold our own in our sales. But because of the economic downturn in Asia, the terrible financial crisis there, and the impact it had in Latin America and the slowdown there, we had some real difficulties. Our farmers, our steel industry, our aircraft people had some real problems.

I believe that it is imperative that the United States take the lead—and we have been working hard on this for a year—in trying to figure out how to create a financial and trade architecture for the 21st century that will benefit ordinary people everywhere, that will put a human face on the global economy, that will enable people who follow responsible policies and honest and open investment practices to actually participate, and that will avoid the kind of horrible, wild swings we've seen in the last 2 years that turned people who worked for a generation to make

themselves middle-class people in Asia into abject poverty. There were Asian cities where doctors and nurses had to start sleeping in the hospitals because they lost their homes when this collapse occurred.

Now, I can't run all their policies. No President could. And some of their problems were of their own making. But I want you to know that I have gotten in touch with the people that I believe are the best minds in the world on this subject. We are working very hard. I am going to work very hard for the next year to try to get the countries of the world to agree on a framework within which steady, solid growth can occur in a way that will benefit Americans but also fulfill our responsibility to help others lift themselves out of difficulties. And if you have any ideas on that, don't be ashamed to present them to me, because I don't think there is a person in the world that has got the answer to this issue today.

The second thing I'd like to ask you to think about is an environmental issue, and that's the issue of climate change. There's no question in my mind that the world is changing and that the climate is warming. I was out on the Monterey Peninsula not very long ago, with Sam Farr, and I think George Miller was there. We had this oceans conference. And Anna was probably there. We went out on the—and Barbara was there, I think. We went out on Monterey Peninsula, and these graduate students took me out into the bay. And we were walking out into the clear water, and this graduate student said, "Mr. President, reach down there and pick up a handful of the stones and the marine life." And I did. And the graduate student pointed to this little elemental form of marine life and said, "You see this? Twenty years ago, you could not find this any further north than 50 miles south of here. That is how much the water has warmed up in 20 years"—this small species, moving 50 miles north.

I've been working real hard—you probably don't know much about this—but to avoid an outright salmon war between Washington, Oregon, Canada, and Alaska, because all the fish keep moving further north. So now, Canada, Washington, Oregon don't have enough, and Alaska's got more than they know what to do with, because of the changing nature of the climate.

Yet, oil prices are very low, and it looks like they're going to stay low for 2 or 3 years, which

makes things like electric cars and substitute technologies relatively less economically attractive. And we have a majority in the House of Representatives—and Dick Gephardt will tell you—that caused this administration to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars last year appearing before subcommittees to explain why our efforts on climate change, which include no regulation and no taxes but tax incentives and research and development for new technologies—were not some great conspiracy to bankrupt the American economy.

Now, California is a place that thinks about the future and lives with the future and has to live with the constant tension of dealing with these things. And you've adopted all of these tough clean air standards. So I say to you: I am determined before I leave office to build a national consensus to tackle this problem in a consistent, disciplined way for the next 10 years, and I believe the technology is there to actually promote more economic growth while doing the right thing with greenhouse gas emissions and turning this situation around.

But if you can give me some ideas about that, as well as contribute your money to the Democratic majority, I would be grateful. These are two great challenges that will shape the way our children will live for the next 50 years, and I want your help.

Now, the last thing I'd like to say is, I thank you for your citizenship and your concern, especially now. I think that it's fair to say in light of the events of the last 6 years and the election of '94 and the success that has come to our country that we're all grateful for and none of us, including me, can take full responsibility for, the American people have the achievement. But I think we really know now that it matters if we give everyone a chance to develop his or her gift. It matters if we believe we're stronger if we become one community and one America.

It matters if we believe the purpose of politics is to bring out the best in people. It matters. That's what this next election is about. That's what your contribution is about. Even if we fix Social Security and Medicare and do all I want to do in education and bring this economic initiative to distressed areas of the country and make peace everywhere I'd like to make it, problems will never go away. And the world is changing very fast, and no one can foresee all the developments.

So the best thing to do is pick the right people with the right values, the right philosophy, and the right approach. The last 6 years entitled the Democratic Party to the benefit of the doubt. And I believe that the last 6 years and the debates of the last 6 years put us in a position to make a very compelling case that we are now not only the party of Jefferson and Jackson, Roosevelt and Kennedy, but the party of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt as well. And we need you. We need your support.

So I want you to think about this. This is a long way from November of 2000. But it will pass in the flash of an eye. Hillary said the other day—we were talking, fixing up a room at the White House—it's part of her project to try to leave the house in a lot better shape than we found it—and she said—no, it was in good shape when we found it. Don't laugh like that. I didn't mean it like that. *[Laughter]*

But we wanted to do some things for the house, and we were up putzing around, putting

stuff around, you know, and she said, "Can you believe we've been here 6 years?" It doesn't take long to serve a term or live a life. And ultimately, we will be judged by what we leave for our successors. I think we want to be judged well. I know you can trust the people who are here with me tonight to carry on the legacy you believe in and to build the kind of America our children deserve. You have helped them to do it, and I am very grateful.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gray Davis of California; Jane Gephardt, wife of Representative Richard A. Gephardt; Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr., of San Francisco; Art Torres, chair, California State Democratic Party; senior citizen Esther Don Tang of Tucson, AZ; and Sylvia P. Kwan, member, board of directors, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce.

Remarks on United States Foreign Policy in San Francisco February 26, 1999

Thank you, and good morning. Mr. Mayor, we're delighted to be here in San Francisco. We thank you for coming out to welcome us. Senator Boxer, Representative Pelosi, Representative Lofgren, members of the California Legislature who are here. I'd like to especially thank two people who had a lot to do with the good things that have happened in the last 6 years in our administration, our former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry and Mrs. Perry, who are here; and General John Shalikashvili, thank you for coming. We're delighted to see you.

I very much appreciate this opportunity to speak with all of you, to be joined with Secretary Albright and Mr. Berger, to talk about America's role in the century to come, to talk about what we must do to realize the promise of this extraordinary moment in the history of the world.

For the first time since before the rise of fascism early in this century, there is no overriding threat to our survival or our freedom. Perhaps for the first time in history, the world's

leading nations are not engaged in a struggle with each other for security or territory. The world clearly is coming together. Since 1945, global trade has grown 15-fold, raising living standards on every continent. Freedom is expanding: For the first time in history, more than half the world's people elect their own leaders. Access to information by ordinary people the world over is literally exploding.

Because of these developments, and the dramatic increase in our own prosperity and confidence in this, the longest peacetime economic expansion in our history, the United States has the opportunity and, I would argue, the solemn responsibility to shape a more peaceful, prosperous, democratic world in the 21st century.

We must, however, begin this discussion with a little history and a little humility. Listen to this quote by another American leader, at the dawn of a new century: "The world's products are exchanged as never before and with increasing transportation comes increasing knowledge and larger trade. We travel greater distances

in a shorter space of time and with more ease than was ever dreamed of. The same important news is read, though in different languages, the same day, in all the world. Isolation is no longer possible. No nation can longer be indifferent to any other.”

That was said by President William McKinley 100 years ago. What we now call globalization was well underway even then. We, in fact, had more diplomatic posts in the world than we have today, and foreign investment actually played a larger role in our own economy then than it does today.

The optimism being expressed about the 20th century by President McKinley and others at that time was not all that much different from the hopes commonly expressed today about the 21st. The rising global trade and communications did lift countless lives then, just as it does today. But it did not stop the world's wealthiest nations from waging World War I and World War II. It did not stop the Depression, or the Holocaust, or communism. Had leading nations acted decisively then, perhaps these disasters might have been prevented. But the League of Nations failed, and America—well, our principal involvement in the world was commercial and cultural, unless and until we were attacked.

After World War II, our leaders took a different course. Harry Truman came to this city and said that to change the world away from a world in which might makes right, quote, “words are not enough. We must once and for all prove by our acts conclusively that right has might.” He and his allies and their successors built a network of security alliances to preserve the peace and a global financial system to preserve prosperity.

Over the last 6 years, we have been striving to renew those arrangements and to create new ones for the challenges of the next 50 years. We have made progress, but there is so very much more to do. We cannot assume today that globalization alone will wash away the forces of destruction at the dawn of the 21st century, any more than it did at the dawn of the 20th century. We cannot assume it will bring freedom and prosperity to ordinary citizens around the world who long for them. We cannot assume it will avoid environmental and public health disasters. We cannot assume that because we are now secure, we Americans do not need military strength or alliances or that because we

are prosperous, we are not vulnerable to financial turmoil half a world away.

The world we want to leave our children and grandchildren requires us to make the right choices, and some of them will be difficult. America has always risen to great causes, yet we have a tendency, still, to believe that we can go back to minding our own business when we're done. Today we must embrace the inexorable logic of globalization, that everything, from the strength of our economy to the safety of our cities to the health of our people, depends on events not only within our borders but half a world away. We must see the opportunities and the dangers of the interdependent world in which we are clearly fated to live.

There is still the potential for major regional wars that would threaten our security. The arms race between India and Pakistan reminds us that the next big war could still be nuclear. There is a risk that our former adversaries will not succeed in their transitions to freedom and free markets. There is a danger that deadly weapons will fall into the hands of a terrorist group or an outlaw nation and that those weapons could be chemical or biological. There is a danger of deadly alliances among terrorists, narcotraffickers, and organized criminal groups. There is a danger of global environmental crises and the spread of deadly diseases. There is a danger that global financial turmoil will undermine open markets, overwhelm open societies, and undercut our own prosperity.

We must avoid both the temptation to minimize these dangers and the illusion that the proper response to them is to batten down the hatches and protect America against the world. The promise of our future lies in the world. Therefore, we must work hard with the world to defeat the dangers we face together and to build this hopeful moment together, into a generation of peace, prosperity, and freedom. Because of our unique position, America must lead with confidence in our strengths and with a clear vision of what we seek to avoid and what we seek to advance.

Our first challenge is to build a more peaceful 21st century world. To that end, we're renewing alliances that extend the area where wars do not happen and working to stop the conflicts that are claiming lives and threatening our interests right now.

The century's bloodiest wars began in Europe. That's why I've worked hard to build a Europe

that finally is undivided, democratic, and at peace. We want all of Europe to have what America helped build in Western Europe, a community that upholds common standards of human rights, where people have the confidence and security to invest in the future, where nations cooperate to make war unthinkable.

That is why I have pushed hard for NATO's enlargement and why we must keep NATO's doors open to new democratic members, so that other nations will have an incentive to deepen their democracies. That is why we must forge a partnership between NATO and Russia, between NATO and Ukraine; why we are building a NATO capable not only of deterring aggression against its own territory but of meeting challenges to our security beyond its territory, the kind of NATO we must advance at the 50th anniversary summit in Washington this April.

We are building a stronger alliance with Japan, and renewing our commitment to deter aggression in Korea and intensifying our efforts for a genuine peace there. I thank Secretary Perry for his efforts in that regard. We also create a more peaceful world by building new partnerships in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Ten years ago, we were shouting at each other across a North-South chasm defined by our differences. Today, we are engaged in a new dialog that speaks the language of common interests, of trade and investment, of education and health, of democracies that deliver not corruption and despair but progress and hope, of a common desire that children in all our countries will be free of the scourge of drugs. Through these efforts to strengthen old alliances and build new partnerships, we advance the prospects for peace. However, the work of actually making peace is harder and often far more contentious.

It's easy, for example, to say that we really have no interests in who lives in this or that valley in Bosnia or who owns a strip of brushland in the Horn of Africa or some piece of parched earth by the Jordan River. But the true measure of our interests lies not in how small or distant these places are or in whether we have trouble pronouncing their names. The question we must ask is, what are the consequences to our security of letting conflicts fester and spread? We cannot, indeed, we should not, do everything or be everywhere. But where our values and our interests are at stake and

where we can make a difference, we must be prepared to do so. And we must remember that the real challenge of foreign policy is to deal with problems before they harm our national interests.

It's also easy to say that peacemaking is simply doomed where people are embittered by generations of hate, where the old animosities of race and religion and ethnic difference raise their hoary heads. But I will never forget the day that the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority came to the White House, in September of 1993, to sign their peace accord. At that moment, the question arose—and indeed, based on the pictures afterward, it seemed to be the main question—whether, if in front of the entire world, Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat would actually shake hands for the first time. It was an interesting and occasionally humorous discussion. But it ended when Yitzhak Rabin, a soldier for a lifetime, said to me, “Mr. President, I have been fighting this man for a lifetime, 30 years. I have buried a lot of my own people in the process. But you do not make peace with your friends.”

It is in our interest to be a peacemaker, not because we think we can make all these differences go away, but because in over 200 years of hard effort here at home and with bitter and good experiences around the world, we have learned that the world works better when differences are resolved by the force of argument rather than the force of arms.

That is why I am proud of the work we have done to support peace in Northern Ireland and why we will keep pressing the leaders there to observe not just the letter but the spirit of the Good Friday accords.

It is also why I intend to use the time I have remaining in this office to push for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, to encourage Israelis and Palestinians to reach a just and final settlement, and to stand by our friends for peace, such as Jordan. The people of the Middle East can do it, but time is precious, and they can't afford to waste any more of it. In their hearts, they know there can be no security or justice for any who live in that small and sacred land until there is security and justice for all who live there. If they do their part, we must do ours.

We will also keep working with our allies to build peace in the Balkans. Three years ago, we helped to end the war in Bosnia. A lot

of doubters then thought it would soon start again. But Bosnia is on a steady path toward renewal and democracy. We've been able to reduce our troops there by 75 percent as peace has taken hold, and we will continue to bring them home.

The biggest remaining danger to this progress has been the fighting and the repression in Kosovo. Kosovo is, after all, where the violence in the former Yugoslavia began, over a decade ago, when they lost the autonomy guaranteed under Yugoslav law. We have a clear national interest in ensuring that Kosovo is where this trouble ends. If it continues, it almost certainly will draw in Albania and Macedonia, which share borders with Kosovo, and on which clashes have already occurred.

Potentially, it could affect our allies, Greece and Turkey. It could spark tensions in Bosnia itself, jeopardizing the gains made there. If the conflict continues, there will certainly be more atrocities, more refugees, more victims crying out for justice and seeking out revenge.

Last fall, a quarter of a million displaced people in Bosnia were facing cold and hunger in the hills. Using diplomacy backed by force, we brought them home and slowed the fighting.

For 17 days this month, outside Paris, we sought with our European partners an agreement that would end the fighting for good. Progress was made toward a common understanding of Kosovo's autonomy, progress that would not have happened, I want to say, but for the unity of our allies and the tireless leadership of our Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

Here's where we are. The Kosovar Albanian leaders have agreed in principle to a plan that would protect the rights of their people and give them substantial self-government. Serbia has agreed to much, but not all, of the conditions of autonomy and has so far not agreed to the necessity of a NATO-led international force to maintain the peace there.

Serbia's leaders must now accept that only by allowing people in Kosovo control over their day-to-day lives—as, after all, they had been promised under Yugoslav law—it is only by doing that can they keep their country intact. Both sides must return to the negotiations on March 15, with clear mandate for peace. In the meantime, President Milosevic should understand that this is a time for restraint, not

repression, and if he does not, NATO is prepared to act.

Now, if there is a peace agreement that is effective, NATO must also be ready to deploy to Kosovo to give both sides the confidence to lay down their arms. Europeans would provide the great bulk of such a force, roughly 85 percent, but if there is a real peace, America must do its part as well.

Kosovo is not an easy problem. But if we don't stop the conflict now, it clearly will spread. And then we will not be able to stop it, except at far greater cost and risk.

A second challenge we face is to bring our former adversaries, Russia and China, into the international system as open, prosperous, stable nations. The way both countries develop in the coming century will have a lot to do with the future of our planet.

For 50 years, we confronted the challenge of Russia's strength. Today, we must confront the risk of a Russia weakened by the legacy of communism and also by its inability at the moment to maintain prosperity at home or control the flow of its money, weapons, and technology across its borders.

The dimensions of this problem are truly enormous. Eight years after the Soviet collapse, the Russian people are hurting. The economy is shrinking, making the future uncertain. Yet, we have as much of a stake today in Russia overcoming these challenges as we did in checking its expansion during the cold war. This is not a time for complacency or self-fulfilling pessimism. Let's not forget that Russia's people have overcome enormous obstacles before. In just this decade, with no living memory of democracy or freedom to guide them, they have built a country more open to the world than ever, a country with a free press and a robust, even raucous debate, a country that should see in the first year of the new millennium the first peaceful democratic transfer of power in its 1,000-year history.

The Russian people will decide their own future. But we must work with them for the best possible outcome with realism and with patience. If Russia does what it must to make its economy work, I am ready to do everything I can to mobilize adequate international support for them. With the right framework, we will also encourage foreign investment in its factories, its energy fields, its people. We will increase our support for small business and for

the independent media. We will work to continue cutting our two nations' nuclear arsenals and help Russia prevent both its weapons and its expertise from falling into the wrong hands. The budget I have presented to Congress will increase funding for this critical threat reduction by 70 percent over the next 5 years.

The question China faces is how best to assure its stability and progress. Will it choose openness and engagement? Or will it choose to limit the aspirations of its people without fully embracing the global rules of the road? In my judgment, only the first path can really answer the challenges China faces.

We cannot minimize them. China has made incredible progress in lifting people out of poverty and building a new economy. But now its rate of economic growth is declining, just as it is needed to create jobs for a growing and increasingly more mobile population. Most of China's economy is still stifled by state control. We can see in China the kinds of problems a society faces when it is moving away from the rule of fear but is not yet rooted in the rule of law.

China's leaders know more economic reform is needed, and they know reform will cause more unemployment, and they know that can cause unrest. At the same time, and perhaps for those reasons, they remain unwilling to open up their political system, to give people a peaceful outlet for dissent.

Now, we Americans know that dissent is not always comfortable, not always easy, and often raucous. But I believe that the fact that we have peaceful, orderly outlets for dissent is one of the principal reasons we're still around here as the longest lasting freely elected Government in the world. And I believe, sooner or later, China will have to come to understand that a society, in the world we're living in, particularly a country as great and old and rich and full of potential as China, simply cannot purchase stability at the expense of freedom.

On the other hand, we have to ask ourselves, what is the best thing to do to try to maximize the chance that China will take the right course, and that, because of that, the world will be freer, more peaceful, more prosperous in the 21st century? I do not believe we can hope to bring change to China if we isolate China from the forces of change. Of course, we have our differences, and we must press them. But we can do that and expand our cooperation

through principled and purposeful engagement with China, its government, and its people.

Our third great challenge is to build a future in which our people are safe from the dangers that arise, perhaps halfway around the world, dangers from proliferation, from terrorism, from drugs, from the multiple catastrophes that could arise from climate change.

Each generation faces the challenges of not trying to fight the last war. In our case, that means recognizing that the more likely future threat to our existence is not a strategic nuclear strike from Russia or China but the use of weapons of mass destruction by an outlaw nation or a terrorist group.

In the last 6 years, fighting that threat has become a central priority of American foreign policy. Here, too, there is much more to be done. We are working to stop weapons from spreading at the source, as with Russia. We are working to keep Iraq in check so that it does not threaten the rest of the world or its region with weapons of mass destruction. We are using all the means at our disposal to deny terrorists safe havens, weapons, and funds. Even if it takes years, terrorists must know there is no place to hide.

Recently, we tracked down the gunman who killed two of our people outside the CIA 6 years ago. We are training and equipping our local fire, police, and medical personnel to deal with chemical, biological, and nuclear emergencies, and improving our public health surveillance system, so that if a biological weapon is released, we can detect it and save lives. We are working to protect our critical computer systems from sabotage.

Many of these subjects are new and unfamiliar and may be frightening. As I said when I gave an address in Washington not very long ago about what we were doing on biological and computer security and criminal threats, it is important that we have the right attitude about this. It is important that we understand that the risks are real, and they require, therefore, neither denial nor panic. As long as people organize themselves in human societies, there will be organized forces of destruction who seek to take advantage of new means of destroying other people.

And the whole history of conflict can be seen in part as the race of defensive measures to catch up with offensive capabilities. That is what

we're doing in dealing with the computer challenges today; that is what we are doing in dealing with the biological challenges today. It is very important that the American people, without panic, be serious and deliberate about them, because it is the kind of challenge that we have faced repeatedly. And as long as our country and the world is around, unless there is some completely unforeseen change in human nature, our successors will have to do the same.

We are working to develop a national missile defense system which could, if we decide to deploy it, be deployed against emerging ballistic missile threats from rogue nations. We are bolstering the global agreements that curb proliferation. That's the most important thing we can be doing right now. This year, we hope to achieve an accord to strengthen compliance with the convention against biological weapons. It's a perfectly good convention, but frankly, it has no teeth. We have to give it some. And we will ask our Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to stop nations from testing nuclear weapons so they're constrained from developing new ones. Again, I say: I implore the United States Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty this year. It is very important for the United States and the world.

Our security and our safety also depends upon doing more to protect our people from the scourge of drugs. To win this fight, we must work with others, including and especially Mexico. Mexico has a serious drug problem, increasingly affecting more of its own young people. No one understands this better than President Zedillo. He described it as the number one threat to his country's security, its people, its democracy. He is working hard to establish clean government, true democracy, and the rule of law. He is working hard to tackle the corruption traffickers have wrought.

He cannot win this battle alone, and neither can we. In any given year, the narco-traffickers may spend hundreds of millions of dollars to try to suborn Mexican law enforcement officials, most of whom work for under \$10,000 a year.

As I certified to Congress today, Mexico is cooperating with us in the battle for our lives. And I believe the American people will be safer in this, as in so many other ways, if we fight drugs with Mexico, rather than walk away.

Another global danger we face is climate change. As far as we can tell, with all the scientific evidence available, the hottest years our

planet has ever experienced were 1997 and 1998. The two hottest years recorded in the last several—excuse me—9 of the 10 hottest years recorded in the last several centuries occurred in the last decade.

Now, we can wait and hope and do nothing and try to ignore what the vast majority of scientists tell us is a pattern that is fixed and continuing. We could ignore the record-breaking temperatures, the floods, the storms, the droughts that have caused such misery. Or we can accept that preventing the disease and destruction climate change can bring will be infinitely cheaper than letting future generations try to clean up the mess, especially when you consider that greenhouse gases, once emitted into the atmosphere, last and have a destructive environmental effect for at least a hundred years.

We took a giant step forward in 1997, when we helped to forge the Kyoto agreement. Now we're working to persuade developing countries that they, too, can and must participate meaningfully in this effort without forgoing growth. We are also trying to persuade a majority in the United States Congress that we can do the same thing.

The approach I have taken in America is not to rely on a whole raft of new regulations, and not to propose big energy taxes, but instead to offer tax incentives and dramatic increases in investment in new technologies, because we know—we know now—that we have the technological capacity to break the iron link between industrial age energy use patterns and economic growth. You're proving it in California every day, with stiffer environmental standards than other States have.

We know that the technology is just beginning to emerge to allow us to have clean cars and other clean forms of transportation; to dramatically increase the capacity of all of our buildings to keep out heat and cold, and to let in more light. We know that the conservation potential of what we have right now available has only just been scratched. And we must convince the world and critical decisionmakers in the United States to change their minds about a big idea, namely that the only way a country can grow is to consume more energy resources in a way that does more to increase global warming.

One of the most interesting conversations I had when I was in China was with the environmental minister there, who thanked me for

going there to do an environmental event, because he was having trouble convincing the Government that they could continue to lift the Chinese people out of poverty and still improve the environment. This is a central, big idea that people all over the world will have to change their minds about before we will be open and free to embrace the technological advances that are lying evident all around us. And all of you that can have any impact on that, I implore you to do it.

Our fourth challenge is to create a world trading and financial system that will lift the lives of ordinary people on every continent around the world or, as it has been stated in other places, to put a human face on the global economy. Over the last 6 years, we've taken giant steps in opening the global trading system. The United States alone has concluded over 270 different trade agreements. Once again, we are the world's largest exporting nation. There is a lot more to be done.

In the first 5 years of my Presidency, about 30 percent of our growth came from expanding trade. Last year, we had a good year, but we didn't have much growth from expanding trade because of the terrible difficulties of the people in Asia, in Russia, and because of the slowdown in growth in Latin America, and because we did not reach out to seize new possibilities in Africa. Those people are suffering more, and our future prospects are being constrained.

The question is what to do about it. Some of the folks outside who were protesting when I drove up were saying by their signs that they believe globalization is inherently bad, and there's no way in the wide world to put a human face on the global economy. But if you look at the facts of the last 30 years, hundreds of millions of people have had their economic prospects advanced on every continent because they have finally been able to find a way to express their creativity in positive terms and produce goods and services that could be purchased beyond the borders of their nation.

Now, the question is, how do we deal with the evident challenges and problems that we face in high relief today and seize the benefit that we know comes from expanding trade. I've asked for a new round of global trade negotiations to expand exports of services, farm products, and manufacturers. I am still determined to reach agreement on a free trade area of the Americas. If it hadn't been for our expansion

in Latin America, from Mexico all the way to the southern tip of South America, we would have been in much worse shape this last year.

I have urged Congress to give the trade authority the President has traditionally had to advance our prosperity, and I've asked them to approve the Caribbean Basin Initiative and the "Africa Growth and Opportunity Act" because we have special responsibilities and special opportunities in the Caribbean and in Africa that have gone too long unseized.

But trade is not an end in itself. It has to work for ordinary people. It has to contribute to the wealth and fairness of societies. It has to reinforce the values that give meaning to life, not simply in the United States but in the poorest countries, struggling to lift their people to their dreams. That's why we're working to build a trading system that upholds the rights of workers and consumers, and helps us and them in other countries to protect the environment, so that competition among nations is a race to the top, not the bottom. This year we will lead the international community to conclude a treaty to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world.

The gains of global economic exchange have been real and dramatic. But when the tides of capital first flood emerging markets, and then abruptly recede, when bank failures and bankruptcies grip entire economies, when millions who have worked their way into the middle class are plunged suddenly into poverty, the need for reform of the international financial system is clear.

I don't want to minimize the complexity of this challenge. As nations began to trade more and as investment rules began to permit people to invest in countries other than their own more, it became more and more necessary to facilitate the conversion of currencies. Whenever you do that, you will create a market against risk, just in the transfer of currencies. Whenever you do that, you will have people that are moving money around because they think the value of the money itself will change and profit might be gained in an independent market of currency exchange.

It is now true that on any given day, there is \$1½ trillion of currency exchange in the world—many, many, many times more than the actual value of the exchange of goods and services. And we have got to find a way to facilitate the movement of money, without which trade

and investment cannot occur, in a way that avoids these dramatic cycles of boom and then bust, which have led to the collapse of economic activity in so many countries around the world.

We found a way to do it in the United States after the Great Depression. And thank goodness we have never again had a Great Depression, even though we've had good times and bad times. That is the challenge facing the world financial system today.

The leading economies have got a lot of work to do. We have to do everything we can, not just the United States, but Europe and Japan, to spur economic growth. Unless there is a restoration of growth, all the changes in the financial rules we make will not get Asia, Latin America, countries—Russia—out of their difficulties.

We have to be ready to provide quick and decisive help to nations committed to sound policies. We have to help nations build social safety nets so that, when they have inevitable changes in their economic conditions, people at least have the basic security they need to continue to embrace change and advance the overall welfare of society.

We have to encourage nations to maintain open, properly financed—excuse me—properly regulated financial systems so that decisions are shaped by informed market decisions and not distorted by corruption. We also have to take responsible steps to reform the global financial architecture for the 21st century. And we'll do some more of that at the G-7 summit in Germany in June.

In the meanwhile, we have to recognize that the United States has made a great contribution to keeping this crisis from being worse than it would have been by helping to get money to Brazil, to Russia, to other countries, and by keeping our own markets open. If you compare, for example, our import patterns with those of Europe or those of Japan, you will see that we have far, far more open markets. It has worked to make us competitive and productive. We also have the lowest unemployment rate in the entire world among all advanced countries now, something that many people thought would never happen again.

On the other hand, we cannot let other countries' difficulties in our open markets become an excuse for them to violate international trade rules and dump products illegally on our markets. We've had enough problems in America this year and last year—in agriculture and aero-

space, especially—from countries that could no longer afford to buy products, many of which they had already offered. Then, in the last several months, we've seen an enormous problem in this country in our steel industry because of evident dumping of products in the American market that violated the law.

So I want you to know that while I will do everything to keep our markets open, I intend, while this crisis persists, to do everything I can to enforce our trade laws.

Yesterday we received some evidence that our aggressive policy is producing some results and, I think, proof that it wasn't market forces that led to what we saw in steel over the last year. The new figures from the Commerce Department show this: Imports of hot-rolled steel from countries most responsible for the surge—Japan, Russia, and Brazil—have fallen by 96 percent from the record levels we saw last November.

That is not bad news for them; that's good news. If they won't—if American markets are going to stay open, we have to play by the rules. We have to follow lawful economic trends, not political and economic decisions made to dump on the American markets in ways which hurt our economy and undermine our ability to buy the exports of other countries.

Our fifth challenge has to keep freedom as a top goal for the world of the 21st century. Countries like South Korea and Thailand have proven in this financial crisis that open societies are more resilient, that elected governments have a legitimacy to make hard choices in hard times. But if democracies over the long run aren't able to deliver for their people, to take them out of economic turmoil, the pendulum that swung so decisively toward freedom over the last few years could swing back, and the next century could begin as badly as this one began in that regard.

Therefore, beyond economics, beyond the transformation of the great countries to economic security—Russia and China—beyond even many of our security concerns, we also have to recognize that we can have no greater purpose than to support the right of other people to live in freedom and shape their own destiny. If that right could be universally exercised, virtually every goal I have outlined today would be advanced.

We have to keep standing by those who risk their own freedom to win it for others. Today

we're releasing our annual Human Rights Report. The message of the Human Rights Report is often resented but always respected for its candor, its consistency, for what it says about our country and our values. We need to deepen democracy where it's already taking root by helping our partners narrow their income gaps, strengthen their legal institutions, and build well-educated, healthy societies.

This will be an important part of the trip I take to Central America next week, which has prevailed against decades of civil war only to be crushed in the last several months by the devastating force of nature.

This year, we will see profoundly important developments in the potential transition to democracy in two critical countries, Indonesia and Nigeria. Both have the capacity to lift their entire regions if they succeed and to swamp them in a sea of disorder if they fail. In the coming year and beyond, we must make a concentrated effort to help them achieve what will be the world's biggest victories for freedom since 1989.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. Tomorrow it holds its first free Presidential election, after a dictatorship that made it the poorest oil-rich country in the world. We are providing support for the transition, and if it succeeds, we have to be prepared to do more. Because we count on further progress, today we are also waiving the sanctions we imposed when its Government did not cooperate in the fight against drugs.

Indonesia is the fourth largest nation and the largest Islamic country in the entire world. In June, it will hold what we hope will be its first truly democratic election in more than 40 years. Indonesia desperately needs a government that can help it overcome its economic crisis while maintaining the support of its people. We are helping to strengthen the social safety net for its people in providing the largest contribution of any nation to support the coming elections.

Whether these struggles are far or near, their outcome will profoundly affect us. Whether a child in Africa or Southeast Asia or Russia or China can grow up educated, healthy, safe, free from violence, free of hate, full of hope, and free to decide his or her own destiny, this will have a lot to do with the life our children have as they grow up. It will help to determine if our children go to war, have jobs, have clean air, have safe streets.

For our Nation to be strong, we must maintain a consensus that seemingly distant problems can come home if they are not addressed and addressed promptly. We must recognize we cannot lift ourselves to the heights to which we aspire if the world is not rising with us. I say again, the inexorable logic of globalization is the genuine recognition of interdependence. We cannot wish into being the world we seek. Talk is cheap. Decisions are not.

That is why I have asked Congress to reverse the decline in defense spending that began in 1985, and I am hopeful and confident that we can get bipartisan majorities in both Houses to agree. I hope it will also agree to give more support to our diplomats and to programs that keep our soldiers out of war, to fund assistance programs to keep nations on a stable path to democracy and growth, and to finally pay both our dues and our debts to the United Nations.

In an interdependent world, we cannot lead if we expect to lead only on our own terms and never on our own nickel. We can't be a first-class power if we're only prepared to pay for steerage.

I hope all of you, as citizens, believe that we have to seize the responsibilities that we have today with confidence, to keep taking risks for peace, to keep forging opportunities for our people and seeking them for others as well, to seek to put a genuinely human face on the global economy, to keep faith with all those around the world who struggle for human rights, the rule of law, a better life, to look on our leadership not as a burden but as a welcome opportunity, to build the future we dream for our children in these, the final days of the 20th century and the coming dawn of the next.

The story of the 21st century can be quite a wonderful story. But we have to write the first chapter.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. in the Plaza Ballroom at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr., of San Francisco; Lee Perry, wife of former Defense Secretary William J. Perry; former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, USA (Ret.); the late Prime Minister of Israel Yitzhak Rabin; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); gunman Mir Aimal

Kansi, convicted in a 1993 attack on CIA employees in Langley, VA; and President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico. The President also referred to the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the

tape was incomplete. The memorandum on certification for major illicit drug producing and transit countries, including Nigeria, is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Emergency Assistance for Farmers and Ranchers February 26, 1999

Today I am sending to the Congress requests for a \$152 million emergency supplemental appropriation to help America's farmers and ranchers. Many farm communities continue to undergo very hard times despite the disaster aid we worked so hard to provide last year. Economic turmoil in Pacific Rim countries and around the world continue to make it difficult for American farmers and ranchers to export their goods overseas. More and more farmers and ranchers need loans to see them through to better times, and

our Department of Agriculture simply is running out of available credit.

The Agriculture Department's staff around the country needs immediate help to handle the increased workload brought on by providing emergency services. I hope that Congress will join me in helping our farmers and ranchers during this difficult time, particularly when the rest of the country is blessed with unparalleled prosperity. I urge them to approve this request by the end of March.

Remarks at a Saxophone Club and Women's Leadership Forum Reception in Los Angeles, California February 26, 1999

Thank you. *[Applause]* Thank you. Thank you very much for the standing ovation. *[Laughter]* I want to thank Janice Griffin and Joe Andrew for their service and their speeches. I want to thank Trudi Loh, the Women's Leadership Forum southern California chair. And the Sax Club cochairs, Lara Brown and Paul Krekorian, thank you very much. I'd like to thank Kathleen Connell and Representatives Waters and Sanchez for being here, and Speaker Villaraigosa for being here. And I'd like to thank Governor Davis and Sharon for being here.

You know, Governor Davis has decided that he will sort of cultivate this "gray" image. *[Laughter]* And it is so bogus; I can't believe it. *[Laughter]* We were standing up here—you know what he said to me when I came here? I said, "Gray, that was a wonderful introduction, and I really appreciate it." And he said, "Well good, you can give me two strokes the next time we play." *[Laughter]*

Let me say to all of you, first of all, a profound thanks. Thank you for the support of the WLF and the Saxophone Club. The Saxophone Club's been going now for several years, and the biggest one we have in the country is right here in southern California. And I thank you. I thank the people of California for being so wonderful to Hillary and to the Vice President and to me, all along the way. It has been an amazing journey.

I'm thinking today about a trip I made almost exactly a week ago—I guess it was a week ago yesterday—to a place that superficially is very different from California. On February the 18th I went back to New Hampshire, on the 7th anniversary of the New Hampshire primary in 1992. And everywhere I went, it was cold and rainy and just the antithesis of today. And New Hampshire only has about a million people, and California has a few more. *[Laughter]* It has a lot of people living in small towns and in

rural areas. But on this cold, rainy day, everywhere I went, there were schoolchildren standing out in the rain and people standing there. I hadn't been there in a good while. They normally vote for Republicans. They voted for Al Gore and me twice there, and I'm very grateful for that.

But the reason I was thinking about it tonight is that when I traveled around the country, beginning in 1991 and throughout 1992, I think the two places that in some ways most clearly embodied the anxiety, the difficulty, the frustration of America, were New Hampshire and California. Because while you were very different, both places were used to being on the cutting edge of economic progress; both places believed in hard work and opportunity; and both places were pretty devastated by what was going on.

In New Hampshire, five of the seven biggest banks had failed. I met people who had their business loans called even though they weren't delinquent. I met children whose parents became seriously depressed, clinically depressed, simply because they couldn't stand coming home at night to dinner not being able to work and provide for their children. And I saw a lot of incredible things. But when I came back to see New Hampshire with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country and a great deal of self-confidence, one of the things that touched me, because it was such a small State, is that all these people said, "We want you to know, Mr. President, we're for you not only because we're doing better but because you did exactly what you said you would do when you ran for President." And that meant a great deal to me.

So increasingly over these next 2 years, as I travel around America to events like this, I will be here advocating the agenda that I intend to pursue until the last hour of my last day in office. But I will also be reminding the American people of the ideas and the ideals, which are bigger than any administration and bigger than any person, that we have tried to bring to bear in American public life for the last 6 years.

In 1992 I came to California and I said this country needs new ideas. We can't stand inaction. But these new ideas have to be premised on fulfilling the historic mission of America: opportunity for everybody who is responsible enough to work for it; a community of all Americans, not just some; and the leadership of the

whole world for peace and freedom and prosperity.

And we have been about that business, and guess what? It worked. It worked. And sometimes I think—and I say that in all humility. I don't take full responsibility for all the good things that have happened; neither should anyone else. America has produced this. This has been an American achievement.

But I do say this: Because our administration and because our people—from the Vice President and the First Lady, to the Cabinet, to all of our people—because we believe in things that clearly distinguish ourselves from our friends in the other party, we have made a difference.

We believe that every single person deserves a chance to live out his or her dreams. And we believe that none of us can be all we would like to be unless we recognize that all of us are part of one community and one family, and we have to help each other in order to make the most of our own lives. And we believe the purpose of political life is to bring out the best, not the worst, in people; to unite this country, not to divide it; to lift people up, not hold them back. That's what we believe.

And after 6 years, with the longest peacetime economic expansion in history and the lowest unemployment rate in peacetime since 1957; the welfare rolls cut in half; homeownership at an all-time high; record numbers of new businesses every year; over 200,000 new jobs in technology areas alone in the last couple of years; half, in just 3 years, half of all of our classrooms connected to the Internet, so we're going to make that goal of all of them connected by the year 2000; with over 90 percent of our children getting their basic immunizations for the first time in American history, I think we can say America is on the right path to the future and moving in the right direction.

Tonight I want you to remember basically just two things. Number one, I believe that for our party and our supporters, the best politics is doing the right thing. And that means trying to get as much done as we can this year to take advantage of our prosperity, to take advantage of our confidence, and not to simply relax and enjoy it.

California, of all places, with all the diversity and all the change and people here from everywhere else, aware of conflicts and troubles and instability in other parts of the world—this State

knows that we have to look to the long-term challenges facing our country. And that is why I have asked the Congress to join me now in dealing with the challenges that the baby boomers will present as we age and solve and save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century.

That is why I've asked the Congress to join me now to keep this economic recovery going by doing three things: Number one, I have proposed a new markets initiative in recognition of the fact that in Los Angeles County, in New York City, in rural areas in the Mississippi Delta and Appalachia, on Native American reservations all across the country, there has been no economic recovery. If we cannot, through tax incentives and loan guarantees, get free enterprise investment into the poorest areas of America and make them part of our prosperity now, we will never get around to it. Now is the time to bring opportunity to all Americans.

The second thing we ought to do is save about three-quarters of this surplus of ours for the next 15 years to fix Social Security and Medicare, and in the process, pay down the debt. If you pay down the debt—now, this is not something any of you ever thought about—if I told you in '92, vote for me and I'll come back here in 6 years and tell you I'll pay down the debt after it had quadrupled, you would have said, "That man is too unstable to be President; we can't have him here." [Laughter]

But I want the young people here to listen to me. You don't know what's going to happen in other parts of the world. I am doing my very best to stabilize the global economy, to put a human face on the global economy, to avoid the kind of churning disruptions we've had in Asia and the threats to Latin America so we can continue stable growth.

But let me tell you this: If we pay down that debt, in 15 years, debt will be the smallest percentage of our income it's been since before we got into World War I. We'll only be spending 2 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes servicing our debt. Interest rates will be lower. Business loan rates will be lower. Home mortgage rates, car payments, credit card payments, student loans will all be less expensive. There will be more investment, more jobs, and higher incomes. If we have tough times around the world, America will have it better. If we have good times, America will have it great. Help me to convince the American people all to tell

the Congress to secure our economy for the next 15 years.

A lot of you younger people, you've brought young children here tonight. One couple came through about to have their first child—maybe before I finish this speech. [Laughter] That's not a comment on how long the speech is going to be. [Laughter] But one of the things that worries me about the 21st century is one of the things that I joy in. And that is that more and more people are going to work, more and more people are having the opportunity to work, and I want that. But the most important work of any society is raising the children well. And we have to find a way to do better in the United States in helping people balance the demands of childrearing and work.

That's why I fought so hard for the family leave law. It's why I think it should be expanded. It's why I have given a child care initiative to the Congress that would help another million children get affordable quality child care while their parents go to work. And it's why we need to more vigorously enforce the law when it comes to equal pay for equal work for women and for men.

I want us, in the 21st century, to live in real community, not only with our neighborhoods in our State but around the world. That means we have to protect the environment, whether it's dealing with traffic congestion and green space and clean air and clean water or the challenge of climate change. It means that we ought to give more people the chance to serve, whether in the Peace Corps or AmeriCorps, here at home. It means that we ought to make sure that no person is subject to unfair discrimination, which is why I am determined to pass the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" this year. These are the kinds of things we need to be pushing, that all of you need to support.

And finally, let me say, in San Francisco this morning, the place where the United Nations was launched, I gave a speech saying that the United States still had to care about peace in Kosovo, in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland; that the United States still had to care about the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons, even if they were at most risk in other countries far from our shore; that the United States still had to care about poverty from Africa to the Caribbean, about democracy in Central America; that we cannot say we love

to get on the Internet and talk to people around the world, we love to sell our products in Asia and Latin America, and pretend that economic globalization will take care of all the problems in the world.

The inexorable logic of our growing closer together is that we are in an interdependent world. And just as we as Americans cannot fulfill our own dreams and destinies unless we work together, we cannot fulfill the dream and destiny of America unless we reach out to our friends and neighbors around the world.

And so I say to you, these are the basic ideas for meeting the biggest challenges the United States faces. We've come a long way in the last 6 years. We've had a good time. We've had a better time, year-in and year-out, because there have been fewer people subject to abject anxieties. And I want to get off the stage and bring back Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. And I thank them for playing.

But if you don't remember anything I say, you remember these two things: Number one, the best politics is to do the right thing by the American people. That's why we're where we are tonight, and we need to take advantage; we need to take advantage of these good times

to deal with the big long-term challenges we face. And number two, if somebody asks you why you're a Democrat, why did you come here tonight, tell them, because that's the party that believes that no matter where you come from and what your circumstances, you ought to have an equal chance to live out your dream. That's the party that believes that no matter what our differences, what unites us is more important than what divides us, and we want an American family. And that's the party that believes that the purpose of our public life is to elevate the spirits and the vision and the heart of the American people.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:55 p.m. in the Los Angeles Room at the Century Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Janice Griffin, national vice chair, Women's Leadership Forum; Joseph J. Andrew, national chairman-designate, Democratic National Committee; Lara Brown and Paul Krekorian, Los Angeles chapter co-chairs, Saxophone Club; State Controller Kathleen Connell; State Assembly Speaker Antonio R. Villaraigosa; and Gov. Gray Davis of California and his wife, Sharon.

The President's Radio Address *February 27, 1999*

Good morning. One of Government's first responsibilities is to keep our people safe. And one of the most successful Governmental efforts to protect the public is in the area of auto safety. Hundreds of thousands of lives have been saved, thanks to laws requiring safety features such as bumpers, seatbelts, and airbags.

Today I want to talk about our latest efforts to make car travel even safer for our smallest and most vulnerable passengers. Over the past 20 years, child car seats have become a fact of life for millions of parents. Where once small children bounced around freely and dangerously in our cars, today the majority ride in car seats, whether for quick errands to the grocery store or long cross-country journeys. Those car seats have made a difference. Since 1975, they've saved the lives of about 4,000 children in motor vehicle accidents.

But all too often car seats don't protect our children as well as they should. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration estimates that more than 70 percent of all children riding in car seats are at risk of injury because their seats have not been properly installed. Now, anyone who has ever struggled to get a car seat to fit snugly into a backseat knows exactly what I'm talking about.

Most seatbelts were not designed to hold car seats, and not all 100 models of car seats can fit all 900 types of vehicles on our road today. For Joe Colella's family, the consequences were tragic. Five years ago Joe's 3-year-old niece, Dana Hutchinson, was killed in a head-on collision because her car seat was incompatible with the seatbelts in her family's car. Ever since, so that no other family has to suffer this tragedy, Joe has worked full-time to improve car seat

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safety and to alert parents to the dangers of poorly fitting car seats.

A few years ago, my administration appointed Joe to a blue-ribbon panel of parents, consumer groups, medical professionals, and auto and seat manufacturers to find ways to make car seats safer and easier to install. Today I'm pleased to announce that their top recommendation, a simple, universal system for attaching car safety seats, will become the standard for every new car and light truck sold in our country.

By the year 2000, the Department of Transportation will require every safety seat to have three standard attachments designed to fit three standard anchors in the backseat of every car. With this new rule, and with these three simple attachments, we can save lives and prevent up to 3,000 injuries a year.

But the challenge of keeping our children safe in our cars and on our roads is never ending. We must continue to encourage all drivers and

passengers to buckle up, to use booster seats and seatbelts for their older children. We must work to make airbags safer for children and smaller adults. And we must press forward in our fight to keep more drunk drivers off our roads by lowering the national drunk driving standard to .08.

Together we can work to make sure more Americans traveling on our roads, especially more young Americans, come safely home to their families and loved ones.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:36 p.m. on February 26 in the Manager's Office at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in San Francisco, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Radio Remarks on "Read Across America" Day

March 1, 1999

The best and most enjoyable way for children to open their minds is by opening a book. This Tuesday America will celebrate "Read Across America" Day. More than one million people—from baseball star Cal Ripken, Jr., to the sailors of the U.S.S. *Saipan*—will share the joy of reading with children in every part of our country. I encourage all caring adults to get involved. Read to children on "Read Across America" Day, and read to them every day. Together,

we can make our children the best readers in the world.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 2:55 p.m. in the Oval Office on February 22 for later broadcast as a public service announcement. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Radio Remarks on Internet Accessibility in Classrooms

March 1, 1999

Vice President Gore and I have set a goal of connecting every classroom in America to the Internet. I'm pleased to announce that new Department of Education data show that more than half of all our Nation's classrooms are now connected—nearly twice as many connections as last year. And thanks to new E-rate discounts that help schools and libraries connect to the

Internet, we'll reach our goal of every classroom and library connected by the year 2000.

Computers and new educational software can make a real difference in the way teachers teach and a student learns. Because of our efforts, children in poorer or isolated areas will now have access to the same universe of knowledge as children in the most affluent suburbs. All

our children will be technologically literate and better prepared for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of the future. But we also must make sure that teachers are as comfortable with a computer as they are with a chalkboard. That's why Congress should support my \$800 million educational technology initiative, including more than \$100 million for technology training for the teachers themselves.

By giving our children the skills they need to succeed in the jobs of the future, we'll build

a stronger nation for the 21st century. I want to especially thank Vice President Gore, who's done so much to put the future at the fingertips of our children.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 1:40 p.m. on February 26 in the Manager's Office at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in San Francisco, CA, for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on Internet Accessibility in Classrooms

March 1, 1999

Vice President Gore and I have set a goal of connecting every classroom in America to the Internet by the year 2000. Today I am pleased to announce that new Department of Education data show that more than half of all classrooms are connected—nearly twice as many connections as last year. And thanks to new E-rate discounts that help schools and libraries connect to the Internet, we will reach our goal by the year 2000.

Computers, the Internet, and educational software can make a real difference in the way teachers teach and students learn. Because of our efforts, children in the most isolated inner city or rural town will have access to the same universe of knowledge as a child in the most affluent suburb. Parents will be able to commu-

nicate more frequently with teachers and keep up with the progress of their child in school. Our children will be “technologically literate” and better prepared for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of the future. But we must also make sure that teachers are as comfortable with a computer as they are with the chalkboard. That is why Congress should support my \$800 million educational technology initiative, including more than \$100 million to train teachers in the latest technology.

By giving our children the skills they need to succeed in the jobs of the future, we will build a stronger nation for the 21st century. I particularly want to thank Vice President Gore, who has done so much to put the future at the fingertips of our children.

Statement on the Proposed “Education Accountability Act”

March 1, 1999

Today's news of improvement in achievement for students in high-poverty schools is welcome, but we must not rest until all students meet the challenging standards we set for them. That is why I urge Senators in both parties not only to support this week's vote to put 100,000 new, well-prepared teachers in the classroom but also to enact my “Education Accountability Act.” This act will help move our education system forward by ensuring that States and school districts end social promotion, phase out the use

of unqualified teachers, turn around low-performing schools, provide parents with report cards on schools, and implement effective discipline policies. While our education reform efforts are clearly headed in the right direction, we must take these important steps to close the gap between students and increase the pace of reform.

Mar. 1 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on International Agreements

March 1, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Pursuant to subsection (b) of the Case-Zablocki Act, (1 U.S.C. 112b(b)), I hereby transmit a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements.

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Statement on the Agreement To Preserve California's Headwaters Forest

March 2, 1999

Three years ago we set out to preserve California's Headwaters Forest, the world's largest unprotected stand of old-growth redwoods. Late yesterday we achieved our goal. We completed an agreement with the Pacific Lumber Company to put the Headwaters Forest in public hands and ensure that it will never be logged.

These redwoods are a natural treasure, as much a part of our legacy as the world's great libraries and cathedrals. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Federal and State negotiators, future generations will know the majesty and awe of

Headwaters. This ancient forest, and the web of life it sustains, are now saved for all time.

I thank Senator Feinstein and Governor Davis for their critical help in achieving this historic agreement. And I am truly grateful that we are able to bestow this priceless gift on generations yet to come.

NOTE: A portion of the President's statement was made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority

March 2, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 701 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-454; 5 U.S.C. 7104(e)), I am pleased to transmit the Nineteenth Annual Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for Fiscal Year 1997.

The report includes information on the cases heard and decisions rendered by the Federal

Labor Relations Authority, the General Counsel of the Authority, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 2, 1999.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Republic of Korea-United States Extradition Treaty With Documentation

March 2, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Korea, signed at Washington on June 9, 1998 (hereinafter the "Treaty").

In addition, I transmit for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty. The Treaty will not require implementing legislation.

The Treaty will, upon entry into force, enhance cooperation between the law enforcement communities of the United States and Korea.

It will provide, for the first time, a framework and basic protections for extraditions between Korea and the United States, thereby making a significant contribution to international law enforcement efforts.

The provisions in this Treaty follow generally the form and content of extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 2, 1999.

Remarks at a Unity Meeting With Democratic Congressional Leaders

March 3, 1999

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. This has been a wonderful morning for me. When I listened to Maureen Marshall and Edwin Beale and Michael Saylor speak, I was again confirmed in my conviction that our principal responsibility here is to give the American people the tools and create the conditions within which they can make the most of their own lives. And if we do that, they will do it every time. These 3 people represent more than 200 million Americans who deserve our best efforts.

I want to thank Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt for their truly outstanding leadership, for their personal friendship, and for their honest commitment to the cause that we meet to discuss today.

I thank the Vice President for being the best partner and friend, adviser and prodger any President could ever have. I can't believe he passed up a chance to remind us all today that in 1993, he cast the decisive vote on the budget plan, and whenever he votes, we win. *[Laughter]*

You know the real, sort of political story out of this meeting today may be that we will have to retire that famous old Will Rogers quip, "I don't belong to an organized political party. I'm

a Democrat." The fact is we are organized, and we are united. And we are united around an agenda for America's future: to meet the long-term challenges of this country at the edge of a new century and new millennium; to build on what we have done for the last 6 years.

The new agenda is rooted in the same ideals with which we began in 1993, to bring opportunity to every American, to challenge every American to be a responsible citizen, and to build a community of all American citizens.

When you look around at this Democratic caucus, the Members of the House and the Senate, as the speakers were speaking, I had the opportunity to just scan both sides of this wonderful room today. You all really do look like America. You think like America, and you reflect America. As perhaps the only one of you who is term-limited, and therefore, faces the prospect of making the most of this next 2 years and leaving the rest to you, I felt enormously good, not just for my party but for my country, to look at all of you, to know what I know about all of you, to know about your backgrounds and your perspectives and your experience and your commitment, and to see how in this caucus we

have bridged every divide of America that will help us to bring our country together and go forward. And I'm very proud to be here with you today.

Let me say that when I ran for President in 1991 and 1992, I used to say something that seems almost strange today. I said one of the reasons that I left a job at home that I loved and undertook this campaign is that I didn't want to see my daughter's generation grow up to be the first generation of Americans not to do as well economically or in terms of quality of life as their parents had done. Nobody worries about that anymore, but we did then.

And what we had before that was more than a decade in which the leaders of the other party talked tough but took the easy way out. We were unashamed to be compassionate, unashamed that we cared about those who needed a hand up in life. But we were unafraid, when it came down to it, to take the tough decisions that cost many of our fellow Democrats their seats in Congress but gave the American economy and the American people a new lease on the 21st century.

So what we came here today to talk about builds on what has happened in the last 6 years. It builds on our way of approaching our political responsibilities here, to put people ahead of partisanship and common sense ahead of ideology. Now, we've already talked about how we turned the red ink to black—that that helped to produce the longest peacetime expansion in our history, the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957.

We ought to point out that we did it in a way that looked to the future, not only reducing the deficit but doubling our investment in education and training, putting 100,000 more police on our streets, making dramatic increases in medical research, immunizing 90 percent of our children from basic childhood diseases for the first time ever, providing millions and millions of people with the benefit of the family and medical leave law, and making our environment cleaner. We showed, in other words, that we could balance the budget and honor our common values as Americans.

Now that, to use Senator Daschle's phrase, America is working again, the question is: What shall we do? And we're here to say that, as proud as we are of the record of the last 6 years, this is not a time to boast about the past but to fulfill our solemn duty to the next

generation, to meet the long-term challenges our Nation faces.

We're for stronger families, with our child care program and our after-school learning, for a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, for the bipartisan legislation to help people with disabilities move into the workplace, for tax relief to help families provide long-term care, for an increase in the minimum wage and equal pay for men and women, and more free enterprise in our poorest inner-city and rural communities. We're for 50,000 more police on the street and better technology for police, especially in the areas where crime is still too high. We stand together to pass the Earth on to our children with our livability initiative for less traffic congestion and more green space. We stand together, as the Vice President has said, for strong, modern, more accountable schools, for giving teachers like Maureen the support they need to do even better.

Last winter, as has already been said, we issued our call, for the first time, for 100,000 more highly trained teachers, to bring class size down in the early grades. And last fall the Republicans in Congress finally agreed to make a significant downpayment toward that goal. Now, in the next few days, the Senate will vote on whether to finish the job of hiring 100,000 new teachers to reduce class size. It will be our first big chance this year to prove to the American people that we are prepared to put people over party. Let's say politics stops at the schoolhouse door.

Now, I'd also like to ask that politics stop and that the Republican majority in Congress stand with us in meeting the greatest challenge we face, the aging of America. Life expectancy is rising; the number of older Americans will double by the year 2030. There will be only two people working for one person drawing Social Security by that time. Even before then, because people over 80 are the fastest growing group of Americans as a percentage of our country, Medicare will run out of money within 9 years.

Now, I particularly appreciated what Edwin Beale said about this being an issue facing younger as well as older Americans, and not only because younger Americans would like to know they will have health care in retirement, when they reach their retirement years, but also because the quality of life of the children of people on Medicare and Social Security and

their ability to raise their grandchildren will be directly dependent upon whether they had to take needed resources away from their own family to care for their parents in ways that previous generations have not. This is a big issue.

But I want to say again—and I feel this with greater conviction as I grow older by the day—this is a high-class problem. We face this challenge because we're living longer. We face this challenge because of the fruits of the medical research that the Congress has funded. We should not be handwringing here. We should be embracing this with joy. This is the inevitable result of our efforts to not only lengthen life but to improve its quality. And because the Democrats took the lead so many years ago, first in Social Security and then in Medicare, we have a special responsibility to the American people to take the lead in resolving this.

Now, let me restate clearly our principles and where I think we are in this debate now because how we resolve these issues will shape how we resolve the other issues in this session of Congress. First, we should devote 62 percent of the surplus for the next 15 years to saving Social Security, to guarantee the soundness of Social Security for the next 55 years, and to enable us to make further choices, some of which will be difficult, to extend Social Security for 75 years, provide help for elderly women, too many of whom are in poverty, and lift the earnings limit on people on Social Security.

Second, we should devote another 15 percent of the surplus to Medicare, to secure that vital program until the year 2020. And again, I believe we should go further, with broader reforms to strengthen and improve Medicare and to meet the greatest growing need of our seniors, affordable prescription drugs.

If we do this, that will still leave funds for other investments or for tax reduction. I believe we should devote over \$500 billion of this surplus to give working families tax relief, creating universal savings accounts, USA accounts, that will help all Americans share in the Nation's wealth and build nest eggs for retirement. If we do these things—saving Social Security, saving Medicare, empowering more Americans to save for their own retirement—we will fulfill our historic challenge to meet the difficulties and the opportunities of the aging of America in a way that provides a stronger economy and more stable families for our children.

If we use the surplus to save Social Security and strengthen Medicare, we will for the next 15 years and beyond, be paying down the national debt, if we follow the proposal that we have made. We can reduce publicly held debt to its lowest level since 1917, before we moved into World War I.

Let me say, for a Member of Congress what that means is, 15 years from now, Congress will be allocating only 2 cents of every tax dollar to pay interest on the debt, instead of the 13 cents you have to take off the top today, before you can pass another bill to do another thing. That means—and again, I was glad to hear Michael Saylor, who told that astonishing story of his company starting with \$132 and winding up with 1,000 employees and hundreds of millions of dollars of wealth that have been created. You remember what he said? He said what they need from Government is a responsible set of rational decisions that keep interest rates low and the economy strong. That is the most important thing. And if we do this, we will drive down interest rates for the next 15 to 20 years. We could actually have our country completely out of debt, under this policy, in 18 years. And in a world in which the economy of other countries is obviously troubled at the moment and in which future events are not predictable, we know one thing for sure: If we pay down this debt and things are troubled beyond our borders, we'll do a lot better and interest rates will be a lot lower than they otherwise would have been. If things go well in the global economy, because of our efforts and others, we will do even better than we otherwise would have done.

And we know that the success of the American economy has reinforced the budget decisions made in 1993. We have got to keep this going. So I say, take care of Social Security; take care of Medicare; pay down the debt; keep the economy going. These things are the most important things we can do for our children in the 21st century.

Now, let me say where I think we are now. I have, frankly, been gratified to see the Republican leaders have quickly joined us in supporting the first idea, dedicating 62 percent of the surplus to save Social Security. At least, I believe the word they used was "setting aside" 62 percent of the surplus, and I'll come back to that in a moment. I've been further encouraged to see some of the Republicans backing

away from the irresponsible across-the-board tax cut that is too costly, in favor of standing with us for targeted tax cuts benefiting mostly middle-class working families.

Last week the majority leaders in Congress actually placed an ad in *USA Today* with a nice letter promising to save Social Security, to give our children the world's best schools, to target tax relief to the middle class. That was the most welcome news I've read in *USA Today*, in terms of progress, since the NBA strike ended. [Laughter] And I was encouraged by it.

But I want to make it clear, there are still strong differences in our approach, and we must resolve them in a way that benefits the American people, in the Vice President's words, that benefit Republicans and independents and Democrats alike. We have to do what's right for the country.

First, while the Republicans are joining me in talking about setting aside a substantial part of the surplus for debt reduction and, presumably, for Social Security—and we welcome that—they still have said nothing about how they would extend the life of Social Security and whether they would dedicate all 62 percent of this surplus for that purpose. And that is very important.

Second, I ask the Republican majority to join us in devoting a portion—15 percent—of the surplus to save Medicare. Now, this is very important. They have not done that so far. And as you see from the difficulties of others who have struggled with these issues and the fact that health care costs are beginning to rise again, we cannot secure Medicare as a guarantee for our seniors with any reasonable set of reforms and keep it a recognizable, universal program, unless we also invest some more money in the program.

You can talk to any hospital that's administering programs that have Medicare patients. You can talk to any doctor. You can talk to anybody who's dealt with this program. We must have more money. So I ask those—especially those who still maintain that somehow, out of the surplus, they can afford a very large across-the-board tax cut—where will they find the resources to extend the life of Medicare?

I am not opposed to responsible reforms that enable us to secure Medicare for an even longer period and to begin to add this prescription

drug benefit so that we can really help people who need it. But I'm telling you, we cannot deal with the Medicare problem without a greater investment of money.

So, let's say, use the budget surplus to save Social Security, to save Medicare, to pay down the debt. Then we can have an honest and principled disagreement about how much and what kind of tax cut we need with the rest—about how much should go to education; how much should go to defense; how much should go to medical research. But the first and most important things are save Social Security, save Medicare, pay down the debt, secure the future of our children.

Now, we stand today unified. We stand today well aware of the challenges before us. But we stand today beleaguered by beepers and message machines. [Laughter] This is my last line I want to say about this. Will Rogers also used to say something that we do not have to disregard. He used to say, and I quote, "You've got to be an optimist to be a Democrat, and you've got to be humorous to stay one." [Laughter]

Well, I urge you, let's bring a new energy to this session of Congress. When we get really frustrated by what seems to be excessive partisanship, let's remember these three fine American citizens who talked to us today and the stories they told and the hundreds of millions of people they represent. Let's keep our optimism, our good cheer, our resolve, and our unity, to give them the 21st century they deserve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in the Thomas Jefferson Building, Library of Congress. In his remarks, he referred to Maureen Marshall, special education teacher, Springfield Estates Elementary School, Springfield, VA; Edwin Beale, graduate student, Tuskegee University; and Michael J. Saylor, founder, president, and chief executive officer, MicroStrategy, Inc. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore, Senator Thomas A. Daschle, and Representative Richard A. Gephardt.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

March 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). My last report, consistent with Public Law 102-1, was transmitted on December 18, 1998.

Overview

As stated in my December 18 report, on December 16, United States and British forces launched military strikes on Iraq (Operation Desert Fox) to degrade Iraq's capacity to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and to degrade its ability to threaten its neighbors. The decision to use force was made after U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) Executive Chairman Richard Butler reported to the U.N. Secretary General on December 14, that Iraq was not cooperating fully with the Commission and that it was "not able to conduct the substantive disarmament work mandated to it by the Security Council."

The build-up to the current crisis began on August 5 when the Iraqi government suspended cooperation with UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), except on a limited-range of monitoring activities. On October 31, Iraq announced that it was ceasing all cooperation with UNSCOM. In response to this decision, the Security Council on November 5 unanimously adopted Resolution 1205, which condemned Iraq's decision as a "flagrant violation" of the Gulf War cease-fire Resolution 687 and other relevant resolutions. Resolution 1205 also demanded that Iraq immediately rescind both its October 31 decision and its decision of August 5. This came after the passage on March 3, 1998, of Resolution 1154, warning Iraq that the "severest consequences" would result from Iraq's failure to cooperate with the implementation of Resolution 687.

Iraq ignored the Security Council's demands until November 14, when U.S. and British forces prepared to launch air strikes on Iraq.

Baghdad initially tried to impose unacceptable conditions on its offer of resumption of cooperation; however, the United States and Great Britain insisted on strict compliance with all relevant Security Council resolutions.

Subsequently, Iraq agreed in writing in letters to the U.N. Secretary General to rescind its August 5 and October 31 decisions and to resume full cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA in accordance with Security Council resolutions. Iraq informed the Security Council on November 14 that it was the "clear and unconditional decision of the Iraqi government to resume cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA."

On November 15, the Security Council issued a statement in which it stressed that Iraq's commitment "needs to be established by unconditional and sustained cooperation with the Special Commission and the IAEA in exercising the full range of their activities provided for in their mandates."

UNSCOM and the IAEA resumed their full range of activities on November 17, but Iraq repeatedly violated its commitment of cooperation. As Chairman Butler's report of December 14 details, Iraq has, over the course of the last 8 years, refused to provide the key documents and critical explanations about its prohibited weapons programs in response to UNSCOM's outstanding requests. It refused to allow removal of missile engine components, denied access to missile test data, restricted photography of bombs, and endangered the safety of inspectors by aggressively maneuvering a helicopter near them. Iraq failed to provide requested access to archives and effectively blocked UNSCOM from visiting a site on November 25.

On December 4 and again on December 11, Iraq further restricted UNSCOM's activities by asserting that certain teams could not inspect on Fridays, the Muslim sabbath, despite 7 years of doing so and the fact that other inspection teams' activities were not restricted on Fridays. Iraq blocked access to offices of the ruling Ba'ath Party on December 9, which UNSCOM held "solid evidence" contained prohibited materials. Iraq routinely removed documents from

facilities prior to inspection, and initiated new forms of restrictions on UNSCOM's work. We also have information that Iraq ordered the military to destroy WMD-related documents in anticipation of the UNSCOM inspections.

Iraq's actions were a material breach of the Gulf War cease-fire resolution (UNSC Resolution 687), the February 23, 1998, Annan-Aziz Memorandum of Understanding, and Iraq's November 14 commitment to the Security Council. The threat to the region posed by Iraq's refusal to cooperate unconditionally with UNSCOM, and the consequent inability of UNSCOM to carry out the responsibilities the Security Council entrusted to it, could not be tolerated. These circumstances led the United States and the United Kingdom to use military force to degrade Iraq's capacity to threaten its neighbors through the development of WMD and long-range delivery systems. During Desert Fox, key WMD sites and the facilities of the organizations that conceal them, as well as important missile repair facilities and surface-to-air missile sites, were attacked. Operation Desert Fox degraded Saddam's ability to threaten his neighbors militarily.

UNSCOM and IAEA inspectors withdrew from Iraq on December 15 when Chairman Butler reported that inspectors were not able to conduct the substantive disarmament work required of UNSCOM by the Security Council. The United States continues to support UNSCOM and the IAEA as the agreed mechanisms for Iraq to demonstrate its compliance with UNSC resolutions concerning disarmament.

Since December 18, the Security Council has discussed next steps on Iraq. It decided on January 30 to establish three assessment panels to address disarmament issues, humanitarian issues, and Kuwait-related issues. The panels, under the chairmanship of the Brazilian Ambassador to the United Nations, are due to complete their reviews by April 15.

The United States also continues to support the international community's efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the "oil-for-food" program. On November 24, 1998, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1210 establishing a new 6-month phase (phase five) of the oil-for-food program (phase four ended November 25). In January, the United States announced its support for lifting the ceiling on oil sales under the

oil-for-food program so that Iraqi civilian humanitarian needs can better be met.

As long as Saddam Hussein remains in power, he represents a threat to the well-being of his people, the peace of the region, and the security of the world. We will continue to contain the threat he poses, but over the long term the best way to address that threat is through a new government in Baghdad. To that end, we—working with the Congress—are deepening our engagement with the forces for change in Iraq to help make the opposition a more effective voice for the aspirations of the Iraqi people. Our efforts are discussed in more detail below.

U.S. and Coalition Force Levels in the Gulf Region

Saddam's record of aggressive behavior compels us to retain a highly capable force in the region in order to deter Iraq and deal with any threat it might pose to its neighbors, the reconstitution of its WMD program, or movement against the Kurds in northern Iraq. We demonstrated our resolve in mid-December when forces in the region carried out Operation Desert Fox to degrade Iraq's ability to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction and its ability to threaten its neighbors. We will continue to maintain a robust posture and have established a rapid reinforcement capability to supplement our forces in the Gulf, if needed.

Our forces in the region include land and carrier-based aircraft, surface warships, a Marine Expeditionary unit, a Patriot missile battalion, a mechanized battalion task force, and a mix of special operations forces deployed in support of U.S. Central Command. To enhance force protection throughout the region, additional military security personnel are also deployed. Because of the increased air-defense threat to coalition aircraft, we have also added a robust personnel recovery capability.

Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch

The United States and coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq through Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch. Since December 23, following the conclusion of Desert Fox, we have seen a significant increase in the frequency, intensity, and coordination of the Iraqi air defense system to counter enforcement of the no-fly zones. Since that date, U.S. and coalition aircraft

enforcing the no-fly zones have been subject to multiple anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) firings, radar illuminations, and over 20 surface-to-air missile attacks. Subsequent to Desert Fox, Iraq significantly increased its air defense presence in both the north and south, but it has since returned to pre-Desert Fox levels. Despite the decrease, however, Iraq has not ceased threatening coalition aircraft.

In response to Iraq's increased and repeated no-fly zone violations, and in coordination with the Secretary of Defense's advice, our aircrews have been authorized by me to respond to the increased Iraqi threat. United States and coalition forces can defend themselves against any Iraqi threat in carrying out their no-fly zone enforcement mission. On over 50 occasions since December, U.S. and coalition forces have engaged the Iraqi integrated air defense system. As a consequence, the Iraqi air defense system has been degraded substantially further since December.

The Maritime Interception Force

The multinational Maritime Interception Force (MIF), operating in accordance with Resolution 665 and other relevant resolutions, enforces U.N. sanctions in the Gulf. The U.S. Navy is the single largest component of the MIF, but it is frequently augmented by ships, aircraft, and other support from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Kuwait, The Netherlands, New Zealand, the UAE, and the United Kingdom. Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) provide logistical support and shipriders to the MIF and accept vessels diverted for violating U.N. sanctions against Iraq. Kuwait was especially helpful providing significant naval and coast guard assistance. Additionally, they accepted over 15 diverted sanctions violators.

Although refined petroleum products leaving Iraq comprise most of the prohibited traffic, the MIF has intercepted a growing number of ships smuggling prohibited items into Iraq in violation of U.N. sanctions and outside the parameters of the humanitarian oil-for-food program. In early December, the MIF conducted the latest in a series of periodic surge operations in the far northern Gulf near the major Iraqi waterways. These operations disrupted smuggling in the region. Kuwait and the UAE have stepped up their own enforcement efforts. Although partially repaired and back on line, damage to the Basra refinery inflicted during Desert Fox had

a significant impact on Iraq's gas and oil smuggling operations in the Gulf.

In December 1998, Iraq relocated surface-to-surface missile batteries to the coastal area of the Al Faw Peninsula. The missiles in question, with a range of nearly 60 nautical miles, could reach far into the North Arabian Gulf and posed a serious threat to the MIF. The deployment of these missiles to a position from which they could engage coalition naval forces was carried out in concert with the increased attempts to shoot down aircraft enforcing the no-fly zones and constituted an enhancement of Iraq's military capability in southern Iraq. Coalition aircraft responded with air strikes to the threat posed by these missiles and are authorized to continue to do so as necessary.

Chemical Weapons

After Iraq's November 15, 1998, pledge of unconditional cooperation with weapons inspectors, UNSCOM began to test the Iraqi promise. In a November 25 letter, Iraq continued to deny that it ever weaponized VX nerve agent or produced stabilized VX, despite UNSCOM's publicly stated confidence in the Edgewood Arsenal Laboratory finding of stabilized VX components in fragments of Iraqi SCUD missile warheads. Iraq alleges that the presence of VX was a deliberate act of tampering with the samples examined in the United States.

On November 26, Iraq agreed to cooperate with UNSCOM efforts to determine the disposition of 155mm shells filled with mustard chemical agent, and UNSCOM agreed to proceed with such an effort when logistically possible. Iraq also agreed to cooperate in verifying the tail assemblies of R-400 bombs, and in determining the precise locations of pits that had been used for the field storage of special warheads at Fallujah Forest and the Tigris Canal.

On November 30, the Iraqis failed to meet a deadline to provide various documents Chairman Butler requested pertaining to Iraq's chemical weapons program. Included in this request was the Iraqi Air Force file of documents found previously by UNSCOM inspectors that details chemical weapons expended during the Iran-Iraq war. We understand that UNSCOM believes the file indicates that Iraq's official declarations to UNSCOM have greatly overstated the quantities of chemical weapons expended, which means that at least 6,000 chemical weapons are unaccounted.

In a January 25, 1999, report to the U.N. Security Council President, UNSCOM identified as a priority chemical weapons disarmament issues: VX, the 155mm mustard shells; the Iraqi Air Force file of chemical weapons documents; R-400 bombs filled with CBW (field inspections needed); and chemical weapons production equipment (field verification is needed for 18 of 20 shipping containers UNSCOM knows were moved together). On monitoring, the report identified as priorities the ability to verify Iraqi compliance at listed facilities and to detect construction of new dual-use facilities.

Biological Weapons

Iraq has failed to provide a credible explanation for UNSCOM tests that found anthrax in fragments of seven SCUD missile warheads. Iraq has been claiming since 1995 that it put anthrax in only five such warheads, and had previously denied weaponizing anthrax at all. Iraq's explanations to date are far from satisfactory, although it now acknowledges putting both anthrax and botulinum toxin into some number of warheads.

Iraq's biological weapons (BW) program—including SCUD missile BW warheads, R-400 BW bombs, drop-tanks to be filled with BW, spray devices for BW, production of BW agents (anthrax, botulinum toxin, aflatoxin, and wheat cover smut), and BW agent growth media—remains the “black hole” described by Chairman Butler. Iraq has consistently failed to provide a credible account of its efforts to produce and weaponize its BW agents.

During the period November 17 to December 2, 1998, an undeclared Class II Biosafety Cabinet and some filter presses were discovered; these items are subject to declarations by Iraq and biological monitoring.

On November 18 and 20, Chairman Butler again asked Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister for information concerning Iraq's biological weapons programs. Iraq has supplied none of the information requested.

In the January 25, 1999, report to the U.N. Security Council President, UNSCOM identified as a priority biological weapons disarmament issue Iraq's incomplete declarations on “the whole scope of the BW program.” The declarations are important because “Iraq possesses an industrial capability and knowledge base, through which biological warfare agents could be produced quickly and in volume.” The report

also identified the importance of monitoring dual-use biological items, equipment, facilities, research, and acquisition at 250 listed sites. The effectiveness of monitoring is “proportional to Iraq's cooperation and transparency, to the number of monitored sites, and to the number of inspectors.”

Long-Range Missiles

Iraq's past practices of (1) refusing to discuss further its system for concealment of longer range missiles and their components, (2) refusing to provide credible evidence of its disposition of large quantities of the unique fuel required for the long-range SCUD missile, and (3) continuing to test modifications to SA-2 VOLGA surface-to-air missile components appear intended to enhance Iraq's capability to produce a surface-to-surface missile of range greater than its permitted range of 150 km.

While UNSCOM believes it can account for 817 of 819 imported Soviet-made SCUD missiles, Iraq has refused to give UNSCOM a credible accounting of the indigenous program that produced complete SCUD missiles that were both successfully test-flown and delivered to the Iraqi Army.

In its January 25, 1999, report to the U.N. Security Council President, UNSCOM identified the following as priority missile disarmament issues: 50 unaccounted SCUD conventional warheads; 500 tons of SCUD propellants, the destruction of which has not been verified; 7 Iraqi-produced SCUDs given to the army, the destruction of which cannot be verified; truckloads of major components for SCUD production that are missing; the concealment of BW warheads; and the lack of accounting for VX-filled warheads. The report identified as priorities the capability to monitor declared activities, leaps in missile technology, and changes to declared operational missiles. There are 80 listed missile sites.

Nuclear Weapons

After Iraq unconditionally rescinded its declarations of noncooperation on November 15, the IAEA began to test the Iraqi pledge of full cooperation. The IAEA Director General Mohammed El-Baradei's December 14 report on Iraqi cooperation stated: “The Iraqi counterpart has provided the necessary level of cooperation to enable the above-enumerated activities [ongoing monitoring] to be completed efficiently

and effectively.” In its 6-month report to the Security Council on October 7, the IAEA stated that it had a “technically coherent” view of the Iraqi nuclear program. At that time, the IAEA also stated its remaining questions about Iraq’s nuclear program can be dealt with within IAEA’s ongoing monitoring and verification (OMV) effort. In the IAEA’s February 8 report to the U.N. Security Council it reiterated this position.

Nonetheless, Iraq has not yet supplied information in response to the Security Council’s May 14 Presidential Statement. This statement noted that the IAEA continues to have questions and concerns regarding foreign assistance, abandonment of the program, and the extent of Iraqi progress in weapons design. Iraq has also not passed penal legislation prohibiting nuclear-related activities contrary to Resolution 687.

In a February 8, 1999, report to the U.N. Secretary Council President, IAEA Director General Mohammed El-Baradei summarized previous IAEA assessments of Iraq’s compliance with its nuclear disarmament and monitoring obligations. The report restates that “Iraq has not fulfilled its obligation to adopt measures and enact penal laws, to implement and enforce compliance with Iraq’s obligations under Resolutions 687 and 707, other relevant Security Council resolutions and the IAEA OMV plan, as required under paragraph 34 of that plan.” The IAEA states that the three areas where questions on Iraq’s nuclear disarmament remain (lack of technical documentation, lack of information on external assistance to Iraq’s clandestine nuclear weapons program, and lack of information on Iraq’s abandonment of its nuclear weapons program) would not prevent the full implementation of its OMV plan.

The IAEA continues to plan for long-term monitoring and verification under Resolution 715. In its February 8 report, the IAEA restated that monitoring must be “intrusive” and estimated annual monitoring costs would total nearly \$10 million.

Dual-Use Imports

Resolution 1051 established a joint UNSCOM/IAEA unit to monitor Iraq’s imports of allowed dual-use items. Iraq must notify the unit before it imports specific items that can be used in both weapons of mass destruction and civilian applications. Similarly, U.N. members must provide timely notification of exports

to Iraq of such dual-use items. Following the withdrawal of UNSCOM and IAEA monitors, there is no monitoring of dual-use items inside Iraq. This factor has presented new challenges for the U.N. Sanctions Committee and is taken into consideration in the approval process.

The U.N.’s “Oil-for-Food” Program

We continue to support the international community’s efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the oil-for-food program. Transition from phase four to phase five (authorized by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1210) was smooth. As in phase four, Iraq is again authorized to sell up to \$5.2 billion worth of oil every 180 days. However, because of a drop in world oil prices, Iraq was only able to pump and sell approximately \$3.1 billion worth of oil during phase four. Since the first deliveries under oil-for-food began in March 1997, food worth \$2.75 billion, and over \$497 million worth of medicine and health supplies have been delivered to Iraq.

As of January 19, under phase four of the oil-for-food program, contracts for the purchase of over \$2.3 billion worth of humanitarian goods for the Iraqi people have been presented to the U.N. Office of the Iraq Program for review by the Sanctions Committee; of these, contracts worth over \$1.6 billion have been approved; most of the remaining contracts are being processed by the Office of the Iraq Program. As of February 4, the United States had approved 584 contracts in phase four and had placed 28 on hold pending clarification of questions about the proposed contracts.

With regard to funds set aside for imports of parts and equipment to increase oil exports, as of February 4, 333 contracts with a total value of nearly \$178 million have been approved; 94 contracts are on hold. In January, the United States released a number of holds on oil spare parts contracts. Up to \$300 million had been set aside in phase four of the oil-for-food program to pay for spare parts and equipment to increase Iraqi oil exports and thus increase available humanitarian funding. The United States had requested holds on contracts that did not directly boost oil exports. As the current phase of oil-for-food again sets aside \$300 million for this purpose, the United States decided to remove holds on lower priority contracts.

The Security Council met in January to discuss the humanitarian situation in Iraq. The United States supported an examination of the current situation and exploration of ways to improve the humanitarian situation, particularly with regard to vulnerable groups such as children under age five, and pregnant and nursing women. The United States has expressed its support for lifting the cap on Iraqi oil exports under the oil-for-food program, and has suggested some streamlining of approval of food and medicine contracts in the U.N. Sanctions Committee.

Three assessment panels are being formed to look at Iraqi disarmament, the humanitarian situation in Iraq, and Iraq's obligations regarding Kuwait. The panels are expected to complete their work by the middle of April.

Resolution 1210 maintains a separate oil-for-food program for northern Iraq, administered directly by the United Nations in consultation with the local population. This program, which the United States strongly supports, receives 13 to 15 percent of the funds generated under the oil-for-food program. The separate northern program was established because of the Baghdad regime's proven disregard for the humanitarian needs of the Kurdish, Assyrian, and Turkomen minorities of northern Iraq, and its readiness to apply the most brutal forms of repression against them. In northern Iraq, where Baghdad does not exercise control, the oil-for-food program has been able to operate relatively effectively. The Kurdish factions are setting aside their differences to work together so that Resolution 1210 is implemented as efficiently as possible.

The United Nations is required to monitor carefully implementation of all aspects of the oil-for-food program. The current phase marked by Resolution 1210 anticipates infrastructure repairs in areas such as oil export capacity, generation of electricity, and water purification. The U.N. monitoring regime is presented with increasing challenges, as UNSCOM monitors are no longer in Iraq.

Humanitarian programs such as oil-for-food have steadily improved the life of the average Iraqi living under sanctions (who, for example, now receives a ration basket providing over 2,000 calories per day, a significant improvement in nutrition since the program began) while denying Saddam Hussein control over oil revenues. We will continue to work with the U.N. Secretariat, the Security Council, and others in the

international community to ensure that the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people are met while denying any political or economic benefits to the Baghdad regime.

Northern Iraq: Kurdish Reconciliation

Since their ground-breaking meeting with Secretary Albright in September, Massoud Barzani, President of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and Jalal Talabani, Chairman of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), have met three times to continue their work towards full reconciliation. Both parties have condemned internal fighting, pledged to refrain from violence in settling their differences, and resolved to eliminate terrorism by establishing stronger safeguards for Iraq's borders. Our deep concern for the safety, security, and economic well-being of Iraqi Kurds, Shias, Sunnis, and others who have been subject to brutal attacks by the Baghdad regime remains a primary focus of our Iraq policy.

On November 4, the Governments of Turkey and the United Kingdom joined us in recognizing and welcoming the cooperative achievement of Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani. The three states reiterated the importance of preserving the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and noted, with pleasure, the prominence the KDP and PUK have accorded this principle. We also welcomed the commitment by the KDP and PUK to deny sanctuary to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), to eliminate all PKK bases from the region, and to safeguard the Turkish border. The parties believe that key decisions on Iraq's future should be made by all the Iraqi people together at an appropriate time and in a regular political process. Their work to achieve the principles embodied in the Ankara Statements are thus meant to implement a framework of regional administration until a united, pluralistic, and democratic Iraq is achieved.

On January 8, the two leaders met without recourse to U.S., U.K., or Turkish interlocutors, in Salahidin in northern Iraq. They reiterated their determination to implement the September agreement, made concrete progress on key issues of revenue sharing and closing down PKK bases, and agreed to stay in close contact.

The United States is committed to ensuring that international aid continues to reach the north, that the human rights of the Kurds and northern Iraq minority groups, such as the

Turkomen, Assyrians, Yezedis, and others are respected, and that the no-fly-zone enforced by Operation Northern Watch is observed. The United States will decide how and when to respond should Baghdad's actions pose an increased threat to Iraq's neighbors, to regional security, to vital U.S. interests, and to the Iraqi people, including those in the north.

The Human Rights Situation in Iraq

The human rights situation throughout Iraq continues to be a cause for grave concern. As I reported November 5, the Iraqi army has stepped up repressive operations against the Shia in the south. In mid-November, we received unconfirmed reports from the Iraqi opposition that 150 persons had been executed at Amara, with three bodies left hanging on the city's main bridge over the Tigris River as a warning to those who oppose the regime. An additional 172 persons, some detained since 1991, were reported to have been summarily executed in Abu Gharaib and Radwaniya prisons; as in prior waves of summary prison killings, bodies showing clear signs of torture were reportedly returned to their families. Reports reached us in December that a mass grave containing at least 25 bodies was found near the Khoraisan River in Diyala province, east of Baghdad.

The Iraqi government continues to work toward the destruction of the Marsh Arabs' way of life and the unique ecology of the southern marshes. In the past 2 months, 7 more villages were reportedly destroyed on the margins of the marshes, with irrigation water cut off and the vegetation cut down and burned. Those who could not flee to the interior of the marshes—particularly the old, infirm, women, and children—were said to have been taken hostage by regime forces.

On February 19, the Shia Grand Ayatollah Mohammed al-Sadr was murdered in Iraq along with several of his relatives. Opposition sources indicate this murder was the work of the Saddam regime. The regime also violently suppressed demonstrations that followed in Baghdad and other cities opposing the murder.

In the north, outside the Kurdish-controlled areas, the government continues the forced expulsion of ethnic Kurds and Turkomen from Kirkuk and other cities. In recent months, hundreds of families have reportedly been expelled from Kirkuk with seven new Arab settlements

created on land seized from the Kurds. Reports from the Kurdish-controlled areas where the displaced persons are received indicate that they are forced to leave behind almost all of their personal property. Due to a shortage of housing, they are still living in temporary shelters.

A conference on the research and treatment of victims of chemical and biological weapons attacks in northern Iraq, organized by the Washington Kurdish Institute and sponsored by the Department of State was held on November 18–19, 1998. The conference focused on the long-range effects of the Iraqi chemical attack on the village of Halabja, where nearly 5,000 persons were killed in 1988. According to panelists, the hideous combination of mustard gas, tabun, sarin, VX, tear gas, and possibly aflatoxin that the Iraqi military used in the attack has resulted in dramatically increased rates of cancer, respiratory problems, heart failure, infertility, miscarriages, and possibly genetic damage in the surviving population.

On December 1, the London-based INDICT organization announced that 12 senior Iraqi officials—including Saddam Hussein, his sons Uday and Qusay, his half-brother Barzan al-Tikriti, Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan, and Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz—would be the focus of its campaign for prosecution by an international tribunal.

The Iraqi government continues to stall and obfuscate attempts to account for more than 600 Kuwaitis and third-country nationals who disappeared at the hands of Iraqi authorities during or after the occupation of Kuwait, despite a Security Council resolution requiring it to do so. Baghdad still refuses to allow independent human rights monitors to enter Iraq, despite repeated requests by U.N. Special Rapporteur for Iraq, Max Van der Stoep. The U.N. Human Rights Commission has issued a strong condemnation of the "all-pervasive repression and oppression" of the Iraqi government.

The Iraqi Opposition

We are deepening our engagement with the forces of change in Iraq, helping Iraqis inside and outside Iraq become a more effective voice for the aspirations of the people. We will work toward the day when Iraq has a government worthy of its people—a government prepared to live in peace with its neighbors, a government that respects the rights of its citizens, rather than represses them. On October 31, I signed

into law the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998. It provides significant new discretionary authorities to assist the opposition in its struggle against the regime. On January 19, I submitted to the Congress a notification of my intent to designate certain groups under the Act; I designated those groups on February 4. The assessment of additional groups that may qualify for assistance under the Act is progressing. Also on October 31, Radio Free Iraq began operations. Its broadcasts are being heard in Iraq and its message profoundly displeases the regime.

On November 17, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Martin Indyk, met with 17 London-based representatives of the Iraqi opposition. He heard the full range of views of the parties present, and outlined the new U.S. policy toward the opposition. Indyk urged them to work together toward the common purpose of a new government in Baghdad; the United States will help, but the opposition itself must take the lead. He urged them to do all they could to get a message to the people of Iraq that there is an alternative to Saddam Hussein, adding that the United States will support the campaign to indict Saddam as a war criminal.

Former Iraqi Foreign Minister Adnan Pachachi outlined a number of agreed points to Indyk. The group: 1) welcomed the new U.S. policy toward the opposition; 2) will work to create a democratic government in Iraq; 3) will redouble efforts to get all groups to work together; 4) wants the opposition to serve as an interlocutor for the Iraqi people with the international community; and 5) expressed thanks for the U.S. role in the recent Kurdish reconciliation.

On January 21, Secretary of State Albright announced the appointment of Frank Ricciardone as Special Representative for Transition in Iraq (SRTI). He will abbreviate his current tour as Deputy Chief of Mission in Ankara, and take up his new responsibilities in early March. He traveled with the Secretary of State to London, Riyadh, and Cairo in late January to discuss U.S. policy on this issue. He outlined U.S. intentions to help Iraq resume its rightful place in the region—a goal the United States believes can only be achieved under new Iraqi leadership. He emphasized U.S. desire to work with Iraqis—who alone can make this happen—inside Iraq and outside Iraq, as well as

with Iraq's neighbors who share the same objectives.

There are, of course, other important elements of U.S. policy. These include the maintenance of Security Council support for efforts to eliminate Iraq's prohibited weapons and missile programs, and economic sanctions that continue to deny the regime the means to reconstitute those threats to international peace and security. United States support for the Iraqi opposition will be carried out consistent with those policy objectives as well. Similarly, U.S. support must be attuned to what Iraqis can effectively make use of as it develops over time.

The United Nations Compensation Commission

The United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), established pursuant to Resolutions 687, 692, and 1210, continues to resolve claims against Iraq arising from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The UNCC has issued over 1.3 million awards worth approximately \$7 billion. Thirty percent of the proceeds from the oil sales permitted by Security Council resolutions have been allocated to the Compensation Fund to pay awards and to finance operations of the UNCC. Pursuant to decisions of the UNCC Governing Council, certain small claims are to receive initial payments of \$2,500 toward the amounts approved on those claims before large claims of individuals and claims of corporations and governments may share in the funds available for claims payments. As money from Iraqi oil sales is deposited in the Compensation Fund the UNCC makes these initial \$2,500 payments on eligible claims in the order in which those claims were approved by the UNCC. To date, the United States Government has received funds from the UNCC for initial installment payments on approximately 1435 claims of U.S. claimants.

Conclusion

Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and security. I remain determined to see Iraq comply fully with all of its obligations under Security Council resolutions. The United States looks forward to the day when Iraq rejoins the family of nations as a responsible and law-abiding member. I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks at a Reception for Senator Robert G. Torricelli in Newark,
New Jersey
March 3, 1999

Thank you for the wonderful, wonderful welcome, and I want to congratulate everyone who had anything to do with building this magnificent Performing Arts Center. It's a fabulous place.

I would like to thank the people whose presence brightened our night tonight. I thank Cissy Houston and my friend Kevin Spacey. I thank Gloria Gaynor. I was—when she was singing her songs, we were all back there singing off-stage. And they said, now—they made me stand way back so no one could possibly take an embarrassing picture of me pretending that I was young again, and off key. And I was trying to decide whether I was—it was more appropriate for me to sing “I Will Survive,” or —[*laughter*]*ter*]—actually, I sort of like “I’m Never Going To Say Good-bye” better. [*Laughter*]

I say that because the people of New Jersey have been wonderful to me, and I am profoundly grateful. I remember so well my first big political event here—Bob Janiszewski had me there—and thank you, Bob, and all the people from that magnificent county Democratic organization. And I had lost my voice that night, and they stuck with me anyway, which I really appreciate.

I’d like to thank Congressman Payne, Congressman Pallone, Congressman Holt, and Congressman Rothman for flying up on Air Force One with me tonight and for doing New Jersey proud every day in the United States Congress. And I want to thank Mayor Sharpe James and the other mayors and State assembly people who met me at the airport. And I thank Charles Kushner and Steve Ross for doing a great job on this event tonight. I thank your State Democratic chairman, Tom Giblin, and your assembly leader, Joe Doria, who tells me we have a chance to win the assembly this year. And I want you to do that.

And most of all, I want to thank Bob Torricelli for many things, for being a great advocate. He is a ferocious advocate for New Jersey, for America, for democracy and human rights throughout the world; now, for the proposition that it’s high time the Democrats took back the Senate, and he’s leading our campaign committee. And he has been my friend, in good times and bad. And I will never forget it. I’m honored to be here tonight.

Bob was up here talking, and I thought: Shoot, he’s giving my speech; I won’t have anything to say when I get out there. [*Laughter*] Let me just say to all of you, again, I am profoundly grateful that the people of New Jersey twice voted to give their electoral votes to the Vice President and to me. I am grateful that Hillary and I and all of us in our administration had the chance to serve these last 6 years, to work to create the conditions and give the American people the tools that brought us to this day. How different this is than America was 6 years ago.

And I am grateful for that. I don’t for a moment claim all the credit for every good thing that has happened in this country, but I do believe when I came to the people of New Jersey in 1992 and said we needed to change the direction of this country; we need to go back to a commitment to give opportunity to every responsible citizen; and we need to remind the American people that we’re all one community across all the lines that divide us; and that we can only do well individually if we’re committed to giving every American and every American family and every American community the chance to be a part of the future we dream for our own children.

And I’m glad and grateful that we have the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957 and the longest peacetime economic expansion

in history and the lowest crime rate in 30 years and welfare rolls cut in half and 90 percent of our kids immunized for the first time ever and the doors of college open to all Americans. I am simply grateful to have had the chance to participate in what we have done together as a nation.

But I want to say to you in more pointed and more specific terms what Bob just said. This country has been through a lot in the last 10, 15 years. We've had a lot of triumph. We've overcome a lot of economic and social trauma. And the easy thing to do when things are going well is to relax, maybe even go back to the old ways, go back to the stand-patter. And I have to tell you that I think that would be a terrible mistake.

I am encouraged that the American people agree. In 1998, when our party picked up seats in the House of Representatives for the first time in the sixth year of a Presidency since 1822—including Rush Holt—it happened because we had the national agenda. We didn't stand back and say, "Vote for us because we've got a surplus. Vote for us because we've got a good economy." We said, "Vote for us because we have a chance to meet the big challenges still facing this country. Vote for us, and we will save Social Security. We will modernize our schools. We will pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. We will keep the American economy going in the right direction. We have an agenda."

And so I say tonight, the thing I like most about Bob Torricelli is if you didn't want to be a Senator to have the honor of the title, he wanted to be a Senator to get up every day and get something done to help the lives of ordinary people in New Jersey, in the United States, and throughout the world.

And I can say to you—so many of you came through the line and said something specific to me about the peace process in the Middle East or democracy in Asia or in our own hemisphere or some specific domestic program, when we were visiting earlier, those of you who came through and talked to me—I think it is important that if the Democratic Party wishes to be the majority party over the long run, in the Congress and in the White House, that we continue to be both the conscience and the engine of America's civic life.

We have big challenges. If I haven't learned anything in the last 6 years, it is how quickly things are changing within and beyond our bor-

ders and what a terrible mistake it is to believe that, just because things are good today, they'll be just fine tomorrow if you don't do anything else. That would be a significant mistake.

So I just want to say three or four things. I ask for your support, for your Members of Congress and for your Senator. And I ask you to fight for these things in the coming years when you have the election this year in New Jersey, next year for the Senate and the Congress races and in the Presidency.

Number one, we have got to face the fact that like every advanced country in the world, we are getting older as a nation. There will be twice as many people over 65 in 30 years as there are now. There will only be two people working for every one person retired and drawing Social Security. The present system cannot be sustained unless we do something about it. And I do not think what we should do about it is forget about it, because half the people in America today over 65 are out of poverty only because, in addition to their other income, they draw Social Security.

So I have said the first thing we've got to do is deal with the challenge of the aging of America, which means we have to save Social Security; we have to save Medicare for the 21st century. And the right way to do it—the right way to do it is to realize that it is also an enormous opportunity if we do it properly.

I want to set aside a little over three-quarters of this surplus that we think will come out in the next 15 years until we save Social Security and Medicare. Since we don't need the money right away, in the ensuing 15 years we can buy in the debt. And if we pay down the public debt for 15 years with this surplus, let me tell you what will happen. Fifteen years from now our country will have the smallest debt it's had since 1917, before we went into World War I. Fifteen years from now, when your Members of Congress go to vote on the budget, instead of taking 13 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes off the top to pay interest on the debt, it will be down to 2 cents. And they will be putting the money into Social Security, into Medicare, into education, into medical research, into protecting the environment, into growing the economy, into building America.

And in the meanwhile, because we'll be doing that, interest rates will be lower; business loans will be lower; college loans will be lower; consumer credit will be lower; home mortgages will

be lower. There will be more jobs, higher income, and more prosperity.

Now, the easy thing to do is to say, "We've got this surplus. We've waited 30 years. Let's give it away. Let's give it back to the American people in a tax cut because it's your money anyway." Well, it is your money, anyway, but you would be better off with a strong, healthy American economy and preserving our obligations for the 21st century, saving Social Security and Medicare. And that is what we ought to do.

We can do that and still have a sizable tax cut and invest more in education and meet our national security needs. But we ought to put first things first. And we will rue the day that we missed the opportunity to meet our obligations to the next generation of elderly and to lift from their children and grandchildren the burden of knowing that they have to care for their parents more than they should and their incomes will be eroded.

We can make the 21st century more secure, more vital, and economically stronger. That is the first and most important mission we have. We have to do more for the children and families of the 21st century. We're a long way from guaranteeing excellence in education for every child. I have loved going into the schools of New Jersey. I have loved seeing the proliferation of computer technology for poor students and immigrant families, as well as for those of middle class and upper-income children and their families. But we have a long way to go, and we have to do better.

We have a long way to go before we can honestly say that we have made it possible for every working family in this country to succeed both at work and in raising their children. That's why we have a major child care initiative. I cannot tell you how many million families every day are confronted with nagging worries—even in this prosperous economy—about whether they can meet their obligations at work and still afford quality child care for their kids. And I will not rest until I believe every American family can do both and take care of their children and their job.

I am proud that the air is cleaner and the water is cleaner and there are fewer toxic waste dumps and the environment is making progress. And I am proud of the fact that the Democrats proved that you could grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time,

something our friends in the other party always denied. That is not true. You can grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time. But we now have a \$2 billion livability agenda before the Congress that's terribly important to me. Why? Because it will help communities deal with everything from traffic congestion to the need for more green space, it will help us to set aside precious lands in urban areas and remote wilderness, and we ought to do it to continue our work.

And let me just say one last thing that you, here in New Jersey, know is true. Not every neighborhood in every city or every small town or every rural area has participated in this recovery. And I have asked the Congress to pass a comprehensive plan to create new markets for American business and new jobs right here at home, by giving the same kind of incentives to people to invest and create private sector jobs in poor urban and rural and small town neighborhoods that we already give people to invest overseas. If it works there, it will work here, and we should support it.

Finally, let me make one other point. We've had a wonderful night, and I don't have to give my State of the Union Address to you again. But if you asked me today what is the distinguishing characteristic of what it is we have tried to do, Senator Torricelli and I and our allies over the last 6 years, and what is the difference between what you have tried to do and what those who have opposed you have tried to do, I would say it is this: Number one, we believe that we have an obligation to give every single American the ability to live out his or her dream. And number two, we believe that with all that divides us, by race, by region, by culture, by religion, by lifestyle, by whatever, we still have to make one family.

When some of you were going through the line tonight saying thank you for what you've done in the Middle East, thank you for what you've tried to do in Northern Ireland, what we're trying to do in Kosovo to head off another bloodshed, what I'd still like to do on the Indian subcontinent and other places in the world, what we've tried to do in helping to end tribal wars in Africa, you think about it. Here we are, on the verge of a new millennium in this high-tech age, and what are we worried about? We're worried about people getting hold of high-technology information and weapons to pursue ancient hatreds or age-old greed, whether they're

organized criminals or drug traffickers or people fighting these awful religious and racial wars all across the world.

If you want America to do good in the 21st century, America first must be good at home. We must be a country of all Americans under the law. And I have said this before, but I have tried to make the Democratic Party and our administration faithful to the traditions not only of Jefferson and Jackson and Franklin Roosevelt but also to those of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. We have embraced the best of America's past, to prepare for America's best days in the 21st century. And I can't think

of any Member of Congress who can do more to give us the kind of America that all our children deserve than Bob Torricelli.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:04 p.m. in Prudential Hall at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Cissy Houston and Gloria Gaynor; actor Kevin Spacey; Hudson County Executive Robert C. Janiszewski; Mayor Sharpe James of Newark; event cochairs Charles Kushner and Steve Moses; and State Assembly Minority Leader Joseph V. Doria, Jr.

Interview With Janet Langhart Cohen of the Armed Forces Television Network

February 25, 1999

President's Impression of Personnel

Mrs. Cohen. Mr. President, thanks very much for this interview. I want to talk about your impressions of our military. You get a chance to travel all over the world and see our men and women in uniform. What is your impression of them?

The President. Well, first of all, I do have a unique opportunity to see them, in all kinds of settings—formal settings in my tour of Korea last December; going to the launching of the U.S.S. *Harry Truman*. But I have been, just in the last couple of years, in the last 2 years, on 30 different occasions with our men and women in uniform, and I see them doing national security work overseas; I see them in training operations here and overseas; I see them dealing with disaster situations. I will see some of them in Central America in the next few weeks when I go down there, dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. And the overwhelming impression that you get is that they're not only superb at what they do but that they're really good people and good citizens. That kind of teamwork that is required to pull off a military mission is something that they bring to all their work in life.

I remember, I talked to a command sergeant major in Korea who can still run under a 6-minute mile; he's in his late forties. And he's been in the Army 29 years, and he's retiring.

I said, "What are you going to do when you get out?" He said, "I'm going home to Kentucky to teach school, because I think I can do some good for those young people."

So I see this. And I always try, when I am with our men and women in uniform, not only to get briefed in a formal way on what their mission is on a particular day but also to find out a little bit about their lives, how their families are doing, how many times that they've been deployed, how are they dealing with that. And whenever possible, I always try to take a meal with them, so that enables me to connect with a lot of them individually and get a real feel for what's going on.

Mrs. Cohen. How do you feel they connect with you? What impression are you getting when they talk to you and answer your questions?

The President. Well, I find them very confident, self-confident, and very forthcoming, very candid.

Mrs. Cohen. Are they open with you?

The President. Yes, I think they are. I think they are, I guess as open as you could ever be with someone who is in my position. I ask direct questions, and I always feel I'm getting direct answers.

Rigors of Military Life

Mrs. Cohen. What do you think the American citizen should know and understand about the

military? Because when you and I were coming up, there was always somebody in the family who was in the military, or somebody in the neighborhood. Nowadays, we don't see them on the street.

The President. Well, I think most Americans do know and admire the fact that we have the best military in the world. They know that we have the most high-tech equipment. They know that our people are well-trained. I think most Americans know they're good people, fine men and women. What I don't think most Americans know is how hard they work all the time. I don't think Americans who aren't involved in the military have any idea how rigorous most of the training schedules are and what is involved. That's the first thing.

The second thing is, I don't think most Americans know how diverse the operations are. And the third thing, maybe the most important thing in terms of this budget we're trying to push on Capitol Hill, I don't think most Americans know how tough it can be today on the families. I don't think they're aware of how—with a smaller military and fewer big engagements but a lot more small ones—how much deployment is involved. I don't think they understand how quickly these people have to come in from being overseas or come in from being on a ship or being in a foreign land and then turn around and go back again.

Mrs. Cohen. And the stress on their families.

The President. Yes. I don't think—the family stress thing bothers me as much as anything right now, about where we are with the military.

Military Budget Proposal

Mrs. Cohen. What are some of the things that you took into account, the factors, the decisions you made on pay raise, retirement—

The President. Well, they were sending us a signal. We've got a lot of people retiring, and we're having trouble meeting some of our recruitment quotas. Now, part of that is a high-class problem; it's a result of the success of the American economy. And with the unemployment rate under 4.5 percent, wages rising at twice the rate of inflation now for the last couple of years, there are so many compelling opportunities for young people outside the military that it's harder to recruit and retain. We see it in Air Force pilots, but we also see it in enlistees in the Navy and the Army. We see it across the board. So it's obvious to me that

we need to raise pay, and we needed to fix that so-called retirement redux problem, you know, that I believe the Congress will go along with fixing this year.

Mrs. Cohen. Sir, with all due respect, you offered the highest budget proposal in a long time—ever. But is it enough when you talk about the things we're asking of them to do? They're at the tip of the sword. I don't know how much money anybody could pay me to get me, at a moment's notice, to go to Bosnia and stay there and leave my family.

The President. Well, I think the real question is—this is what we're working out with the Congress now—there is sentiment in the Congress to have an entire pay increase, and I think that, from the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs to the White House, we would all support that. But we have to operate within a given budget ceiling, so we have to measure what we need to do for our troops and their families off against the absolute imperative of being able to pay for training, which is more and more expensive—the more sophisticated the equipment is, the more expensive it is to train on it, which is why we developed so many computer simulations and programs—and the need to continue to modernize the equipment. You don't want a bunch of equipment out there that you can't run because you don't have spare parts, you haven't kept upgraded to high safety conditions.

So in the best of all worlds, is it enough? No, I don't think so. I'd like to do more. But if we're going to do more, then we need to work it out with Congress so we're not robbing Peter to pay Paul. I mean, most of our men and women in uniform would like it if we invested more in them, in their families, in their quality of life, but they wouldn't like it if, in so doing, we made it impossible for them to fulfill the mission they joined the military to perform in the first place. So that's the real conflict.

Postsecondary Education

Mrs. Cohen. Sir, what I was thinking is the mid-life, the mid-career recruits that we have—they're thinking: Well, I've been in half my adult life; I have children; I may have to educate them in college. On their pay, they can't afford to educate their children. Can there be a GI bill for—

The President. One of the things we helped a little at—I should point that out, I haven't

mentioned it—the Defense Department is also working on changing the pay scales, so that the rewards will ramp up more for people who stay in longer as they reach different levels of achievement and service.

And keep in mind now, the children of military personnel are eligible for all the financial benefits that we put out there for middle class families generally. I mean, now, for example, in the first 2 years of college, virtually all American families can get a \$1,500 tax credit—and if you're in the 28 percent tax bracket, that's like \$6,000 worth of tuition—plus a dramatic increase in the scholarships, and a lowering of the cost of the student loans, and tax credits for all other higher education.

So I think that we need to make sure our military families know about all these benefits and make sure they can take advantage of them, but I think on that score they'll be all right. I'm more worried about just whether the pay itself and the retirement are sufficient to allow good people to feel they can stay in, take care of their children, and know they'll be all right when they get out.

Recruitment

Mrs. Cohen. Do you think it's enough for recruitment? While it may be enough for retention because they're already invested, can we do more on recruitment?

The President. I don't know; we'll see. You and I were talking before we started the interview about this new innovative program the Navy is doing, and I hope that the higher pay, plus the better retirement benefits, will make a difference in recruitment this year. We'll just have to see. But I think that we all have to be honest: On the recruitment side, the biggest problem is the rest of the economy is doing so well, and the young people we've been getting in the military—we've got fairly high standards for who can get in in the first place.

Military Career Benefits

Mrs. Cohen. If you were to do a pitch right now for those we already have, what would you say as to why they should stay? Because they're certainly not in it for the money.

The President. I would say, first of all, if you stay until you've got enough time in to retire, you'll still be young; you'll still have a whole other career you can work. We're going to do our best to get our budget on a plane where

we'll be paying you better. We're going to accelerate the maintenance of quality of life, improvement of those benefits. We're going to improve the retirement system for those for whom it was a problem. And the work you're doing is profoundly important to the country. We need good people to do it. And the skills you acquire in doing it will make you even more marketable when you leave.

I see people all the time getting out of the service. Maybe it's just my perspective since I'm not young anymore, but you can do—a lot of these people doing 25, 26, 27 years, and they're still not 50 years old yet. So they've got another 20 years or more to do something else with their lives. So I would hope that if we can make the quality of their life situation better for them, that more will choose to stay.

Importance of the Mission

Mrs. Cohen. What would you say, sir, to the men and women serving in our hotspots, from Bosnia to the Persian Gulf to Korea, even those who are down in Central America helping with relief—what would you say to them, why their missions are important, why it is important to those of us here at home?

The President. Well, first I would say that they're really the first generation of American troops to serve a United States that is both the dominant military power in the world and without a dominant military opponent, like the Soviet Union; that for 10 years now, we've been trying to work out how we can fairly fulfill our responsibilities to promote peace and freedom and prosperity, consistent with our ability to afford it and the need for our allies to assume their fair share of responsibility.

And our military people have been on the cutting edge of this sea change. In the whole history of America, there has never been a period like this, ever. We've either gone into isolationism as soon as a war was over, or we got thrown into the cold war for the last 50 years, before the end of the cold war. And I would hope that they would be very proud of that, the idea that other nations would trust the United States, for example, to come into Bosnia, to deal with this crisis in Kosovo, to stand guard on the border with the U.N. troops in Macedonia, to stay in Korea decades after the end of the Korean war, because they know we have no territorial ambitions, because they know we don't seek to impose our will on other countries.

They really know we're there for peace and security.

And it's sometimes dangerous, sometimes boring, sometimes disruptive because of the rapid number of deployments that we have. But all of them should understand that they're part of a profound historic transformation in the world. And if we do this right, when we get through, the United States will share responsibilities for security with other democracies in a balanced and fair way and will be doing it in a way that is quite effective.

I mean, one of the things that our people ought to be proud of is how effective they are in Bosnia, for example; how effective they are in the aftermath of the hurricane in Central America.

Mrs. Cohen. Give me some examples, human stories, in Bosnia and then Central America.

The President. Oh, I got lots of letters from Bosnia, people who—I got wonderful letters from service people in Bosnia, men and women who went over there having questions about why they were going, was it worth it, was it going to be dangerous. Then they got involved with people in the communities nearby, with children. They understood—they saw the incredible tragedy of the carnage that existed before we went there. And these soldiers who write me these letters, or when I go over there—the second time I went over there, telling me how they—how proud they were; it was the right thing to do.

I never will forget one prominent officer who went to Haiti, who told me—he said, “You know, when you sent us down there, I just didn't know about that, but I'm glad we gave those people a chance to save their country.”

I think that of all ranks and all walks of life, our military people, they get caught up in actually seeing what they can do. The military is the most well-organized operation in our society, so you can only imagine the contrast between going into a war zone or a society that is totally dissolved over racial or ethnic or religious hatreds. To a little child who is used to living in chaos, seeing the United States as a symbol of both order and goodness, both things, is astonishing. And what I mostly hear back from the members of the Armed Services is when they see that and they see the human reaction it evokes and they see what it does for the image of the United States in those areas, most

of them are very proud to have done what they have done.

Kosovo

Mrs. Cohen. You talked about Kosovo. It's very timely right now. What are we going to do? Are we going in on the ground? Are we going to be just that 10 percent of NATO, or are we going to be the dominant force? Who is going to command people who go in on the ground?

The President. Well, first of all, unless there is an agreement between both parties, we will not go in on the ground, because we didn't go in on the ground in Bosnia until we had an agreement—everybody had to agree—because we were a peacekeeping force, not a war force designed to win a victory and then enforce the peace.

Mrs. Cohen. But we will defend ourselves.

The President. Absolutely. We'll have vigorous rules of engagement if necessary to defend ourselves, just as we've had in Bosnia. And the more vigorous our right to defend ourselves, the less likely it is we'll ever have to do it.

But anyway, to go back to the first question, the difference in this and Bosnia is that this movement reflects the continued development within Europe of security capacity and the idea that the Europeans have that they should take the lead for their own security. So this time, all we have been asked to do within NATO is to put up 14 percent of the troops. But it's a critical 14 percent because it bolsters the confidence in our NATO allies that there really is a European alliance, number one; and number two, the Kosovar Albanians want us there, which is interesting. Most Americans didn't know a thing about Kosovo or Albania until this whole thing started. But those folks knew about America. They knew about the American military, and they trust them to keep their word and do what they say they're going to do. So that's an enormous thing.

So we'll go in there if, in fact, it happens—and I hope it does—with only 14 percent of the force in the NATO command, working with perhaps other countries as well, like we work alongside Russians in Bosnia. That's one of the reasons that the mission has been a success. But this one reflects the continuing maturity and strength of the European capacity for self-defense. And I think it's going about the way we want. We think that they should do more

for themselves, but we also want to maintain our tie to the Europeans.

Accomplishments Past and Present

Mrs. Cohen. Sir, this is my last question. Everyone lately has been talking about “The Greatest Generation,” from Tom Brokaw on down to “Saving Private Ryan.” I think this is one of the greatest generations, the men and women serving now. What would you say to them? Because I remember the day that we went to Normandy in 1994, and that had to be—time for you. What would you say to the people serving now, if we look back 50 years from now, as to their contribution?

The President. Well, I would say that obviously what they’re doing may not be as dramatic as landing on Omaha Beach, and I certainly hope it won’t be as dangerous, ever. But what we know about World War II, looking back, is that even though after World War II there was this long twilight struggle of the cold war, it may be that World War II was the last war of mass slaughter of nation-states, certainly in Europe, because we stood up against the totalitarian dictatorships of Nazi Germany and their allies.

So it was of historic significance because, in the aftermath of World War I, we hope at least that it nailed the coffin, at least in the West and other more well-developed countries, on mass warfare by nations. And huge—millions and millions and millions of people died.

Then the cold war, we hope, brought an end to the world being divided between communism and freedom. But what these people are doing, and what 50 years from now their children and their grandchildren will be able to look back and see, is that they are erecting a defense for the 21st century. They are dealing with a hundred little problems, each of which could become a big problem and could swallow the world up. They are making the world safe for genuine self-determination, for freedom, for free commerce, for free exchange of ideas, in a way that no generation has ever tried to do or had to do before, because the world is so interconnected and one of these little problems can become a forest fire and spread around.

So they really—I think 50 years from now, when they look back, they will see that they didn’t bring an end to an era of slaughter the way the World War II generation did, with heroism and great sacrifice, but they did put Amer-

ica’s military might to work in building a new world, which is something that I think their children and grandchildren will be very, very proud of. And there is no doubt that the United States could not have done it by economic power alone. Without our military alliances, without the expansion of NATO, without the deployment in Bosnia, without our ability to continue to try to stop bad things from happening and weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, without our willingness to stay on the Korean Peninsula to try to stabilize situations there and work through the other tensions in Asia, we would not have been able to do this.

And if people in my position, the decision-makers, if we don’t mess it up, then the military will know that they were part of literally building the world different from any in all previous history. And that’s—I think that’s a legacy to be proud of.

Mrs. Cohen. It’s one you should be proud of, too. Thank you very much for this interview. Thank you, sir.

Opportunities for Women and Minorities

Mrs. Cohen. The recent mission that we had was Desert Fox. And we were fortunate at Christmas to be on the “Big E,” on the U.S.S. *Enterprise*, and we met a lot of the Navy pilots, and some of them were women. Could you talk about that?

The President. Yes. You know, we’ve had now, for a few years, women in combat pilot roles, and they’ve performed very well. And I think, to me, the most important thing is that this was done in Desert Fox without a lot of fanfare. The military did it without a lot of fanfare, and the women pilots themselves did it without a lot of fanfare. They worked for a long time; they trained for a long time; they waited for a long time. And when their chance came to do their job, they did their job without making a big deal of it, and they did it very, very well.

So I like the fact that it was done and the way it was done. I think since I’ve been President we’ve opened something like 250,000 duty positions to women that were not open previously. And it’s making a big difference. And there all these disputed areas of training, deployment areas, but I think that the disputes should not be allowed to obscure the underlying reality

that the military has dealt with the gender difference in the same way it dealt over time with racial differences, to open up a maximum number of roles and give people the maximum opportunity to live up to their own ability.

We were talking before about the pardon I gave posthumously to Henry Flipper, who was the first African-American graduate of West Point, remarkable engineer, good soldier, unfairly discharged. He was cleared of his dishonorable discharge over 20 years ago but never given a pardon, I think because we had never given a posthumous pardon before. But the Defense Department and I very much wanted to do it.

We gave the fourth star to Benjamin O. Davis not very long ago in tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen. I think that looking backward is really a way of—in this context—is a way of ensuring you'll continue to go forward. It's a way of reminding us how far we've come and what we missed when we deny any group of people who wanted to contribute to our military the chance to do so. And I hope that this forward movement will continue.

I mean, there will always be controversies around the edges, rules to be worked out, difficulties to be dealt with, but when you give patriotic Americans who want to serve and who can serve well, the chance to do it, you win.

Mrs. Cohen. Sir, if I may ask you a personal question, you have been a champion of diversity, you have always defended and stood up for the underdog, whether it's gender, whether it's race, whether it's age, whether even it's orientation. Where does that come from?

The President. I think two things in my long-ago past. First of all, with regard to women, my mother was widowed when I was born, and she was off studying to be a nurse. My grandparents raised me until I was 4. My grandmother worked, as well as my grandfather; my grandmother was a nurse. So I had always been around women who had to work to make a contribution to their family's welfare. And so I think from early childhood I always was particularly sensitive to any kind of discrimination against women or just denial of opportunity. And I was always sort of rooting for them because of my mother and my grandmother.

And on the race thing, I think it was because of my grandfather and the fact that when I was a child he had a little grocery store in

a predominantly black area of this little town we lived in. Most of the customers were black. And most of what I learned about people and human nature and treating everybody the same and also discrimination, I learned as a little boy just listening and watching and observing and being taught.

So, in a funny way, most southerners were at a—most white southerners were at a disadvantage in dealing with the civil rights revolution because they were raised with more explicit racial prejudice. But some of us were actually at an advantage because we had more human contact with African-Americans before others did, and if we were lucky enough to have parents or grandparents that taught us differently, I think it made a difference.

So I think those two things, you know, and just in my family—we always had sympathy for the underdog, too. We never believed it was right to keep anybody down. And we were all raised, all of us, never to build ourselves up because there was somebody else we could look down on.

And I think that's—if you think about it, if you generalize that, really that psychological problem is at the bottom of a lot of this racial and ethnic hatred around the world. A lot of these groups themselves are deprived of opportunity. They've had economic adversity, had all kinds of diversity, and a lot of them, frankly, are taught as groups that what gives meaning to their lives is that they're not a member of this other group; at least they've got somebody to look down on. And I just thank the Lord nearly every day that I was—it didn't have anything to do with me—I was lucky enough to have grandparents and a mother, a family situation where I was taught differently.

Mrs. Cohen. Well, we're lucky that we have a President who feels that way.

The President. Thank you. Thank you, Janet.

NOTE: The interview began at 11:10 a.m. on February 25 aboard Air Force One en route to Tucson, AZ. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on the 150th Anniversary of the Department of the Interior March 4, 1999

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, it's wonderful to be here today. I want to thank the great American Indian dancers. I got to watch on the screen, off the stage, and I thought they were wonderful. And I want to thank Dagmar and Mark for their presentations and for the employees they represent.

Mark, that was a pretty shameless pander to Bruce Babbitt, though. *[Laughter]* If that doesn't get you a raise, nothing will. *[Laughter]*

And I would like to say Secretary Babbitt has spent a lot of his time putting out fires, both figuratively and literally, some of which I lit. *[Laughter]* And I thank him for that and for his remarkable loyalty to this Department. I got kind of tickled when he said that talking to one of you reminded him of drinking water from a fire hydrant. Sometimes I feel like the fire hydrant looking at a pack of dogs. *[Laughter]*

For 6 years I have declined to tell these kinds of jokes because I have been told repeatedly it is not Presidential. *[Laughter]* But I feel kind of outdoorsy today, you know. *[Laughter]*

I would like to also say to all of you, I really appreciated the Secretary both featuring these two fine employees and talking about the other appointees. I know we have some previous administration appointees who have left to go on to other things here in the audience. I thank all of you who have served by my appointment and all of you who serve by choice in this Department.

I have some remarks to make, but I hope that you will forgive me if I mention a few words about a great American citizen who deeply loved the natural beauty of his native Minnesota. Justice Harry Blackmun died this morning, at the age of 90. In 24 years on the Supreme Court, he served with compassion, distinction, and honor. Every decision and every dissent was firmly grounded in the Constitution he revered, and his uncanny feel for the human element that lies just beneath the surface of all serious legal argument.

You can see his mind and heart at work in the landmark decision he wrote protecting women's rights to reproductive freedom, and in his decisions to make the promise of civil rights

actually come alive in the daily existence of the American people.

Hillary and I were deeply privileged to know Justice Blackmun and his wonderful wife of 58 years, Dottie, for quite a long while. I saw up close Harry Blackmun's intense passion—his passion for the welfare of the American people, for defending our liberties and our institutions, for moving us forward together. We send our respect and our prayers to Dottie and to his three daughters.

To the millions of Americans whose voices he heard and whose rights he defended, to the countless numbers of us who knew and loved him, Harry Blackmun's life embodied the admonition of the prophet Micah: He did justice, and he loved mercy. And now, he walks humbly with his God. Thank you very much.

Now, let me say that I've been wanting to come over here to thank you for a long time. I don't know that there has ever been a President who has benefited more, in personal ways at important times of his life, from the Department of the Interior. I was raised in Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, the first city in America to contain a national park. I spent my first 18 years in a State that is more than half-covered with pine and hardwood forests, which is why Mike Gauldin had a little trouble appreciating Arizona. *[Laughter]*

When I finished law school, I went home to the hills of northwest Arkansas and spent some of the happiest days of my life on the Buffalo River, the very first river set aside under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Today, my family and I have the great honor of living in the most beautiful home under the care of the National Park System. Sometimes it feels more like a zoo than a park, but I love it. Now, my lease is up in one year, 10 months, and 16 days—*[laughter]*—but who's counting? *[Laughter]*

Perhaps more than any other department of the Federal Government, the Interior Department really does embody the history of our country: the story of manifest destiny and the great western expansion; the story of fertile fields rising from arid desert, of people rising from the depths of the Great Depression, of

the nation marshaling the resources to win two World Wars; a story of scientific discovery and relentless exploration; a story of our country's struggles to recognize the dignity and independence and sovereignty and expand the opportunity of our first citizens, our Native Americans; a story of the efforts of this country to expand the horizons and make real the promise of America for all Americans, as Secretary Harold Ickes did when he invited the incomparable Marian Anderson to sing from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial 60 years ago, in 1939. Most of all, as Secretary Babbitt has proved every day, it is the story of our intensifying determination as a people to conserve and restore our precious natural resources.

In 1849 when this Department was launched, with a headquarters staff of 10 and a budget of \$14,200, it lacked a unifying purpose—hard to imagine you could do much more than one thing with that kind of money. [Laughter] Today, with a much larger staff and a considerably larger budget, the contrast is remarkable.

Under Bruce Babbitt's leadership, everything this Department does is guided by the unifying purpose of stewardship. As wise and dedicated stewards, you act in the recognition that all of us are but brief visitors on this small planet. You understand that everything we want for our children depends on protecting the forests, the streams, the deserts that were here so very long before we came along. Today, the "Department of Everything Else," as it was once called, is and forever will be the "Department of Stewardship." And for that, I thank you all.

Using a skillful touch, but not a heavy hand, you have achieved remarkable things. Many have been mentioned today, but because they're so important to me, I want to thank you personally for them.

Three years ago, we set out on a mission to preserve California's Headwaters Forest, the world's largest unprotected stand of old-growth redwoods. Three days ago, you did it. We did it. And aren't we glad? [Applause] Thanks to the tireless efforts of so many people here and at your sister agency NOAA, not one of the magnificent trees of Headwaters Forest will ever be logged. Anyone who has ever strolled through a grove of redwoods—and I have—who have seen the tangle of ferns at your feet and the living canopy reaching high overhead, knows that these ancient forests are as much a part of our legacy, as I said, as the world's great

cathedrals. Thank you for making them safe for all time.

We should also be proud that over the last 6 years we've set aside vast unspoiled areas of the Mojave Desert, designating three new national parks. We put a stop to a massive mining operation that threatened Yellowstone, the world's first national park.

To protect Utah's stunning red rock canyons, we created the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and completed the largest land exchange in the continental United States. And I have to tell you, I just returned from Utah, where the rest of my family went skiing and I thought about it. [Laughter] And I was so pleased that any number of people—after all the flak we took—any number of people came up to me, just on the street, and said, "Mr. President, you might have been right about that. I think this is going to work out fine, and I'm glad we saved that land." [Applause]

And in a project that has been particularly close to my heart because I have also been there, we are restoring the Florida Everglades, the largest restoration project ever undertaken in our Nation's history.

That is quite a legacy. But we have much, much more to do. This year, the last of this century, we must dedicate ourselves not to resting on these accomplishments but to building on them.

First, we must preserve more precious lands. I will soon send the Congress a plan to bestow the highest level of wilderness protection on more than 5 million acres of back-country lands within Yellowstone, Glacier, and other national parks. In these vast regions, the roar of bulldozers and chainsaws never again will drown out the call of the wild.

I'm also proposing an unprecedented \$1 billion Lands Legacy Initiative, which Secretary Babbitt mentioned, on which many of you worked. It will allow us to continue your efforts to protect natural and historic lands across our Nation, such as Civil War battlefields, remote stretches of the historic Lewis and Clark trail, and an additional 450,000 acres in and around Mojave and Joshua Tree National Parks.

It will also allow us to meet the stewardship challenges of a new century. It is no longer enough for our Nation to preserve its grandest natural wonders. As communities grow and expand, it has become every bit as important to preserve the small but sacred green and open

space closer to home. So my Lands Legacy Initiative will also help communities protect meadows and seashores, where children play; streams where sportsmen and women can fish; farmlands that produce the fresh harvest we often take for granted.

We believe this Lands Legacy Initiative must be a permanent legacy. So today I promise to work with Congress to create for the very first time a guaranteed fund for protecting and restoring priceless land all across America.

There are many good legislative ideas for achieving this goal. We think any solution must provide at least \$1 billion annually, with at least half dedicated to helping communities protect local green spaces. It also must recognize the unique environmental challenges of coastal States, without creating any new incentives for offshore oil drilling. Working together, we can ensure that not only our generation, but each generation to come, will have the resources to leave an even better land for those who follow.

Second, as we help preserve more open spaces, we have a great opportunity to help create more livable communities, healthy communities where people don't have to waste a gallon of gasoline driving to get a gallon of milk, where employers have no trouble recruiting workers interested in a high quality of life. The Vice President and I have proposed record funding for public transit and Better American bonds to help communities grow in ways that ensure a clean environment and strong, sustainable economic development.

Third, we must clean up the 40 percent of our waterways that still are too polluted for fishing and swimming. Most Americans don't know that, and many are surprised to hear it. I call on Congress to fully fund my clean water action plan and to reauthorize and strengthen the Clean Water Act.

Fourth, we must do more to meet our most profound, common global environmental challenge, the challenge of global warming. I have proposed a clean air partnership fund to help communities reduce both greenhouse pollution and smog, as well as tax and research incentives to spur clean energy technologies. I want to work with Members of Congress in both parties to reward companies that take early, voluntary action to reduce greenhouse gases.

Let me say just one thing here that's not in the script. A lot of you clapped and a lot of you were smiling, when I said I'd been to

Utah and people came up to me and said this Grand Staircase idea wasn't such a bad idea after all, and you nodded your head because you knew it all along. One of the biggest impediments to human progress in any free society is the persistence, buried deep in the brains of the people at large or people in decision-making positions, of old ideas that aren't right any longer. The biggest impediment we have to dealing with the challenge of climate change is not cheap oil. It is the old idea that we simply cannot have economic growth without industrial age patterns of energy use.

And I see it all over the world. I see it here in the United States. I see it in the United States Congress, where one subcommittee forced us to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars last year trying to defend our climate change plan, which had no new taxes, no big new regulations, was solely devoted to tax incentives and new research and development for new technologies.

Now, the fact is that things we do today to reduce greenhouse gas pollution—with available technologies, not to mention those that are just ahead and almost within our reach—will lower greenhouse gas emissions, will reduce the threat of global warming, and will create more jobs at higher incomes. The old idea is wrong. I ask the employees of the Interior Department to help the American people get rid of an old, wrong idea so that we can do this.

These are the things that we have to do: setting aside more lands; making more livable communities; cleaning up our waterways; dealing with the challenge of climate change. We can do it. I say to the Members of Congress in both parties, please join this crusade. I say to the majority party, the preservation of our natural resources, the stewardship of this great land, should not be a partisan issue.

This country never had a better conservation President than Theodore Roosevelt. For 12 years, I was a Governor. The first Governors' Conference in history was called by Theodore Roosevelt in 1908 to talk about conservation of our resources.

When I was out in Utah, I was looking through Roosevelt's four-volume history of the American West, and thinking to myself, why don't we have two parties equally committed to fulfilling his vision? So I implore the Congress: Let us not waste precious time battling over these bad antienvironmental riders, which

I am going to veto anyway; instead, let's go on with the work of America.

Let me say in closing one very personal thing. As I have already explained, I am as deeply indebted to the work of the Department of the Interior as any President could possibly be—to the visionaries like John Wesley Powell and Harold Ickes and Rachel Carson, to the park rangers that I've seen in Yellowstone and Grand Teton and other parks, to the people that were kind to me as a boy when I roamed the trails and the mountains of the national park which was my home.

In one way or the other, almost all of us have come to see nature as a precious but fragile gift and an important part of the fabric of our lives. Probably every one of us could cite one particular example where that came home to us as never before. I remember once in 1971, when I was driving to California to visit Hillary—we had just started seeing each other—and I stopped at the Grand Canyon. And I crawled out on a ledge about an hour-and-a-half or two before sunset, and I just sat there for 2 hours, and I watched the Sun set on Grand Canyon. If you've never done it, you ought to do it. And because of the way the rocks are layered over millions of years, it's like a kaleidoscope. And the colors change over and

over and over again, layer by layer by layer as the Sun goes down. It is a stunning, stunning thing to see the interplay of light and stone and realize how it happened over the ages. I never got over it. I think about it all the time, now, nearly 30 years later.

That kind of moment can't be captured in the words I have shared with you, or even photographed, because the important thing is the interaction of human nature with nature. But we've all felt it. And we all know that part of our essential humanity is paying respect to what God gave us and what will be here a long time after we're gone.

That is what the Interior Department means to me. And after 150 years, it's what it means to all of America's past and to America's great future.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the Sidney B. Yates Auditorium at the Department of Interior. In his remarks, he referred to Interior Department employees Dagmar C. Fertl and Mark Oliver, winners of the Unsung Hero Award. The related proclamation on the death of Harry A. Blackmun is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of Harry A. Blackmun *March 4, 1999*

Justice Harry Blackmun, who died this morning, was a great American citizen. In 24 years on the Supreme Court, Justice Harry Blackmun served with compassion, distinction, and honor. Every decision and every dissent was firmly grounded in the Constitution he revered and his uncanny feel for the human element that lies just beneath the surface of all serious legal argument.

You can see his mind and heart at work in the landmark decision he wrote protecting women's rights to reproductive freedom and in his decisions to make the promise of civil rights actually come alive in the daily existence of the American people.

Hillary and I were deeply privileged to know Justice Blackmun and his wonderful wife of 58

years, Dottie, for quite a long while. I saw up close Harry Blackmun's intense passion—his passion for the welfare of the American people, for defending our liberties and our institutions, for moving us forward together. We send our respect and our prayers to Dottie and to his three daughters.

To the millions of Americans whose voices he heard and whose rights he defended, to the countless numbers of us who knew and loved him, Harry Blackmun's life embodied the admonition of the prophet Micah: He did justice, and he loved mercy. And now, he walks humbly with his God.

NOTE: The related proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Mar. 4 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement on the National Assessment of Education Progress March 4, 1999

Today's release of State-by-State National Assessment of Education Progress scores is evidence that our efforts to raise academic standards have begun to pay off. Many States have shown significant improvement in reading in the last 4 years, and some States that had scores well below the national average have made the greatest gains. But much remains to be done to ensure that every child in America is mastering the basics. That is why I urge the Senate

to vote this week to continue funding for 100,000 new, well-prepared teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. Parents and teachers across the country know that smaller classes lead to improved student performance in reading and other basic skills. We should grasp this opportunity to build on the gains we have made, so that every child in America is prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Statement on the Murder of Tourists in Uganda March 4, 1999

I was deeply saddened to learn of the brutal violence that erupted Monday morning in a nature preserve in southwestern Uganda. Hillary and I have extended our profound condolences to the families of the victims.

Eight innocent tourists from the United States, Great Britain, and New Zealand were killed. All of the victims were there because they loved Africa. It was a senseless and cowardly murder, apparently committed by those who perpetrated the Rwandan genocide in 1994. If this attack was intended as a warning to our Nation to stop supporting those in the region seeking reconciliation and justice, those who

committed it should understand that we will not be deterred in any way.

We will not forget these crimes, nor rest until those who committed them are brought to justice. Already, a team of FBI experts is on the ground, working with Ugandan authorities to gather the relevant evidence so indictments of the perpetrators can be made.

Let me also underscore our commitment to breaking the cycle of violence and impunity that has gripped the Great Lakes region, so that all who live in and visit the region can do so without fear.

Remarks at a Screening of "Dare To Compete: The Struggle of Women in Sports" March 4, 1999

Thank you. I hate to risk spoiling the moment. I'd like to ask you all to join me in thanking Jeff and HBO for this magnificent gift to our country. *[Applause]* Thank you.

As I watched this film I had many thoughts. Hillary and I have been privileged to know some of the athletes that were featured. I missed Flo-Jo again. I knew I would never have a golf swing like Babe Zaharias. *[Laughter]* I knew I would never dunk the ball like you. *[Laughter]*

I remembered how desperately I wanted Billie Jean to win that tennis match—*[laughter]*—for the sake of my mother, my then-girlfriend.

I remembered all the times as a private citizen—when I'm upstairs at the White House now, I can indulge my obsession with sports by watching women athletes as well as men, across a whole range of endeavors—all the joy, all the elation, all because the pioneers in this room and on this film dared to compete. And

we owe all of you who are here and all of those who are featured, all those living and all those gone, a profound debt of gratitude.

I also remembered again, looking at Senator Bayh, the importance of what we do here—to give the American people the right to live out their dreams without regard to whatever particular conditions define them. Where would we be without title IX? There were only 300,000 girls all over America in high school sports then; today, there are well over 2 million. The law makes a difference, too, and we will do our best here to be faithful to it.

But finally, let me say—as the grandson and son of two women who worked and did their best to make their way in life; as the husband of a remarkable woman who has made her way; as the father of a daughter I hope will always be free to make hers—what Billie Jean said about the tennis match is true of this whole subject. This is about more than sports. This is about the fundamental right of every human being to dream and work and strive and the obligation never to quit, never to give in, never

to be limited, never to be defined—and our obligation to see that all those who come behind us have that right to jump and soar in athletics, in music, in every endeavor. Even some day, someone of a different gender will be standing here giving a speech like this, and I hope it won't be too long.

So we thank you for the gifts you have given us. We thank you for the gifts you have given our daughters. We hope our granddaughters will think this is a quaint remembrance, because all of them will have, without question, the right to live their dreams.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jeffrey L. Bewkes, chairman and chief executive officer, Home Box Office, Inc. (HBO); former tennis star Billie Jean King; and former Senator Birch Bayh, who sponsored legislation which became Title IX—Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, part of Public Law 92–318, the Education Amendments of 1972.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy

March 5, 1999

The President. Good afternoon. I very much enjoyed my first meeting with Prime Minister D'Alema. I am proud of our alliance and our friendship with Italy.

I have to begin this press conference by stating again our great sorrow over what occurred at Cavalese. When I called former Prime Minister Prodi immediately after that terrible event, I made it clear that we would take strong measures to assure that something like that would not occur again. We have taken such measures to enhance safety; we will continue to do so.

The Prime Minister and I today agreed that our Secretary of Defense and their Minister of Defense will review these operational and safety measures together to assess their adequacy and to determine whether additional measures should be taken to ensure the highest levels of safety. They will report to the Prime Minister and me as soon as possible.

I know you will understand that I cannot comment on any particular case, in part because legal proceedings are still pending, but let me say that our objective has been, and remains, to determine responsibility and accountability in an open and fair process. As I said when this happened, the United States is responsible for this terrible tragedy. Again I want to say to the people of Italy, on behalf of the American people, we are profoundly regretful and apologetic for what has occurred, to the families and to all the people of Italy.

Now, we must remember that we have been strong partners and good friends, especially in working for our common security. Today we discussed the coming 50th Anniversary NATO Summit. It will be here in April. We will admit new members. We will plan to meet new challenges. We will address our European allies' initiative, which I fully support, to enhance their

defense capabilities and assume a greater role in our common defense.

NATO's efforts have been aimed at helping the Eastern half of Europe enjoy the freedom and stability the Western half has built over the last half century. The end of the cold war made this a possibility but not a certainty. We have learned that if we do not contain conflict in Europe, it will spread, and we will pay a far higher price to deal with it down the road. That is why we and our allies acted to stop the war in Bosnia and start it on the path toward reconciliation and democracy and why we are seeking to end the conflict in Kosovo. If we don't and it intensifies, there will be a major refugee crisis in the center of Europe, something that Italy knows all too well.

Almost certainly it will draw in nearby nations, including the bordering states of Albania and Macedonia, which today are engaged in the fragile process of building their own democracies. But the next round of talks, set to begin in 10 days, now—I very much hope the Kosovar Albanians will follow through on their statement at Rambouillet, and sign the agreement to end the fighting and restore self-government.

It is in their strong interest, and it is also in Serbia's interest. Serbia must accept the agreement and a NATO-led force in Kosovo, which is essential for peace to take hold. And NATO remains ready to act if Serbia instead continues the violent repression of Kosovo's people.

The Prime Minister recently wrote, "the turmoil and uncertainty in southeast Europe has made Italy a frontline state." How true. It is terribly important that we, therefore, move together to strengthen stability across this region. NATO has been working closely with some of southeast Europe's emerging democracies to do that.

Two weeks ago, when President Chirac was here, I announced a new initiative to expand security cooperation with these nations, to coordinate security assistance from NATO countries to them, and to improve cooperation and economic development across the region. I hope and believe Italy will play a key role in this effort.

The Prime Minister and I also talked about our common efforts and our common interest in spurring global economic growth, bringing greater stability to the world's financial system, and putting a human face on the global econ-

omy by supporting working families and aiding the most vulnerable citizens, communities, and countries.

Today I am grateful to know that our economy reached a milestone of 18 million new jobs last month, since 1993. But the United States cannot grow over the long run unless prosperity is increasing for our friends and partners in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. I want to work with the Prime Minister to address growth, the stability of the financial system, and the human needs of the 21st century economy. And I must say I'm quite optimistic about our prospects, based on our first meeting today.

Again Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. The podium is yours.

Prime Minister D'Alema. Thank you, Mr. President, for your words, and thank you for our talks which, for me, have been very interesting, indeed.

I conveyed to the President of the United States that I was personally shocked, and so is Italian public opinion, owing to a verdict which gave the impression that the tragic accident at Cavalese could find no effective answer in terms of determination and punishment of those responsible for it.

I thanked the President of the United States for the sorrow he decided to express in remembering that tragedy. It is a sincere sorrow and a feeling we have great appreciation for. The President of the United States repeated here that he believes that accident concerns the responsibility of the United States. I also understand that at this moment we cannot and must not interfere with the specific judicial proceeding which is not yet over which will include new trials and new verdicts.

I just wish to stress one point. That event certainly cannot be considered an ordinary occurrence. It is not normal for a military aircraft to fly in a valley, 300 feet from the ground. It is neither normal nor acceptable that this leads to the consequences it did lead to. We expect that at the end of the process it is made clear who was responsible for this accident and that these people are punished for it.

At the same time, as President Clinton said, we gave a mandate to the Defense Secretaries of the United States and Italy to jointly reexamine all measures concerning the functioning of military bases, concerning the military exercises around such bases, all the safety measures that

will reassure citizens that such accidents can never again occur.

I must say, I appreciated the human sensitivity and the serious way in which President Clinton reminded us all of his commitments to Prime Minister Prodi and his will that justice is done in a clear way.

Our talks have shown that the friendship and cooperation between the United States and Italy is very strong, both in the preparation for the NATO summit and in the preparation of the G-7/G-8 meeting, as well as in confronting the most acute and delicate international crises.

We both want the Rambouillet peace accord to be signed. We ask this with great determination—we ask this of Albanians, Kosovar Albanians, for whom this peace agreement means autonomy, safety, and recognition of their rights. And we ask the same, with great determination, of the Yugoslav Republic and Serbian Republic, which have a duty to respect the rights of Kosovar Albanians. And for them the peace accord means putting an end to guerrilla activities and ensuring respect for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia.

We are ready to take upon ourselves our responsibilities, as we did in Bosnia and Albania, together with our allies. We are ready to deploy our forces to ensure peace and security in that war-torn area.

We also talked about Russia, the very serious problems in Russia, the need for a common strategy between Europe and the United States to help Russia to embark upon the path of a more solid democracy, an open and functioning market economy.

I also expressed to the President of the United States my own personal gratitude for his commitment to peace in the Middle East. And I repeated to him our commitment to support and encourage that peace process.

It was very interesting for me to have a dialog on the major problems of the economy and of societies, making a comparison between the experiences and problems of Europe and the United States of America. We admire the American economic dynamism, the American capability for innovation, for job creation and creation of wealth. At the same time, we are very fond of the social rights and social solidarity which is one of the assets of Europe. This is, indeed, a major issue for a shared dialog and effort at finding new ways between Europe and the United States.

How do we combine together strong, economic dynamism with the values of social solidarity? We have opened a dialog on this issue, on this major issue which President Clinton so many times has been actively engaged upon. And I suggested to him that after the forum that was held in New York with Prime Minister Prodi, with Tony Blair, with President Clinton himself—I suggested to him that after that dialog we could have a similar dialog, including European and American intellectuals and political leaders.

And President Clinton told me he will think about this idea, namely, about the possibility for a new dialog of this nature. And we would be very pleased to host it in our country, organize it. It is very important for me that, as well as having a loyal and active alliance at a military and political level, we can develop a common dialog and rethink it together. The world is confronting us with major challenges, and we must and can search for the answer to these challenges together.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you. Now we will alternate questions between the American and Italian press.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press]?

U.S. Aircraft Incident in the Italian Alps

Q. Mr. President, the Prime Minister said yesterday that he was baffled by the acquittal of the Marine pilot, and that he felt that the accident was a massacre. What do you say to Italians who feel that justice has not been done, and that if the pilot is not guilty, then someone else is?

And to the Prime Minister, sir, could you say, do the President's remarks today about this, do you think that they will calm the anger in Italy? How far will they go?

The President. Well, let me answer. First of all, because there are at least two further court-martial proceedings to go forward, I have to be quite careful in not making any comments that have any kind of impact on those one way or the other.

To me, the important thing now is that the United States must clearly and unambiguously shoulder the responsibility for what happened. Our presence in Italy, our air operations, our training operations were the context, the environment in which this horrible thing occurred. I think the things that we can do are, first

of all, to work closely with the Italians, as I've said, to make sure that we have done everything we can to reduce the prospect to zero that something like this will occur again and that our Italian counterparts agree with that and agree with the changes; secondly, that we do what is appropriate by the families. And there was a modest cash settlement given to each of the victims' families shortly after the accident to deal with immediate expenses. And under Italian law, they file claims, adjudged by the Italians, and then we pay 75 percent of those claims under our agreement.

And the third thing is to do everything we can to have a just disposition of the cases that are now going through. And I'm committed to all three things. I will do the best I can. I also think it's very important. I don't know that my words could ever ease the pain of someone who lost a child or a parent or a sibling or a spouse in that terrible accident. But at least it's important for the people of Italy and for those families to know that the United States is not trying to duck its responsibility and that we are heartbroken and horrified by what happened. And we're going to do our best to make sure that nothing like that ever happens again.

Prime Minister D'Alema. I think President Clinton spoke very clearly. We are not asking for a scapegoat. I do not know who was responsible for what happened. It is up to the justice system to determine who was responsible and who is guilty. But we expect that at the end of this process it is clear and it is determined who is responsible, and those who are found responsible are punished through a fair trial. We are confident that this will happen.

Q. Prime Minister D'Alema, you touched upon something that we Italian journalists have very much at heart, the Cavalese events. But I ask you to make an effort, could you please very sincerely say to us, are you satisfied with the answer given by President Clinton on this specific point, on the Cavalese tragedy?

And I'd like to ask President Clinton, were you expecting a verdict of acquittal on this case? Thank you.

Prime Minister D'Alema. Let me repeat, I appreciated President Clinton's words very much and the commitment he has taken. I consider them to be serious commitment. We shall say we are satisfied when whoever is responsible for what happened is found guilty and punished. With so many casualties, with so many deaths,

you can hardly ever say you are satisfied. It is a word I cannot use. Let me say very clearly that I have appreciated very much, and I think we should appreciate, the great human sincerity with which President Clinton has shared this tragedy, with no arrogance, with no sense of detachment.

The President. Sir, let me say again, because the person involved in that court-martial is facing another action and because there is yet another action against another person who was in the plane, another trial pending, I cannot comment on what my reaction to the verdict was, because anything I say, under our law, that goes across the airwaves, could be inferred one way or the other to have an impact on a pending proceeding, in ways that would be disastrous for what I think we all want, which is an orderly and just process.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]?

Kosovo/Missile Defense System

Q. Mr. President, I have a couple of foreign policy questions. Do you expect a breakthrough on Kosovo, especially in view of—the policy seems to be attacking or threatening Serbia and then retreating. It's constant. And my other question is, how can you justify chipping away at the ABM Treaty, which helped keep the peace during the cold war, and pour billions and billions into a Star Wars defense against the possibility that starving North Korea might fire a missile at us?

The President. Well, first of all—[laughter]—you know, she's been doing this for quite a long time. [Laughter] And it's not a fair fight. She's better at it than I am.

Let me, first of all, say about Kosovo, I don't think it's fair to say that NATO threatens and backs away. We took military action in Bosnia, which led directly to the peace. So I don't think Mr. Milosevic is under any illusion that if NATO has an action order outstanding, that we won't activate it. And I would be astonished to believe that our allies would back away from a commitment we had made.

I think what happened at Rambouillet was quite important and justified the request, not of Serbia but of both parties—both parties—for some more time to try to sell this agreement, to ruminate on it, to decide how to respond to it. The Kosovars themselves wanted that. Finally we have an agreement, not in every single

point but in large measure, between the Serbs and the Kosovars on what the nature of autonomy would be over the next 3 years. That's quite an astonishing achievement.

And so my perception is quite the reverse. I think we were facing a humanitarian disaster in Kosovo last summer. We came in with the threat of force, and it worked, and we averted it. And we didn't have to use force because we averted the tragedy; we got what we wanted. Were there violations of the cease-fire? Yes, but they were violations from both sides.

And there were problems there. But that's why we started this new process with the new NATO action order. It became clear we had to do more because, particularly, of the terrible killings in one village in Kosovo, that were precipitated by the Serbs.

Now, I do not believe that, at least at the present point, Mr. Milosevic could be under any illusion, based on what happened in Bosnia—that—from the point of the view of the United States, anyway, and what NATO has said—that we will keep our word. And I think we did the right thing to give both parties the time they asked for at Rambouillet to try to figure out how to get to “yes.” The most important thing here is how to get to “yes.” It's a good agreement. It will save lives. It will stabilize Kosovo. It will move us toward genuine autonomy, which was working there, I might add, before it was taken away a decade ago.

Now, on the ABM Treaty, let me say, doing the research on a missile defense system, which is not a violation of the ABM treaty—it is theoretically possible that we could develop a missile defense system that, either by its nature or by where it was deployed, would be a violation of the ABM Treaty. I, personally, have told the Russians over and over again I have no intention of abrogating the ABM Treaty. Anything we do, we will do together.

But the only threat we have—excuse me—the threat that the United States is likely to face 10 or 20 years from now from missiles coming in is by no means—not just from North Korea. It is a fact that many countries with whom we have serious differences now are making vigorous efforts either to build or to buy missiles with increasing ranges, that go distances far beyond anything that would be necessary to protect their own territory.

General Shelton has said that this missile defense is tough; it's like trying to hit a bullet

with a bullet. That's what missile defense is. I think if we believe that the technology might be there, we owe it to ourselves and to all of our allies, not just our old allies but some of our post-cold-war allies, to try to develop that, along with an adequate warning system, to try to prevent countries that are desperately trying to get missiles, that they could not possibly need to defend their own territory, from ever taking offensive action against us or anyone else.

But I have no intention of supporting or initiating a unilateral abrogation of the ABM Treaty. I will not do that. We have been very candid with the Russians. We have talked to them about what we are going. We have talked about what kinds of information we might share in the future. But I have never advocated, initiated, encouraged, sanctioned, or blinked at the possibility that we could unilaterally abrogate the ABM Treaty. I personally would be very opposed to that.

NATO Bases in Italy

Q. Prime Minister D'Alema, next Wednesday you will have to answer the questions by the Members of Parliament. Can you say as of today that your government will not have to revise the legal status of NATO bases? And I have a question for President Clinton. What is your answer to the many Members of the Italian Parliament who are asking for a revision of the status of the NATO bases?

Prime Minister D'Alema. We very clearly stated that we intend to revise the rules and very seriously go through and check all the rules relating to military actions, exercises, training, movements, flights, in order to ensure high and certain standards of safety for the civilian population. So to some extent, this does not concern the legal status of the military personnel, which is, as you know, regulated by a 1952 convention. It should be revised by all the countries that signed it, if it is to be revised. But this is a way to respond to the need to reconcile the function of these military bases—which are not a concession to someone else; they are a tool to defend our own security and our common security—it is a way to reconcile this with the safety of our citizens. We shall discuss this.

I don't know what you meant by legal status or position. Legally speaking, the United States has asked to abide by the convention, to implement the convention according to which military

personnel working in military bases abroad, in case of charges, should be tried by the country of origin. This convention applies to all countries. It is not an American privilege. For example, when the Italian pilots were charged for the Ramstadt accident, they were tried in Italy. We required that the 1952 convention be applied, exactly like the United States has asked to apply the 1952 convention for the Cavalese accident.

Naturally, the convention must be respected and complied with, because it exists. But we will be much happier to comply with it if our citizens and our public opinions are reassured that by adopting these procedures, justice is done.

The President. I'm not sure I have a great deal to add to what the Prime Minister said. I agree with what he said.

If the question that many Italian officials are asking is, shouldn't there be an agreed-upon set of changes in the procedures for the movements and training of American military personnel to make them safer for the people of Italy, I agree with that. If the question is, should our very presence there be reexamined, and the agreement under which Americans charged with offenses should be tried in American jurisdiction, my answer is just what the Prime Minister said.

I believe it serves both our interests; for example, when we were establishing our presence in Bosnia, I flew into Aviano, into our base there. And I took a C-17, one of our supply planes and flew into Bosnia. I also flew up to Hungary from there, the place where we had our base, from which we moved our people in there. And it seemed to me that our presence there, in that way, furthered Italy's interest, Europe's interest, NATO's interest, and not simply American interest. That, of course, is a judgment that every country and all the decisionmakers make, in a way, on an annual basis. They decide. They continue to support these things.

But I believe that the larger partnership has served the United States and Italy very well.

Larry [Larry McQuillan, Reuters].

Monica Lewinsky/U.S. Aircraft Incident in the Italian Alps

Q. Mr. President, more than 70 million Americans watched Monica Lewinsky's recent television interview, and a number of people are buying a book that she's put out. I'm just wondering, do you have any thoughts on it that

you can share with us that perhaps might bring closure to this? And do you have any problem with the idea that she's actually making money off that relationship?

And Prime Minister, some of your countrymen are suggesting that NATO ought to conduct a review, an investigation of this accident. Do you support that idea, to just ensure a sense of impartiality?

The President. Well, let me answer your question. First of all, I did not see the interview, so I can't really comment on that. What I hope is that she will be permitted to go on with her life, and I hope it will be a good life. And I hope that the efforts that I have made and that I continue to make every day—at home and at work—will bear fruit. And I hope that all the people who have been hurt by this, including totally innocent people who have massive legal bills, will get the help they need. And I'm determined to do what I can to help them.

But the important thing is that the American people are virtually screaming at us to get on with their lives and their business and to do their business. And I'm going to do my best to do that, as well as I possibly can. But you know, this was a pretty tough thing for everybody involved, and I wish her well. I hope it works out all right for her.

Q. So the money is okay?

The President. You know, that's not a decision for me to make. I think that my—I can only—one of the things I've learned, that I've had to relearn all over again in this last 4-year episode, is that all I can control in life is what I do and what I say. And if I do and say the right things, then that's the thing that's best for me and my family and for the American people. And that's what I'm concentrating on doing.

And I don't wish anyone ill who was caught up in this. And she paid quite a high price for a long time, and I feel badly for that. So I just hope it works out all right.

Prime Minister D'Alema. I think that at present we should follow with attention and respect the proceedings and the judicial process which is envisaged in the United States. As President Clinton mentioned, two more trials have to be held concerning these events at Cavalese. When this process is over, when we have a complete picture of responsibilities and punishment for the events, then we shall evaluate what to do, once it is made clear who is

responsible and these people are punished. But at this time, I don't think it would be right to examine other possibilities and put forward new ideas that do not seem well-founded as yet.

*Domestic Economies/Trade Issues/
United Nations Security Council*

Q. Prime Minister, you talked about American, European, and Italian values. There are some criticisms toward American values. These American values have created 18 million new jobs in the last years. How many of these are you willing to learn to create new jobs in Italy and in Europe, if any?

Mr. President, the problem with Italian public opinion is a little bit more widespread than just the crisis, the accident, that happened yesterday. We have a crisis on trade, and Italy somehow feels to be a target within the U.S. So what can you say to reassure Italians, and what actions are you going to take? Because the public opinion is rather upset, not just for that, but for the fact that Italian products are constantly, constantly, whenever there is a trade war, on target. And on other issues like the Security Council, the U.S. is against the Italian position, while Italy seems to be having a position very much in sync on G-8 and NATO position with the U.S. What do you say to that? What do you say to the public opinion? What will you do?

Prime Minister D'Alema. It is not the first time that I have expressed great interest for the dynamic nature of the American society and economy. I think that when exchanging views and ideas and suggestions it is certainly useful for Europe to learn some lessons from—some important lessons—from the experience of the United States.

And more specifically, I think that one of the features that impressed me most is their speed in terms of innovation, the ability to innovate, and the amount of investment in education. Last night I was talking about this with the Secretary of Education of the United States. And I think that, undoubtedly, this is a strategic issue. The speed of innovation, the investment in human capital certainly are strategic options. And these are some of the things—there are other things, as well—that we are interested in, in the American experience. And Europe, which has a more rigid, heavier, less dynamic system—and so does Italy—must learn from them.

The President. If I might just say I will answer the question you asked me, but I would like to also comment on the question you asked the Prime Minister. The great struggle every serious country faces is how to reap the benefits of the astonishing revolution in technology and the globalization of the economy, and to minimize the disruptions so that you can have some sort of stable family and community life.

Now, what we had to do when I took office was to get rid of this terrible deficit we had, which kept interest rates high for us and too high for you and was taking too much money out of the global economy, and to focus on some areas where we really needed to do better with our own economy. And it is true that we are blessed in this country with a very dynamic system. Of the 18.1 million new jobs we've had, almost 17 million of them were created in the private sector; they were non-governmental jobs. An enormous percentage of them were created in small businesses.

But I wouldn't say that you have nothing to look to within Italy. I told the Prime Minister, when I was a Governor, I came to Italy 10 years ago to study the economic organizations of small businesses in Northern Italy that grew out of the medieval artisans' guilds. And I think—and they are quite flexible; they have individual business owners working together to market their products, to develop new products, to advertise their products. There are all kinds of exciting options which will be job-creating if you can figure out how to multiply them.

And what we are trying to do in America, now—by strengthening our family leave law, by strengthening our child care support system, by moving people from welfare to work, but making sure they keep the health care for their children—is to get the benefits of having a social contract that recognizes the need for families and communities to get support, and the benefits of the dynamic economy.

You're coming at it from a different direction. What you need to do is to keep as many of the benefits of the social contract as you can but to make the economy as dynamic as possible, because you know that you have a country full of intelligent, innovative people who could generate more jobs than they're generating.

But understand that this is the dilemma that every single country is facing from some perspective or another. And no one has all the answers. And what I would hope that the people

of Italy will give the Prime Minister the ability to do is to try some new ideas to support him in admitting that no one has solved this problem perfectly, and that we should want responsible leaders to have serious thoughts about new ideas and to try them out without having someone try to derail every effort that they make. I think he deserves some support in addressing this issue, because for any of us to pretend that we either shouldn't address it or have all the answers, I think both approaches would be quite wrong.

Now, let me just say a word on the trade issue. First of all, the specific issue you mentioned must feel strange to Italy, since the Italians have not really been at the forefront of this decade-long dispute between the EU and the United States over the banana issue. It's not really about bananas; it's about rules.

I'm trying now—right now—to get the United States, through the authority of the Congress, to take the lead in further market-opening measures. I have done my best to keep our markets open during this very difficult period for the Asian economy and for much of the Latin American economy. We had a record trade deficit last year. I thought that, except for where I thought our laws were being violated, like in steel—where we were having steel dumped—I felt that we should try to do that, that that should be our contribution, because we were doing well, and we ought to try to help these countries as much as we could.

But we cannot maintain an open trading system, which I am convinced is essential for global prosperity, unless we also have rules that are abided by. Twice—just twice since I've been President, we've won this case in the EU. I think we've won it 4 times over the last 10 years. It has gone on—somehow the rules have to work. That's what this is about.

And since it's the EU—I had nothing to do, by the way, with drawing up the details of what would be in the package of countervailing tariffs or duties. But I think our Trade Ambassador's office must have felt that since it was an EU dispute, there had to be some—we couldn't just pick out countries and play favorites in that way.

But I regret this very much. And we still have time to fix this. We can still fix this and it can be avoided, and I hope very much we will, in the next few weeks, get a resolution of this. But it's been going on 10 years. And we lose cases in the WTO all the time, and

we just take a deep breath and face the fact that we lost. It happens. Now, so I would say to the people of Italy, don't—it's not a unilateral issue.

Now, on the—you asked me about the United Nations. Let me just say—I can't—there are very few countries in the world, in the years that I've been President, who have shown more consistent leadership, even through a successive change of governments, than Italy. For us, it's a critical country in so many ways. And I was delighted that the Prime Minister would come here today. I would do anything I could to increase the responsibility and reach of Italy.

The United States has had a long-standing policy in favor of expanding the Security Council to include Japan and Germany, largely because of the size of their economies and their influence and their importance for that reason. And we have been—we have recognized that there are countries in the developing world that believe they should have more permanent membership. So we have been for an expansion in the size of the Security Council, generally, to guarantee certain continents and regions a permanent position.

The position we have taken should not be viewed as an anti-Italian position. We've tried to calculate how many people can you have on the Security Council and still have it function. That's basically where we've been. I'm not obsessed with any—there is no magic number. But what we're trying to do is not to hold back anyone but to keep the Security Council as a functioning body. But I doubt very seriously that there's another leader of any other country in the world that has a higher opinion of the international responsibility and capacity of the Italian Government and the Italian people than I do, after having observed it for 6 years.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 170th news conference began at 5:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Prime Minister Romano Prodi and Minister of Defense Carlo Scognamiglio of Italy; President Jacques Chirac of France; court-martial subjects Capt. Richard J. Ashby, USMC, and Capt. Joseph P. Schweitzer, USMC; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Monica S. Lewinsky, subject of Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's expanded investigation. The President

also referred to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Prime Minister D'Alema spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

In his remarks, the Prime Minister referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Statement on the Kennedy-Murray Amendments to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation *March 5, 1999*

I strongly support the efforts of Senators Murray and Kennedy to offer a class size amendment to the ed-flex bill. We must make a long-term commitment now to hire 100,000 new, well-prepared teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. The Republican leadership

is wrong to try to shut down debate on this bill before a class size amendment can be voted on. I urge them to allow an up-or-down vote on this amendment, and I urge every Senator to vote for it.

Statement on the Death of Billy Jack Gaither *March 5, 1999*

I share with many Americans a sense of grief and outrage at the tragic and violent death of Billy Jack Gaither in Alabama. This heinous and cowardly crime touches the conscience of our country, just as the terrible murders of James Byrd in Texas and Matthew Shepard in Wyoming did last year.

In times like this, the American people pull together and speak with one voice, because the acts of hatred that led to the deaths of such innocent men are also acts of defiance against the values our society holds most dear.

That is why I will continue to work for passage of the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act," which can empower the Federal Government, working with local authorities, to do even more to deter, investigate, and help prosecute crimes of hatred. The legislation would remove needless jurisdictional requirements and give the Depart-

ment of Justice the power to prosecute hate crimes committed because of the victim's sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

Laws represent values that we as a society cherish, and among those values is a belief that intolerance is un-American. And intolerance, left unchallenged, can inspire evil deeds that threaten the very fabric of this great country. All Americans deserve protection from hate. Nothing is more important to our country's future than our standing together against intolerance, prejudice, and violent bigotry. Congress can give power to such shared values by passing the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act." In so doing, all Americans can be made more safe and secure.

Hillary and I offer our prayers for the family and friends of Mr. Gaither, and our hope that their love for him, together with God's grace, will carry them through these trying times.

The President's Radio Address *March 6, 1999*

Good morning. This week we learned the good news that our efforts to raise academic standards for our children are beginning to pay

off. The National Assessment of Education Progress, or NAEP, released State test scores on Thursday that show that our children's

reading scores have risen, with some of the greatest gains in States that once scored below the national average.

Today I want to talk to you about what I think we must do to build on our progress, by putting more teachers in the classroom and reducing class size in schools around our country.

We all agree that to build a stronger nation we must build up our Nation's public schools. I have proposed a comprehensive education agenda to strengthen and improve our schools with more accountability, higher standards, more volunteer reading tutors for young children, and mentors for teenagers, with Internet connections in every classroom, and with more well-trained teachers in smaller classes.

As any parent, teacher, or school principal can tell you, smaller classes make a huge difference in our children's lives. Studies show that teachers in smaller classes spend less time on discipline and more time teaching. Students spend less time competing for attention and more time learning. Students in smaller classes outperform their peers.

For children in struggling communities, from remote rural areas to inner-city neighborhoods, small class size is even more critical. And with school enrollments at record highs and expected to keep rising, we must act now to reduce class size in all our Nation's public schools.

Across the country, more and more communities are recognizing the importance of smaller class size and trying to do something about it. To help them meet this challenge, I called on Congress early last year to pass my initiative to reduce class size by helping school districts hire 100,000 highly trained teachers. I'm pleased that Republican Members of Congress joined with Democrats and did the right thing in making a big downpayment toward meeting our goal.

Today the Department of Education is releasing guidelines that will let every school district in our Nation know how much money they will receive and how best to use the funds to reduce

class size in time for school this fall. But communities deciding now whether to hire and train new teachers for next year need to know whether they can count on the commitment Congress made last year to help them reduce class size for years to come. It is time to finish the job.

Now, this week the Senate and House will vote on a bill that gives States the flexibility they need to improve their public schools in spending Federal aid they receive. I support this bill. But I also strongly support efforts by Senators Murray and Kennedy and Representatives Clay and Wu to add an amendment to it that will fully fund 100,000 well-trained teachers over the next 6 years.

Unfortunately, Republican leaders are trying to shut down debate on the ed-flex bill before this important amendment on more teachers and smaller classes can even be voted on. Now, last October, just before the election, Republicans joined us in promising the American people more teachers and smaller classes. Less than 5 months later, we now have the first big test of whether this Congress is really willing to work together across party lines and with the White House to get things done for the American people, whether the Congress is serious about giving our children the education they need and deserve.

The choice is simple: Are we going to give Americans smaller classes or more partisanship? Are we going to put politics ahead of progress or put 100,000 teachers in our Nation's classrooms? I call on the Senate to allow an up-or-down vote on the Murray-Kennedy class size amendment, and I urge every Senator to vote for it. When it comes to our children's future, politics must stop at the schoolhouse door.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:08 p.m. on March 5 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Death of Amir Essa bin Salman Al-Khalifa of Bahrain March 6, 1999

I would like to express my deep sadness at the news that Shaikh Essa bin Salman Al-Khalifa of Bahrain has passed away. The prayers and condolences of all Americans go out to the royal family and the people of Bahrain.

The Amir was a good friend of the American people and a good friend of peace. He shared our desire to see a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. I take heart from the

personal commitment to forwarding the cause of peace the Amir expressed during his recent June visit to the United States. The Amir shared his heartfelt hope to see peace come to his region in eloquent and passionate words.

Shaikh Essa did much to deepen and strengthen the historic relationship between America and Bahrain. He will be missed.

Remarks to the Community in Posoltega, Nicaragua March 8, 1999

Thank you very much. President Aleman, Mayor Zeledon, Mayor Palacios, Bishop Vivas. To our school director, Julia Martinez Toruno, and all the children who are here; to the members of the Government of Nicaragua and the National Assembly; to the—[inaudible]—Boys Choir and to the young woman who sang the national anthems of both nations, the granddaughter of former President Violeta Chamorro; and to all the people of Nicaragua: thank you for making us feel so very welcome today.

My fellow Americans and I are moved and humbled to be here in Posoltega, where the terrible mudslide took so many sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, neighbors and friends. I have come to pay my respects to those who lost their lives and to reaffirm the support of the American people for those who were spared and for your rebuilding. In this decade, with courage and strength, you have created a new Nicaragua. You have earned the world's admiration, and now you deserve the world's support in this moment of need.

Somos humanos, y nos ayudamos. We are brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends. We must help each other.

I thank President Aleman for recognizing the work of the United States to provide food, shelter, and health care; to renew the farms and small businesses; to rebuild the roads and bridges and homes. I thank our Armed Forces for all they have done, including building a new health center in Wiwili, north of here. Now

our Agency for International Development will provide equipment, training, and immunizations for this health center and others in Nicaragua, so that your people can get back on their feet and stay healthy as they rebuild their lives.

Today we have brought 3,000 pounds of school supplies for the children of Posoltega, donated by organizations all across America and by our own workers at the White House. I know that you need more temporary shelters until permanent homes can be built. I know you need to speed the discovery and the removal of landmines left from the war, because the hurricanes may have moved them and made them more dangerous. With these tasks, too, we will help.

I know that more is needed, and urgently. I have asked our Congress for \$956 million to support our reconstruction effort here. I am grateful that leaders in our Congress from both political parties have expressed support, and I thank the Members of the United States Congress who have come to Nicaragua with me and are sitting over here, Senator Graham and Congressmen Becerra, Deutsch, and Reyes.

This aid will help to speed the rebuilding of homes, farms, businesses, and roads. It will help your Government to deliver aid better. It will allow us to send more Peace Corps volunteers. And I would like to thank the Peace Corps volunteers who are here today for their service in Nicaragua.

As we see the dust in the wind today, it reminds us that you must rebuild in a way that

helps you to manage the environment better by preserving trees that can help prevent a mudslide or curbing pollution that can cause temperatures to rise. We can avoid or lessen future catastrophes. We can manage the land and water and grow your economy, and I know you want to do that.

To help you focus on reviving your economy, my aid package would also forgive or defer much of Nicaragua's—and Honduras'—debts to our Government. And I have asked our Congress to reduce trade barriers between the two of us so that all the people of Central America can work and grow their way back to prosperity and normal life.

We have provided temporary immigration protection for Central Americans in our country, and I will seek a fair solution to all the immigration issues this tragedy has heightened.

In times past, there was conflict, turbulence, and distrust between our two nations, but now we are bound together in our common commitment to democracy. And democracy will light the way to a brighter future for Nicaragua through government, through voluntary organi-

zations, through local officials working with citizens who are participating in decisions that affect their lives, through leaders working to see that no one exploits this tragedy for personal gain and no one is left behind. And we will work with you every step of the way.

A hurricane, a mudslide—they can destroy lives; they can destroy homes; they can destroy a life's work. But they must not be allowed to destroy hope. Not so long ago, your country overcame a terrible war and emerged even stronger. You will overcome this adversity as well. And we will work with you every day until the task is done.

Thank you. God bless you. *Muchas gracias.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. on Jose Dolores Toruno Lopez High School field. In his remarks, he referred to President Arnaldo Aleman of Nicaragua; Mayor Felicita Zeledon of Posoltega; Mayor Eligio Palacios of Chichigalpa; Monsignor Bosco Vivas, Bishop of León; and Maria Andres Chamorro, who sang the national anthems.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Las Casitas Volcano Mudslide Survivors in Posoltega

March 8, 1999

[President Arnaldo Aleman of Nicaragua opened the discussion by presenting four survivors of Hurricane Mitch and directing them to tell their stories and express their needs for assistance.]

President Clinton. Could I just say one word? This is Senator Graham, who is from the State of Florida in the United States. First of all, thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I know it must be hard to relive your story. But I think it is very important for us to be able to go home to the United States having seen not only the President, who is my friend—I enjoy that—but also the people who have lived personally through this terrible tragedy.

It is also important for the health of Nicaragua's democracy that he and I, when we respond to this terrible tragedy, respond in a way that helps you the most and that is consistent with your wishes. So I would like it if, in your own words, you could just tell us a

little about what happened to you and your family and what would help most going forward.

[Survivor Ricardo Santeliz thanked the President for his visit and for the assistance from U.S. and international relief organizations. He described Hurricane Mitch and the resulting mudslide down Las Casitas Volcano as a tragedy which devastated his community and altered its future. Mr. Santeliz described his family's experience attempting to flee from harm and said that he had lost 22 relatives and his wife had lost 45. President Aleman asked Mr. Santeliz about the death toll from Posoltega and El Porvenir, a neighboring community, and Mr. Santeliz said it must have been about 4,000. President Aleman asked about the experience of a little boy, Juan Pablo Montoya, who was present. Mr. Santeliz described finding the boy beneath enormous tree branches and said that Juan Pablo lost his parents, but two of his brothers survived.]

President Clinton. So he has two brothers now?

Mr. Santeliz. One is 13, and one is 21.

President Clinton. And are both of them living with him—he's living with both of them?

President Aleman. Are you going to school, Juan Pablo?

Juan Pablo. No.

President Aleman. Why not, sweetie? You were going to school back in—

Juan Pablo. No.

President Aleman. No? Didn't you go to school back in—but there was a school there, wasn't there?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Aleman. Is your other brother going to school?

Juan Pablo. Tonio.

President Aleman. Tonio, is he the one going to school?

Juan Pablo. No, he's not.

President Aleman. And how many of your brothers and sisters died?

Juan Pablo. Three.

Mr. Santeliz. And his mother died.

President Aleman. And you have uncles and aunts?

Juan Pablo. No.

President Aleman. Did your father have any brothers or sisters? What about your mother?

Juan Pablo. One.

President Aleman. And where are your uncles and aunts? Did they die?

Juan Pablo. Yes, the whole family.

President Clinton. So now it's you and your two brothers?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Clinton. And you have to stay close with them.

Juan Pablo. Yes.

[Survivor Olivia Cortes, from neighboring Rolando, explained that during the hurricane she was away at a clinic for an operation and was consequently spared; however, she lost most of her family and relatives in the tragedy. She described the danger and difficulty her surviving children experienced in searching the mud for family members. President Aleman asked how many survived in Rolando, and Ms. Cortes estimated 2,000 to 2,500. She stated that a lot of surviving residents were in Costa Rica seeking work at the time because the crops in Rolando were finished. President Aleman asked her for

Rolando's death toll, and she estimated there were 3,000 between Rolando and El Porvenir. Ms. Cortes thanked the U.S., the Red Cross, and Save the Children for relief efforts and added her concern for people's need for shelter and work in the wake of losing their livelihoods. Survivor Esperanza Morales thanked the President and described being buried in the mud for 3 days. She said in spite of everything, she held out hope that she'd be able to find her family, but she never did. She said she lost 25 family members.]

President Aleman. No one from your home was saved, my dear? No one?

Ms. Morales. My sisters were saved because they had gone to work in Costa Rica. But the people who were living there, who were still there from my family, I'm the only one who survived.

President Aleman. And where were you?

Ms. Morales. In El Porvenir.

President Aleman. And that's exactly where the mudslide went through?

Ms. Morales. When it came through, it was a terrible noise of helicopters. My husband went out, and he shouted at me, "Sweetheart, run." And I grabbed my little girl, and I ran out. But when I ran out, the house had been destroyed, and I was dragged by the water. I lost my little girl, and I never found her again.

President Aleman. And your husband died, too?

Ms. Morales. Yes. And my little girl was shouting at me, asking me to save her, but the water was dragging me away, and I couldn't do anything. I was struggling to try and stand up again, but I couldn't do anything. I couldn't see anything.

President Aleman. And who rescued you?

Ms. Morales. I was rescued by people from the Red Cross who were there and some people from the area. Two people from the area were there, as well. They found me. I was terrified, and they were able to get me out. They were able to dig me out of the mud. I was there stuck for 3 days.

President Clinton. So what are you going to do now with your life?

Ms. Morales. I still have problems with one knee. I want to get well, and I want to fend for myself, because now I have nothing and no one left. All I want to do now is work to survive and just get by.

President Aleman. She said, "I just want to work until my day comes to go."

Ms. Morales. That's all I'm waiting for.

President Aleman. And what's wrong with your leg?

Ms. Morales. I had a cast on this leg, and it wasn't set properly. And so now they have to x-ray it again and see what they can do.

President Aleman. And where are you staying now?

Ms. Morales. I'm over there in the shelter.

President Clinton. You know, the President was explaining to me when we were coming out that the people need not only homes again but homes that are close enough to land which can be farmed again, because a lot of this land which is covered by the mud, even though it's dried out, it may or may not be suitable for crops now. And a lot of trees will have to be replanted to guard against further flooding.

So I think we in the United States have to try to get some financial help to the President to do that. And then you will have to work together to identify the land where the people can farm again, and then the houses can be built.

You were explaining that to me, on the way out, what you have done—find the land.

[President Aleman agreed and said that deeper channels should be dug to avoid future flooding. He inquired about a nearby cooperative farm and suggested that help be given to individuals left without family. He then asked Ms. Morales if none of her children survived.]

Ms. Morales. I had four.

President Aleman. All of them little?

Ms. Morales. The oldest was 13. My little girl was 7—13, 12, 10, and 7.

President Clinton. And how old are you?

Ms. Morales. I'm 29.

President Clinton. You're still young.

President Aleman. So you became a mother when you were 16?

President Clinton. What about you, Juan Pablo? Do you want to say anything to us? Do you want to say anything to your President about this terrible thing?

Juan Pablo. I lost my whole family, and I miss them—my mama and my papa.

President Aleman. Where are you living, Juan Pablo? With his brother?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

Mr. Santeliz. Yes, he lives at the co-op there with his brother.

President Aleman. How many people are in that co-op? Fifty people, they said? And all these new people are coming in? You said that there are 2,500 people in a block. Will they accept them there?

[Mr. Santeliz stated the need for everyone involved, governmental and international organizations and survivors, to sit down together to visualize solutions and discover alternatives. President Aleman said all the co-ops in the El Porvenir sector were destroyed, but a co-op in Posoltega, with 50 people farming about 2,000 acres, survived. He noted the trouble was convincing the 50 to accept 300 survivors from El Porvenir and offer them 3 or 4 hectares per family to cultivate. Mr. Santeliz interjected that he understood the land had been rented to people with money.]

President Aleman. The co-ops themselves are doing that?

Mr. Santeliz. Yes.

President Aleman. We have to sit down and talk with them so we can convince them.

Mr. Santeliz. I think what we need to do there is sit down, as I was saying, to see what points they propose, see what they want to do.

President Aleman. And what about Juan Pablo's brothers? Have they already been admitted?

Mr. Santeliz. No, they're in the same situation.

President Aleman. So you're like squatters?

Mr. Santeliz. No, I'm not there. I was given a parcel, it's 12x20, by an organization from the U.S., as well—in Washington. An Evangelical church gave us a little plot of land, about 6 blocks of—

President Clinton. World Vision, was it World Vision?

Mr. Santeliz. It's managed by the Evangelical Conference of the Assembly of God in Washington.

So since we didn't have anything, we said, "Okay, give me a little plot of land where I can go." And that's where I am. The only thing is that we're all so very much reduced right now and we're under so little plots of land.

President Clinton. How much land did the average family farm before the hurricane and the mudslide?

Mr. Santeliz. About 5 or 6 blocks—what they call blocks, which are actually more like hectares.

President Clinton. Ten acres? So the average family had 10 acres?

President Aleman. Per family, that's what each family had.

President Clinton. And then this block, you say, with the 50 families, they have an average of 25 hectares?

President Aleman. It's like, 100 acres per family—this particular group.

President Clinton. So they could actually sell it out?

President Aleman. And what they're doing is, they're renting out the land that they're not farming themselves.

President Clinton. So it's your proposal for the Government to buy this land on behalf of the other people, if they will accept them?

President Aleman. That would be the ideal situation. The problem is that the co-op with those 50 people—and it's very, very good land; they know that land, very fertile land. This co-op got it back in the Sandinista days. So I don't think they're going to want to give it up. They're not going to give it to anyone or sell it. They

prefer it, as he was saying, to rent it, to lease it, because it's better business for them. We'll see what measures can be taken. And the discussions we're trying to hold—we'll see how we can change this. Because the other problem we have, Mr. President, is there's land, but not in this area, not on the Pacific side.

President Clinton. Too far away?

President Aleman. This has been traditionally farm land. But we'll see what solution we find. Faith in God.

Juan Pablo, you have to go and study now. Do you promise you're going to study?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Aleman. Are you going to study? You promise?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Clinton. You can learn a lot and pray to God to take care of your mother and father. And they will know and be very proud of you.

NOTE: The discussion began at 3:45 p.m. in the auditorium at the Cotton Research Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this discussion.

Statement on the Death of Joe DiMaggio

March 8, 1999

Today America lost one of the century's most beloved heroes, Joe DiMaggio. This son of Italian immigrants gave every American something to believe in. He became the very symbol of American grace, power, and skill. A brilliant individual performer, he led his magnificent Yankees to the World Series 10 out of his 13 years. His electrifying 56-game hitting streak, unequalled to this day, is one of the most remarkable achievements by any athlete in any sport.

He stood tall off the field as well. In 1943 he volunteered for the Army and swapped his

Yankee paycheck for \$50-a-month private's salary. He and the foundation he started gave mightily to help poor children benefit from the world's best medical care. And he was an incredibly devoted father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

I have no doubt that when future generations look back at the best of America in the 20th century, they will think of the "Yankee Clipper" and all that he achieved. Hillary and I extend our thoughts and prayers to his family.

Mar. 8 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

March 8, 1999

The Republican leadership continues to block a vote on an amendment to finish the job of hiring 100,000 teachers to reduce class size. Communities across the country need to know that Congress will live up to the bipartisan commitment we made last fall to fund this effort.

The American people expect us to work together to improve the education of our students. I call on the Republican leadership to allow an up-or-down vote on more teachers and smaller classes.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty Compliance

March 8, 1999

Dear _____:

In accordance with Condition (5)(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) of November 19, 1990, adopted by the Senate of the United States on May 14, 1997, enclosed is the Report on CFE Compliance.

The Report is provided in both a classified and unclassified version.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; and Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks to the Community at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras

March 9, 1999

President Flores, Colonel Ramirez, General Wilhelm, Colonel Rosner, members of the Honduran and American militaries, to the people of Honduras, the American delegation and Members of Congress who came here with me, ladies and gentlemen. Yesterday in Nicaragua, today in Honduras, we see that this disaster has taught us that what happens to one in the Americas affects us all. It reminds us that in good times and bad, *todos somos Americanos*.

Mr. President, I thank you for your kind words about the First Lady. I spoke with Hillary last night, and she asked me to give you her best. She remembers so well her trip here, and she wishes you well.

Mr. President, as our military leaders know, at this Honduran air base, our Armed Forces trained together for this sort of disaster just a few months before the storm. When the real test came, they passed with flying colors.

This long runway, turned into a lifeline, connected the countries all over the world. Over 47 million pounds of supplies came through here. Helicopters performed daring rescues and delivered food; engineers repaired roads; medical teams gave treatment and comfort; relief workers provided clean water, built schools and shelters, and restored faith in the future that nearly washed away.

Operation Fuerte Apoyo turned into one of the largest humanitarian missions performed by

the United States military since the Berlin airlift 50 years ago. To all who were a part of it, I thank you for your courage, your confidence, your compassion.

I believe the United States must do more. I have asked Congress for \$956 million to support the reconstruction effort in Central America. We expect almost a third of that to come to Honduras to improve public health, to build homes and schools, to rebuild roads so farmers can move their produce to market, and to prepare for future hurricanes. It will also forgive and defer Honduran debt, and it will be targeted to local communities to make sure the people who need it get the assistance.

I would also like to announce \$56 million to expand our New Horizons program which brings civilian guardsmen and reservists to the region for 2 weeks of training and relief work.

Mr. President, I know Hondurans are determined not just to rebuild but actually to create something better out of this tragedy: to build a reconstruction that protects the environment so that people are not exposed to unnecessary risks in the next storm; to build a reconstruction that ensures that those who suffered most participate fully and benefit equally; to build a reconstruction that consolidates democracy by engaging local government, NGO's, and the private sector.

I would like to especially thank the members of our Armed Forces for their hard work to advance these goals, for their enthusiasm and good cheer, even when you have to sleep in hooches in Tent City—[laughter]—for your cooperation between the services and between our U.S. personnel and our Honduran hosts. You have shown the people of Central America the true colors of our men and women in uniform.

Today I am proud to announce the award of Humanitarian Service Medals to all those members of the U.S. Armed Forces who served in support of the relief effort in Central America, and to announce that I have just presented

to Colonel Rosner a Joint Meritorious Unit Award to JTF Bravo for its sustained commitment to our mission in this region. Congratulations on a job well done.

Later today I will see the Juan Molina Bridge in Tegucigalpa. It was built jointly with U.S. assistance and Honduran efforts. I can't think of a better symbol of JTF Bravo's efforts or our cooperation, building bridges between people and nations in Central America, with Central America itself the bridge between North and South America.

In this tragedy's aftermath, Hondurans and Americans have given new meaning to the words written by Juan Molina in his poem "Eagles and Condors": *Pueblos Americanos en este continente debemos ser hermanos*.

Not far from here is Comayagua, the old capital of Honduras, built because it was near the center of Central America and of the entire New World. That city boasts a clock said to be the oldest in the Americas, made by Spanish Moors in the 12th century. When that clock began ticking about 900 years ago, the world was a smaller place in every way. Now that clock is ticking away the final hours and days of the 20th century, headed toward a new millennium. But one thing remains as true today as the day the clock was built: We humans still have the urge to chart a new course for the future and the obligation to make it a better one for our children.

Thanks to your work here, a new and better world truly lies within our grasp. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in Hangar 1. In his remarks, he referred to President Carlos Roberto Flores of Honduras; Col. Alberto Ramirez-Mathia, Honduran Base Commander; Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command; and Col. Elliot J. Rosner, USA, Commander, Joint Task Force Bravo.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Hurricane Mitch Reconstruction Efforts in Tegucigalpa, Honduras March 9, 1999

President Clinton. Thank you, Mr. President, for your remarks and for the extended visit we have already had today about these matters.

I wanted to have the opportunity today to hear from a broad cross-section of citizens of this country, and so I will be extremely brief. I agree with the President that this period of reconstruction should be seen as the opportunity to build something even better than what was here before. And furthermore, I believe that if all elements of the society are properly involved and feel fairly treated, that the country's social fabric, sense of community will be stronger than it was before the disaster occurred.

Many of you have paid a very high price for what has occurred, and the losses have been staggering. But I think the—I have been quite impressed by what has already been done and by the attitude of the people. What the United States is interested in is how we can best be an effective partner with you from here on in. And so I'm quite interested in your perspective on that, as well as anything you would like to tell me about your present activities.

I'd also like to introduce—this is Congressman Xavier Becerra, who came here before with the First Lady and has just finished a term as the head of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. He is from California. And I am delighted to have him back with me. And Congressman Reyes from Texas is also here with us.

Moderator. We have our archbishop—perhaps he can kick off the discussion.

[Archbishop Oscar Rodriguez began the discussion by thanking President Clinton, the people, and the churches in the U.S. for their assistance in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. He asked the President to support trade expansion and NAFTA parity, cease deportation of Hondurans, and support Central American efforts within the G-7 for multilateral debt relief.]

Moderator. And this is the mayor of Tegucigalpa. I think you know about the accident she had in the helicopter. And after that, she took his job, and here we have her now.

[Mayor Vilma de Castellanos stated that 30 percent of Tegucigalpa was destroyed, mentioning

the impact of loss of life and damage to the economic and social infrastructure of the city. She then presented the President with the key to the city.]

Moderator. And now we have Mario Canawati, who is president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of San Pedro Sula and Cortés.

[Mr. Canawati thanked the U.S. Government and people for support during the crisis and reconstruction. He noted that Central America was an important trade partner of the United States, which had been instrumental in Honduran economic and democratic development through the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). He said the textile and apparel industry had been excluded from CBI and that Honduras was losing investment to Mexico as a result. He said that Honduran exports should compete under the same conditions as NAFTA products and called for a new version of CBI.]

Moderator. And perhaps Jacqueline Foglia from the Honduran American Chamber of Commerce would like to speak.

[Ms. Foglia stated that Hurricane Mitch affected agriculture more than other sectors of the economy. She noted that since the garment industry and tourism sectors were not highly affected, these might provide the motor for economic reconstruction. She outlined steps that the Honduran American Chamber of Commerce was taking to advance reconstruction efforts with the Association of American Chambers of Commerce of Latin America, in Washington, DC, such as working toward a U.S. legislative reconstruction package which would include greater access to U.S. markets, promoting faster economic recovery, job creation, and overall economic benefits for Honduras.]

Moderator. And now, Jorge Quinones, director of the Vida Foundation.

[Mr. Quinones thanked the President and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for its help in Honduran environmental projects. He stated that in the aftermath of the

hurricane, reforestation and sustainable management of water basins were the most formidable challenges in reconstruction. He added that environmental education needed to be a central part of the reconstruction agenda.]

Moderator. And Mariano Flanos now, from Save the Children.

[Mr. Flanos stated that Save the Children used financing from the people and Government of the United States, especially from USAID, to support over 50,000 people in such areas as home construction, rehabilitation of water systems and schools, and equipment for clinics and hospitals.]

Moderator. And now, Ricardo Maduro, a businessman.

[Mr. Maduro, president of a private education foundation, stated that Hurricane Mitch had substantially damaged the Honduran education infrastructure and reduced the public and private capacity to invest in education. He suggested using nontraditional methods such as radio and television to reach students and expressed the need for more computers in education and teaching English as a second language. A spokesman for the Flores administration said the Government was working with the International Monetary Fund for bilateral and multilateral debt relief, developing a reconstruction master plan with a consultative group in Sweden, and strengthening the mechanisms of financial transparency through international auditing. Representative Xavier Becerra commended the Hondurans for the improvements made since his visit in November 1998 and pledged to work hard in Congress to provide as much support for the region as possible.]

President Clinton. First of all, I would like to thank you all for your presentations and for making them quite specific and to the point. I would like to respond to a number of the points that were made. First of all, I have sent legislation to the Congress, just last week before I came here, asking for greater liberalization of trade for the Central American and Caribbean nations to move closer toward parity with NAFTA in Mexico. I have—it does not go as far in everything that I'm sure a lot of you would do, but it does as much as we believe we can pass in the Congress.

I was profoundly disappointed last year that we did not pass the trade-opening initiative. And

of course, after the hurricane struck, I was even more disappointed. I think now, ironically because of the hurricane, we may have a better chance to pass a bill. And I will do everything I can to that end.

With regard to debt relief, part of the package that I have proposed to the Congress in aid, as opposed to trade, about a \$965 million package, a part of it involves the debt deferral and outright debt forgiveness, both of which would give very much needed debt relief not only to Honduras but to the other Central American nations. If the Congress will go along with me and pass this, it will give me the standing to argue more forcefully to the other nations and to the international organizations that they must follow suit.

I think, clearly, Honduras should be given relief under the highly indebted countries initiative that the United States has done a lot to create. I believe we should do more. I think the fact that the Holy Father has made this a year in which he's calling for people to do more debt relief will, frankly, be enormously helpful, and I told him that when I was in St. Louis recently. And I would urge you to communicate this to the Vatican, that if there could be more of this, like sort of a constant reminder, it would be highly effective, even perhaps establishing some sort of priority saying you ought to do at least Central America and then something in Africa and something in Asia to give hope to the people on those continents, something like that.

But I think on a thing like this it's not enough to say it one time. We have to keep working. But I think Central America has a special claim here, Honduras, Nicaragua, the other countries as well. Because one of the arguments I always hear, even in my own country, about debt forgiveness is, "Well, look, you know if you"—and the former banker here understands this—"if you forgive it all, well, then nobody will want to loan any money tomorrow because they'll think all of that will be forgiven, too." Well, in the aftermath of the worst natural disaster in centuries here, it seems to me that argument just doesn't hold water here. It might be true in the case of an Asian country that had a bad banking system and got in an economic problem for local reasons; but it seems to me, insofar as the present predicament of Central America is a direct result of the hurricane, that argument has no standing.

So I will do the best I can. But again, I would urge all of you to stay on that because relieving the government of the financial burden of the payments will free up a lot of money for education and other things as well.

On the deportation, I think you know, Archbishop Rodriguez, because you spoke in a way that indicated you did, I have done what I could to minimize the impact of some of our immigration laws, not only on Hondurans but on all the people of Central America. I, frankly, believe I have done all I can do under the law. Now, because there was such hardship here, so much devastation, I was able to provide some greater consideration for the Hondurans that have come to the United States. But I think it would be a mistake to sort of openly encourage more people to come, in violation of our laws and quotas, because there is—I have gone to the limit of what I can now do. And I think it is far more important for us to concentrate on getting this aid package passed, getting the debt relief, getting the trade relief, getting the renewal of the economy here going.

Let me just mention three other issues very quickly. One of you mentioned the need for more loans for small business and micro-businesses. We have our USAID Director here with me, Mr. Atwood. I think the United States funded 2 million microenterprise loans last year through AID around the world. My wife is—probably talked about that when she was here. This is a passion of hers and has been for about 15 years now.

And we have found, in our own country, when we have a natural disaster—you know, we had a flood, a 500-year flood in the Mississippi River 5 years ago, and one of the most important funds that we have is the fund that provides for special credit for small businesses who otherwise could not get it.

So I don't know whether there's anything special, Mr. President, we could do to help, for the small and micro-enterprises or to try to establish even a broader and more adequate international fund for such things in the face of disasters. But we always find, even in America, which has a very sophisticated banking system, that they are the first casualties of natural disasters that wreck the economies of whole communities. So if we could help you in that, I would be happy to.

There are just two other things that were mentioned. With regard to the environment, I

think that—you said, sir, that you felt that the disaster would have been even worse had it not been for some of the environmental practices here in Honduras. Yesterday, when I was in Nicaragua, there was no question that it was worse in the places where there had been vast deforestation and nothing to protect the people from the mudslides. And you have a lot of serious—the President was telling me today, you have a lot of serious decisions to make about, you know, how to replenish the soil which has been destroyed, where the topsoil has been carried away or perhaps the nutrients have been washed away and the crops won't grow anymore.

I will do whatever I can. In this aid package, we have some significant amount of money for environmental investments. But I will do whatever I can to be particularly helpful there. I think it would be—not only with the United States but with others as well—I think the more we know about the specific plans and strategies, the better off we will be.

But if you look at our hemisphere, our region here, it's perfectly obvious that the countries that have done the best job of preserving their natural environment are going to be the strongest economically, also, over the long run. And yet, one of the greatest battles we face in the world today, in this larger struggle over climate change, which may or may not have had anything to do with Hurricane Mitch—we don't know. No one knows for sure. But the larger battle is that in most countries, most decision-makers do not believe you can grow an economy unless you continue to use its resources at an unsustainable rate—that is, at a greater rate than they can be replaced—and do not believe you can grow an economy unless you increase, year-in and year-out, the amount of fuel and energy you are using that contributes to greenhouse gases—coal and oil, for example.

Now, all the evidence is against that proposition, but old ideas die hard. And I do believe that because of economies of scale, if for no other reason, and because of some of the stunning examples already set by the preservation of the biosphere or by the energy patterns adopted in Costa Rica, for example, that Central America may be in a unique position to get lots of investment to prove to the rest of the world that we don't have to destroy the environment to grow the economy. And so I would be happy to exert some extra efforts to help

you get some investments in that regard, but again, I think the specifics are important.

For example, I'll just say one thing. The last time I was in Costa Rica, I noticed they were driving—the buses they were using, the school buses they were using, the transportation buses they were using, were powered by electricity or natural gas, and they were all made by a company in Vice President Gore's home State. And there are lots of things—if we knew what the strategy was here and what the priorities were, there might be a lot of things we could do to be helpful.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I want to endorse what was said earlier by you, Mr. Maduro, about education. And I would be happy for us to have a long-term partnership on that, but again, I don't feel that I know enough to know what your immediate priorities are. The United States has had some success in working with countries in various parts of the world in helping to increase more rapidly the number of children going to school. And of course, as you pointed out, there's no point in increasing the number of children going to school unless you have a place for them to go to school, a teacher to teach them, and materials with which they learn. But I do not believe that you can come anywhere close to doing what you want to do in Honduras if it takes you a decade to add one more year to the average schooling.

And there may be a way—I'm going to talk about this a little bit tomorrow—but this is a year in which a lot of countries are trying to pass this international convention against child labor, which the church has been strongly supportive of and which I strongly support. But I think it would be interesting to see whether we could marry the commitment of countries to support the convention against child labor with a commitment of the advanced countries that are pushing to help to dramatically increase investment in those countries in education, so that you're saying not just that you don't want the children in the factory but you do want them in the school. And there may be a way that we could dramatically accelerate the rate, the average schooling here.

Now, I have all these people from my administration here, plus Lieutenant Governor MacKay, former Lieutenant Governor of Florida, who now will be my new Special Envoy to Latin America, and Mr. Atwood and the oth-

ers are all here, so—and your Ambassadors. He's our Ambassador, but I think he's really your Ambassador. [Laughter] But we will follow up on this. On the environment and on education, the more specific you can be about what you want us to do, the more we can be helpful, I think. On all these areas, I will do my best.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I'd like to thank the gentleman from Save the Children. My wife and I have been involved with Save the Children for more than 20 years, long before we ever thought we would be in national political life. And as soon as this hurricane occurred, she gave some money from her foundation to Save the Children through operations here. So I thank you for what you're doing. The organization has done great work in our home area as well, and I thank all of you.

This was a very good set of presentations, and you gave me a lot to go home and work on.

[President Carlos Roberto Flores of Honduras expressed his appreciation to President Clinton and noted the representation in the audience of nongovernmental organizations, labor unions, private enterprise, and religious groups. He said his government did not want to promote emigration to the United States, but asked that Hondurans already there receive the same treatment other Central American countries' nationals receive by law.]

President Clinton. Well, I think you know that I strongly believe in that. I think that the present American immigration law and how it treats people that were in our country as of some time ago is an inexcusable remnant of the cold war and wrong. I haven't said anything to you I haven't said at home. I think that—people came to the United States because they felt oppressed and are entitled to stay in our country because they came here; it shouldn't matter whether they felt the oppression from the left or the right. I mean, if it's a rational category, people should be treated the same regardless of what the facts are. But the real issue is that all the countries in Central America should be treated the same insofar as whatever the objective facts were that brought the people to our country. So if people should come home, then they should be treated the same; if people should be able to stay, they should be treated the same. That's what I believe.

[President Flores said he was optimistic about Honduras' recuperation from Hurricane Mitch but expressed concern that the difficulties it presented could undermine the democracy his nation had fought so hard to attain. He said the challenge would be to show the Honduran people that the system would work for them. He concluded by thanking the President for coming.]

President Clinton. Thank you. Let me just say one thing as we break up. I have heard this—and one of the reasons I am grateful that we have Members of our Congress here is that we have these bills up there; they can be addressed now. I think there is an overwhelming understanding in both parties in the Congress that we have to pass the aid bill. And I think

the only thing that we have to do is to make sure that political considerations in America that have nothing to do with Central America, things that are back home don't in any way hold up the consideration of either piece of legislation, and so we will work hard on it.

Thank you.

Oh, I have to get my key to the city. If I wear this to dinner tonight, I'll get a discount. *[Laughter]*

Thank you.

NOTE: The discussion began at 2:52 p.m. in the conference room at the Central Bank. In his remarks, the President referred to Pope John Paul II. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

March 9, 1999

For the second day in a row, the Republican leadership has continued its efforts to stand in the way of voting on an amendment to finish the job of hiring 100,000 teachers to reduce class size. Communities across the country need to know that Congress will live up to the bipartisan commitment we made last fall to fund this effort. The American people expect us to

work together to improve the education of our students. I call on the Republican leadership to allow an up-or-down vote on more teachers and smaller classes, and I call on every Senator to support the Murray-Kennedy measure to reduce class size and hire well-prepared teachers across the Nation.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Endowment for the Arts

March 9, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

It is my pleasure to transmit herewith the Annual Report of the National Endowment for the Arts for Fiscal Year 1997.

The Arts Endowment awards more than one thousand grants each year to nonprofit arts organizations for projects that bring the arts to millions of Americans. Once again, this year's grants reflect the diversity of our Nation's culture and the creativity of our artists. Whether seeing a classic theatrical production in Connecticut or

an art exhibition in Arizona, whether listening to a symphony in Iowa or participating in a fine arts training program for inner-city students in Louisiana, Americans who benefit from Arts Endowment grants have experienced the power and joy of the arts in their lives.

Arts Endowment grants in 1997 supported:

- projects in theater, dance, music, visual arts, and the other artistic disciplines, demonstrating that our diversity is an asset—

and helping us to interpret the past, understand each other in the present, and envision the future;

- folk and traditional arts programs, which strengthen and showcase our rich cultural heritage; and
- arts education, which helps improve our children's skills and enhances their lives with the richness of the arts.

The arts challenge our imaginations, nourish our spirits, and help to sustain our democracy.

We are a Nation of creators and innovators. As this report illustrates, the NEA continues to celebrate America's artistic achievements and makes the arts more accessible to the American people.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 9, 1999.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Trade Policy Agenda and a Report on the Trade Agreements Program *March 9, 1999*

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 163 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2213), I transmit herewith the 1999 Trade Policy Agenda and the 1998 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program. This report includes the Annual Report on the World Trade Organization, as

required by section 124 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (19 U.S.C. 3534).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 9, 1999.

Remarks to the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador in San Salvador *March 10, 1999*

To the president of the Legislative Assembly, thank you very much for your welcome and your fine comments. To the president of the Supreme Court, the leaders and members of the Assembly; to the other leaders from Central America who are here; members of the diplomatic corps; other distinguished public officials from El Salvador; members of the American delegation. Mr. President, I noticed you said you would officially certify the results of the recent Presidential elections today, so I don't want to jump the gun, but apparently the President-elect is here. And I'm delighted to see him as well.

I have come to Central America with gratitude for our partnership, gratitude for the warm reception that my wife received when she came here recently, and later the wife of our Vice President, with a distinguished delegation of Members of Congress, heads of our Federal

agencies, members of the White House staff, my new Special Envoy to Latin America, former Lieutenant Governor of Florida Buddy MacKay, and others.

For 2 days now, we have been seeing and speaking with many different kinds of people in Nicaragua and Honduras, now in El Salvador, about efforts to recover and rebuild in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. We have met people who have lost everything but hope. I have been moved and humbled by their refusal to be defeated in the face of the deaths of their children, their husbands, their wives, their parents, the loss of all source of income.

I am very proud and grateful that the United States, through our soldiers, our aid workers, and our Peace Corps volunteers, our private donations, have had the opportunity to work alongside the people of Central America in the rebuilding process.

The message I have heard from all kinds of people is that it is not enough now simply to fix things which were destroyed and move on; that together we must build a better life for future generations, restoring people's lives and livelihoods as soon as possible, in a way that strengthens freedom and peace and the rule of law over the long run.

No one can forget that just a few years ago, the people of Central America were suffering from a legion of manmade disasters far more cruel than anything nature can bestow on us. There was a time not long ago when many in this region believed they could only defend their point of view at the point of a gun, a time when civil war and repression claimed tens of thousands of lives and cast many thousands more into exile, a time when farmers were pushed off their land and children were torn from their parents, a time which provoked in the United States bitter divisions about our role in your region.

You have worked hard here in El Salvador to shed light on that dark and painful period. Now all of us, as friends and partners, can and must join in building a common future, determined to remember the past but never to repeat it.

I hope the people of Central America now see the United States in a new way, as a partner, a friend, a colleague in the process of strengthening democracy, in reconstruction, in reclaiming your rightful future.

The wars are over. Every country in Central America now is governed by elected leaders accountable to their people. What once was a no-win contest for power has turned into a win-win contest for better schools, safer streets, and economic opportunity. A battlefield of ideology has been transformed into a marketplace of ideas. Decades of struggle have brought a victory for democracy, the only revolution of our time that has not betrayed its principles.

In so many other parts of the world, things are different. Nations still short-change schools and hospitals to pay for arms in the vain pursuit of weapons of mass destruction—not in Central America and certainly not in El Salvador. In so many other places in the world, financial turmoil has undermined confidence in open markets and societies—not in Central America and certainly not in El Salvador. In so many other places, people still try to resolve ethnic, religious, and political tensions by the force of

arms rather than the force of argument—not in Central America. And no nation has traveled a greater distance to overcome deeper wounds in shorter time than El Salvador. You reached another plateau through your elections on Sunday.

A hurricane can transform villages full of life into valleys of rubble and death. But it will not wash away the foundations of good government and good will the people of Central America have laid. It cannot, it will not take away from you the power to shape your own destiny.

All the Central American leaders with whom I have visited have told me that if reconstruction is managed in the right way, if it clearly benefits all segments of society in a transparent way, if it carves out new roles for local government and voluntary organizations, if it reflects the necessity of protecting the environment, then this region will emerge in stronger shape than before the storm.

You are striving to build true democracies in which all people have a stake and human rights are respected; to build more equitable societies that have conquered not only the bitter divide between right and left but the embittering divide between poverty and wealth; to build safer communities in which people can live in peace and have faith in police and judicial institutions; to build a more integrated community of the Americas in which borders are open to travel and trade, but closed to deadly traffic in drugs and guns and human beings.

The United States will work with you to realize that vision, from relief to reconstruction to renewal. It is the right thing to do. Clearly, it is in America's interests. Years ago, we learned that when Central America suffers, we suffer, too. In the last 10 years, we have learned how very much we benefit when Central America prospers in peace. Our exports to Central America and trade between us have more than tripled in this decade of reconciliation and hope. But to keep rising together, we have much more to do.

First, we need to keep in mind the extent of the challenge just before us, the hurricane-damaged infrastructure that will cost \$8.5 billion to repair. Hope cannot be restored by aid alone. We also must expand trade and investment to restore growth. I have asked our Congress for funds totaling over \$950 million to help restore Central America.

On Friday I sent to Congress a new proposal for an enhanced Caribbean Basin Initiative that would provide for Central America and the Caribbean even greater benefits than the proposal I made last year before the hurricane. It would eliminate our tariffs on all textiles assembled here from U.S. fabric, as well as on all textile handicrafts. It would allow us, also, to treat all nontextile imports from Central America exactly as we treat such imports from Mexico under NAFTA. The only requirement is that all nations must meet their obligations under the World Trade Organization and participate in the effort to create a free-trade area of the Americas.

Now, if our Congress agrees, clearly this will help people in Central America find jobs, market their exports, stand on their feet. It will bring us closer to a day when goods move freely from Alaska to the tip of South America with benefits to all nations.

In every country, including the United States, the progress of open markets is met by some skepticism and resentment. But look at the facts. Hundreds of millions of people on every continent have risen from poverty because finally they had the chance to produce goods and services for buyers beyond the borders of their nation. This will continue if we continue to tear down barriers that shut off countries from their customers. Exports have been the main engine of your country's growth the last few years. They have helped the United States, too. Our expanding trade with Latin America clearly has lifted our own growth and limited the impact on us of the global financial crisis.

As we build a free-trade area of the Americas, however, we must remember that trade has to work for ordinary citizens everywhere, to contribute both to wealth and fairness. We must build a trading system that upholds the rights of workers and consumers, so that competition is a race to the top, not the bottom. We must conclude a treaty to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world this year.

But I know it is not enough to keep children out of work. We must get them into school in every nation. Today I am pleased to announce that the United States will provide over \$8 million in new funding to help the children of America start school and stay in school.

I must say, as I drove along the streets of San Salvador today, first to see the President and then to come here, I was very moved by the friendly faces of people waving to me. But

the most touching of all were the children that stood out in front of their schools in their uniforms with their little signs and their smiling faces. And I could only think that our obligation is to give all the children of this region the chance to stand in those lines, in those uniforms, and learn what they need to know to prosper in the century ahead.

We must also protect our environment. It is essential to the wealth of our nations and the health of our people. One of the central lessons of this hurricane is that we have to protect the environment to protect people. It was the deforested hillsides, for example, that experienced the deadliest mudslides. In places that retained their trees, lives were saved.

Now, we cannot stop hurricanes or earthquakes or storms, but we can minimize the damage they do so that every act of God is not a disaster of Biblical proportions. We can reforest watersheds and preserve wetlands. We can grow crops in a way that preserves instead of spends the fertility of our soil. We can build more safely for the future. We in the United States are providing computer software and aerial imagery to Central America to tell you where flooding and mudslides are most likely to occur during the next storm, where roads and infrastructures must be rebuilt to last.

But we also can do more. We must join together to stop the warming of our planet. Otherwise, there will only be more of the storms, floods, droughts, and record-breaking temperatures that have caused so much misery in the last few years, not only in our own backyard but throughout the world. We can do this together, and we can do it without forgoing economic growth. Each year we are developing cleaner technologies and cleaner sources of energy. For example, here in Central America you have an abundance of geothermal energy in hot springs just waiting to be tapped.

We simply must face the fact—all of us—that in this new information age, nations need not, indeed, nations cannot continue to grow their economies by clinging to the industrial age energy practices and land management practices and water management practices of the past. We can do better. And if we do, we will create more jobs and grow our economies faster, whether it is in Central America or the United States. And it is a critical lesson for the leaders of every nation to teach the people.

Each time—[*applause*]*—it's okay if you hesitate on that; my Congress is not sure I'm right, either. [Laughter]* But I am. I can only tell you this from our own experience. Each time the United States has set higher environmental standards, our businesses have created the technologies to meet them, and we have actually had more jobs and faster growth as a result. Of course, this has to be done in a sensible way. It matters how it is done, but it can be done. Healthy market economies, in the end, cannot resist change; they must adapt to change.

Like protecting the environment, protecting our people from drugs and crime is a challenge we must meet together. We have come far in the last few years in building a common understanding of the drug problem. The United States has recognized that we have a fundamental responsibility to reduce demand for drugs. The nations of Central America have recognized that drugs cannot pass through a society without leaving addiction and crime in their wake. So we are fighting the scourge together today for the sake of all our children.

We also have to join forces to fight the proliferation of small arms to criminal gangs. For all the deadly advanced weapons technology in the world today, the weapon most responsible for the most death and destruction is not a missile or a bomb but the rifle. In too many parts of the world, it is easier and cheaper to buy a gun or a grenade than to buy a schoolbook or a life-saving drug.

No country suffered more in Central America's civil wars than El Salvador. Today, no country suffers more from the weapons and gangs left over from the war than El Salvador. This assembly here can help to meet this challenge by expanding our extradition agreement and preventing criminals from escaping punishment by flight across borders.

But America must also do our part to meet this threat to us all. We will continue to help you to train police forces that can fight gangs and gunrunners, while respecting human rights. We have tightened our laws to prevent Americans from making arms deals abroad that would be illegal at home, beefed up controls on our southern border, and stepped up prosecution of smugglers. Together we helped to negotiate an OAS convention that criminalizes the unregulated manufacture and sale of firearms, mandates strong export controls, and requires all firearms to be marked so they can be traced

from one end of our hemisphere to the other. I am determined to try to extend that convention to the entire world by the year 2000, and I hope I can count on your support for that endeavor.

Now, if we can do these things, if we can create jobs, lift people out of poverty, protect our environment, build safer communities, we also will diminish the pressure that causes so many people in this hemisphere to leave their homes in search of a better life. Legal migration from Central America has enriched the United States greatly. It has made us a stronger, a more vital, a more enterprising, a more diverse society. But poverty and the yearning for a better future have also brought many illegal migrants to our Nation.

As the President said, people do not leave their families and their homes and risk a dangerous journey for the uncertain prospects of life in a strange land willingly. Most illegal immigrants are not, by nature, lawbreakers. Most are simply looking for the chance to live in dignity and provide for their children. Nevertheless, we must continue to discourage illegal immigration, for it undermines the control of our borders, which every nation is entitled to pursue. And even more, it punishes hardworking people who play by the rules and who wait for their turn to come to the United States. Therefore, we must enforce our laws, but we will do so with justice and fairness. I believe fairness means treating people equitably, whatever their country of origin.

Now, during the 1980's, many Central Americans fled oppression by both the right and the left. Some were hurt by soldiers, some harmed by rebels. All whose lives were shattered have a right to sympathy, safety, and justice. Many who have been in the United States for a long time have established deep roots in our communities. At my request, following the Central American summit in Costa Rica 2 years ago, our Congress passed legislation to help them. But it did so by establishing different treatment among groups of Central Americans, depending upon where they were from. I will do everything I possibly can to overcome that different treatment. And I will work with our Congress to write laws that are more evenhanded. Our treatment of people from Central America should reflect what they suffered, rather than who caused the suffering. This is wrong, and we should change it.

Now, it is important for all of us to stop looking backward and start thinking forward about the future we want to build for our children. More than half the people of your nation today are under the age of 20. The same is true in Guatemala and Nicaragua and across Central America. These young people with no adult memories of war will not be defined by the need to take sides in a bitter struggle between two ideological extremes.

Instead, they will come of age in the 21st century with the unquestioned right to choose their leaders and shape their destinies. Now they will use that right, I believe, to demand of their representatives better education, good jobs, fair justice, clean water, safe streets. They will want the things that will give them the tools to live their own dreams, that can help them to give value and meaning to their lives.

I believe we have a solemn obligation to make democracy deliver for them so they will see a bright future, a future that is their future here in Central America. *Juntos para un mejor futuro. Se lo debemos a los fallecidos; se lo debemos a nuestros hijos.* We owe it to the fallen; we owe it to our children.

Muchas gracias. Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Legislative Assembly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Legislative Assembly President Juan Duch; Supreme Court President Eduardo Tenorio; and President-elect Francisco Flores and President Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Arrival in Guatemala City, Guatemala March 10, 1999

Mr. President, representatives of the Guatemalan Government and people, we thank you for your warm welcome. I am honored to have the chance to be greeted here, in a place that recalls both Guatemala's marvelous cultural heritage and its past of conflicts and pain.

And I am especially grateful for the chance to meet you today, at a time when Guatemala is building a future of democracy, reconciliation, and peace. You have ended a cruel war. You have given your people—all your people—a chance to shape their destiny and to stand on their own. You have faced the past with candor and found the courage to move forward. You are teaching the world that no conflict is so bitter, no gulf is so wide that it cannot be overcome by the power of good government and by people of good will.

In a few moments, I will have the opportunity to discuss, with a broad range of Guatemalan citizens, the progress of peace in your country.

I will reaffirm America's commitment to shed light on the dark events of the past, so that they are never repeated, and to help you implement the peace accords in a way that ensures that the human rights of the Guatemalan people are always respected.

Tomorrow I will meet with President Arzu, and we will join with the leaders of Central America in a summit in Antigua to continue our efforts to build in this hemisphere a community of true democracies in which all our nations finally can prosper together. That is our common goal. *Lo lograremos como socios y como amigos.*

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:15 p.m. in the courtyard at the National Palace of Culture. In his remarks, he referred to President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Peace Efforts in Guatemala City March 10, 1999

President Clinton. Thank you very much. Mr. President, first let me say how much I appreciate this opportunity that has been provided for me to meet with citizens of your country to hear about the progress of the peace process and the challenges ahead. Because of the involvement of the United States, I think it is imperative, as we begin, for me just to say a few words about the report of the Historical Clarification Commission.

The commission's work and the support it has received from the government shows how far Guatemala has traveled in overcoming that painful period. I have profound respect for the victims and the families who had courage to testify and for the courage of a nation for coming to terms with its past and moving forward.

For the United States, it is important that I state clearly that support for military forces or intelligence units which engage in violent and widespread repression of the kind described in the report was wrong, and the United States must not repeat that mistake. We must and we will, instead, continue to support the peace and reconciliation process in Guatemala. As many of you know, we provided \$1½ million in support for the commission. We declassified over 4,000 documents at the commission's request. Now we will encourage the translation of the report into indigenous languages and its wide dissemination. Consistent with the commission's recommendations, we also will continue our support of development programs in those communities which suffered most from violence and repression. This year, we plan to provide an additional \$25 million to support the peace accords through aid to the justice sector, to education, to literary training, to the generation of income, and to citizen participation in government.

You have come a long way, as President Arzu just said, in forging a consensus in support of democracy and human rights and in finding a way to discuss your differences openly and peaceably. I applaud the difficult but essential effort you have undertaken.

Beyond the commission issues, I would also hope to discuss other matters critical to peace and to development and reconciliation, including

economic liberalization, market-opening measures, increased trade and investment, all of which are crucial to the overall well-being of the people of Guatemala. Now that you have chosen democracy and peace, it is imperative that the United States be a good partner in making sure that it works for all your people.

And again, Mr. President, I'd like to thank you and the Government and the people of Guatemala for the road you have taken and for making me feel welcome today. Thank you, sir.

[At this point, the discussion proceeded.]

President Clinton. Well, first of all I would like to say how very impressed I was by the presentations. And I would like to say a few things at the end, but for now, I was asked a couple of questions, so I would like to respond.

First, I was asked about possible opportunities, greater opportunities, for women and young girls and children, generally. I think that the model which has worked best throughout the world for economic empowerment for women has been the whole—particularly rural women and indigenous populations—has been the whole concept of microcredit, as I'm sure my wife talked about quite extensively when she was here.

But I think even more important is getting schooling going and providing—you know, I'm involved in this effort to try to end child labor that's abusive, worldwide. But it's not as—it's also important to get the children into schools—all kinds of children—including the children of indigenous people, and girls as well as boys, for a longer period of time. This is a big problem not just in Latin America; it's a huge problem in Asia; it's a huge problem in Africa. But I think the United States should be heavily involved, particularly in light of our past. We have a heavy responsibility to Guatemala and, indeed, to all of Central America to do more in this area.

I have asked the Congress of the United States to pass an aid package, tied to what happened in the hurricane, of something over \$950 million. A lot of it is designed just to support the rebuilding that has to be done, and that is important. But there is quite a lot of money

for education and economic development and, to go to another point you made, for the efforts to institutionalize the rule of law, both for commercial and economic reasons and for human rights reasons.

This is an area in which I think those who have and those who have not, in Guatemala and throughout Central America, have a common interest, because the rule of law is essential to get more investment and more economic opportunity and to protect the investments that exist. It is also essential to establish, in an orderly way, human rights and the institutions of justice.

So, Mr. Atwood, our AID Director, is here, and he can talk more about that with you. But we have worked quite hard to put together a package that I hope will be helpful. And I will be prepared, over the next couple of years, to try to do more.

On the question of trade, I sent last Friday to the Congress another bill to try to provide more parity between our trading relationships with Mexico and Canada and our trading relationships with Central America and the Caribbean. And I believe we have a reasonable chance to pass that bill this year. And if we do, it obviously will lead to more opportunities for the sale of Guatemalan products in the United States, and more jobs, therefore, for the people here. I will work very hard to pass it.

I was asked about the immigration issue, and I would like to speak briefly about that. I gave a more extended statement today to the National Assembly of El Salvador, but I will briefly say what I said there.

I think it's important for every country to enforce its immigration laws and try to protect its borders. We have very generous legal immigration laws, and we have many, many immigrants from Central America making a major contribution, positive contribution, to the United States. On the other hand, most of the illegal immigrants from Guatemala and other Central American countries are not lawbreakers by nature; they're people who are seeking a better life. It's hard to leave your family and your home and take the risks inherent in coming to a strange land without the approval of the law. And people do it because they want a better opportunity for themselves and their families.

I think there are two things that should be noted as we do try to enforce our immigration laws. The first is that we have to be sensitive

and act with justice and understand the impact of recent events. The second is that the present American law is completely unfair in that it treats different—people from different countries in Central America differently. And it is a vestige of our, sort of—kind of, our cold war mentality and how we were involved here.

I can do two things about that. The first is to try to change the law. And we will aggressively work to try to change the law to get parity, equal treatment for all people from Central America, without regard to the political past and whether the difficulties of the past were seen as coming from the right or the left. I think that's irrelevant. We should treat all countries the same.

The second is to use, to the maximum extent possible, whatever flexibility I have under present law to achieve the same goal. I will do that. But in the end, the problem cannot be fixed—the immigration problem cannot be completely fixed until there is a change in the law so that all countries would be treated the same under the law. And I will actively seek that this year.

Anyway, I think that responds to the questions that were asked of me. If I were to ask a question—if I could ask one question, I would like to say that, one of you said that we needed a dignification program, with priority given to the widows and orphans. And I would like to know whether you have specific suggestions, over and above the programs I have already mentioned, for what the United States could do to be helpful to deal with the large number of orphaned children and widows you have. What else could we do? What specific suggestions do you have for me, over and above what has been mentioned?

[The discussion continued.]

President Clinton. Well, I think it is in the nature of such meetings that you only scratch the surface of what needs to be done and what the possibilities are. I will say again, I intend to go back home and do my best to pass the aid package, to pass the trade parity bill, and to get improvements in the immigration difficulties. Within the aid package, we will be able to support education initiatives and economic power initiatives like the women's credit program that President Arzu mentioned.

I think it is important that, after I leave Central America, the United States develop with

every country the most specific possible plan for what it is you want to achieve that we can help you achieve, whether it is in dealing with the specific problems of the widows and orphans; the need for the education of the children; the need for the economic empowerment of women; the need for greater efforts with indigenous groups; the need to go further in the search for human rights, the rule of law; how to come to terms with the issues related in the commission report.

And I guess what I would like to leave you with is my commitment that I am willing to continue to push, Mr. President, to have these sorts of specific commitments on the part of the United States so we know we have a good roadmap for where we're going into the future, and you know what you can expect of our partnership. And of course, tomorrow, we'll have a greater chance to talk about what we can do regionally when you get all the Presidents together.

I would like to just leave you with this one thought. For all of your terrible suffering and the continuing difficulties you face, please do not underestimate how far you have come and what you have done. It is my responsibility as President of the United States to travel the world to deal with all of these problems that I see cropping up in other places. You know this, but I would like to just say, the last few years have brought a floodtide of changes in the way people work and live and in the political and social and economic relationships of people—the end of the cold war, the growth of the global market, the explosion in information technology—it has changed everything. And all over the world, people are searching for a new balance.

Most of these changes are good, but there are—not all of them are good. And they all present people everywhere with dilemmas. There is the question of integration versus disintegration. And I'll give you—you have it in Guatemala. You want—how do you balance the need for the nation to be sovereign with the legitimate rights of individuals and groups? How do you balance the need for the nation to be sovereign with the need to have greater cooperation with other countries? How do you balance the need to develop your economy with the imperative of preserving your natural resources? How do you balance the need for security and order with the imperative of individual rights

to privacy and liberty and the rule of law, for both commercial and human reasons?

All of these challenges you face are being faced by other people elsewhere. In South Africa, for example, to go back to what many of you talked about, they had this Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which perhaps went a little further than your report. And I thought that they—we think they're making real progress there. But in the last week, four different political leaders have been killed. In central Africa, where there was tribal slaughter in Rwanda and Burundi, I met with indigenous peoples. I met a woman whose husband and six children were all killed, and she woke up and for some miracle reason she didn't die from the wounds she sustained. And she, like the woman here, is devoting her life to this reconciliation. And I thought we were making progress, and just last week the majority tribe killed a bunch of Americans and other people.

So I say, as awful as this is for you and as frustrating as it is, it is astonishing how much has been done in Guatemala and in the other countries of Central America, and the direction you have taken. For all the economic frustrations you face, you're doing better than many much larger countries in Asia and in Latin America, because you've shown greater discipline and innovation.

So I urge you to not get discouraged, and I urge you to—I have tried very hard to change the historic relationship between the United States and Central America, to be a genuine partner and to think about the future in different terms. And we won't solve all the problems today or tomorrow, but I think we have to say we are on a different track. We have turned a real corner. And I came here as much as anything else just to express my respect for you and to ask you not to get too discouraged.

You think about Europe as being a very rich continent, but look at these problems we're having in Kosovo and Bosnia, where they haven't been able to, in Kosovo, do what you have decided to do. They still think they can shoot their way out of their difficulties. And we're hoping and praying they will take a different decision in the next few days.

So I thank you for talking to me and, before me, to my wife when she came here and for all the work you are doing. But I just want you to know that I am committed to changing our relationship over the long run in all these

areas we have mentioned. And I will do my best to make sure that we have the kind of partnership that will make both our countries stronger and address the specific concerns you have outlined today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. in the Reception Hall in the National Palace of Culture. In his remarks, he referred to President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala.

Radio Remarks on Proposed Airline Passenger Protection Legislation *March 10, 1999*

Our country's airlines serve millions of Americans a year, but as more planes are taking off, so are passenger complaints. That's why I'm proposing a new law requiring all airlines to spell out how they will address problems such as delays, overbooking, and missing baggage. This airline passenger protection act has overwhelming bipartisan support. With its passage,

we can make the best airline system in the world even better.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on March 5 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation *March 10, 1999*

I am pleased that the Senate leadership has finally agreed to allow an up-or-down vote on an amendment to hire 100,000 teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. Last year, with bipartisan support, Congress enacted a downpayment on this class size initiative, and school districts across the country will soon receive funds to begin hiring teachers. It is now time for Congress to finish the job by making a long-term commitment to class size reduction. I call on every Senator to vote for the Murray-Kennedy amendment to bring every class in the early grades down to a national average of 18.

I will vigorously oppose any Republican amendments to undermine the bipartisan agreement we reached last year on class size by diverting those funds to other uses, including spe-

cial education. While we should increase funding for special education—as we have done in past years and as my budget recommends continuing to do in the future—we should not take this money from the recently enacted class size initiative. We should not pit our children against one another or change the rules now on our critical efforts to reduce class size. Smaller classes will help all students do better and will reduce the need for special education services by helping teachers identify and assist as early as possible children who have learning problems. I call on every Member of Congress to reject these efforts to tear down what we accomplished last year, and call on them instead to build on that significant bipartisan achievement.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran March 10, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 1999, to the *Federal Register* for publication. This emergency is separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, in connection with the Iranian hostage crisis and therefore requires separate renewal of emergency authorities. The last notice of continuation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 6, 1998.

The factors that led me to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, have not been resolved. The actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including support for international terrorism, its efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and its acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Accordingly, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad programs I have authorized pursuant to the March 15, 1995, declaration of emergency.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 10, 1999.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Opening Remarks at the Central America Summit in Antigua, Guatemala March 11, 1999

President Arzu, President Aleman, President Flores, President Calderon Sol, President Rodriguez, President Fernandez, Prime Minister Musa. First, President Arzu, let me thank you, your government, and the people of Guatemala and especially the people of Antigua for the wonderful welcome and hospitality I have received here.

When Hillary came back from her trip to Central America last November, she told me about the devastation she had seen in four nations, but she also said, “At the end of the trip, you have to go to Antigua.”

You know, this is the first time the President of the United States has been anywhere in Guatemala outside of the airport in Guatemala City. President Johnson visited there 30 years ago. This visit is long overdue. More importantly, this moment in history is long overdue.

I came to the Presidency in 1993 determined to establish a new partnership with the peoples of Latin America and especially to reach out to our neighbors in Central America. At long last, Guatemala and all its neighbors have a chance to prosper in freedom and peace, in a hemisphere united by shared values.

We have come together in this old capital to find new solutions. The damage the hurricanes left, some of which I have seen, of course, has increased the urgency of our deliberations and our action. We are determined to respond to this calamity so that what was destroyed will be built back better than ever. We commit today to build a common future here in Antigua, a city that knows a great deal about rebuilding.

Our challenge is to consolidate the remarkable achievements of Central America in the last decade, to build on them, and to accelerate them.

I am committed to lowering trade barriers between us, both to speed recovery and to build a free-trade area in this region that will benefit all the citizens of all the countries. I am committed to a common struggle against violence and drug trafficking and drug abuse, to shared responsibility for the care of our environment, for the education of our children, for the health of our people. I am committed to justice and to institutions which will maintain it. I am committed to fair immigration laws, fairly enforced, and especially to the principle that we should treat people from Central America equitably, whatever their country of origin, and recognize the special circumstances of those nations that Hurricane Mitch hit hardest.

Our new partnership has made quite a bit of progress since our last summit in Costa Rica. We still face daunting challenges. But now we face them with a unique sense of solidarity and a common commitment to freedom, to democracy, to open markets, and to meeting the demands of our people for better schools, safer streets, wider opportunities.

Even before the United States was created, a North American poet, Anne Bradstreet, com-

plained about the harshness of our weather. But she added, "If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant." Well, Central America has had a long and difficult season, aggravated by the recent hurricanes, but we can truly rejoice that the springtime of renewal and rebuilding is here. The Sun shines on us today, in Guatemala and throughout this region. For all the problems that people face, we must never forget how far they have traveled, and we must never lose sight of the path that leads to a brighter tomorrow. We must go on that path together, to build a new American century for all the people of the Americas.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the courtyard at the Casa Santo Domingo. In his remarks, he referred to summit participants President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala, President Arnoldo Aleman of Nicaragua, President Carlos Roberto Flores of Honduras, President Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador, President Miguel Angel Rodriguez of Costa Rica, President Leonel Fernandez of the Dominican Republic, and Prime Minister Said Musa of Belize.

Closing Remarks at the Central America Summit in Antigua and an Exchange With Reporters

March 11, 1999

The President. Good afternoon. President Aleman, thank you for your words and your leadership. President Arzu, thank you so much for bringing us to this magnificent place and for hosting this very valuable meeting. To all my fellow leaders of the Americas, I thank you for the examples you are setting within your countries and by working together.

As we see here in Guatemala and, indeed, in all the nations represented in this extraordinary region, they are blessed with natural and with man-made monuments of ancient grace and spectacular beauty. Now the people have built a new monument—also spectacular and, hopefully, just as enduring—the monument of peace.

Kosovo

Because of developments in Washington and in Europe, I hope my fellow leaders will forgive

me if I take my only opportunity today to appear before the press to say something about another area in which we are working for peace—in Kosovo, where a serious civil conflict has been occurring and where much bloodshed might still occur.

Today our House of Representatives in Washington is debating a resolution on the potential deployment of American troops. I hope the House will act in a way that supports our efforts to achieve a strong peace agreement. I have and will continue to work closely with the Congress as we seek to bring peace to Kosovo. As I have repeatedly said, a final decision on whether we would send our troops as part of a peace force depends upon the achievement of a genuine agreement, on an immediate cease-

fire, on rapid withdrawal of most Serbian security forces, and demilitarization of the insurgents.

Both sides must agree to a NATO force. Europe's troops must make up the great majority of the forces. And we must have a NATO strategy that includes a clear plan for bringing our forces home. If, and only if, these conditions are met, I strongly believe United States forces should contribute to securing the peace in Kosovo. We have a strong stake in bringing peace there, just as we have a strong stake in peace in Central America. If we don't end the conflict now, it will spread; and when it does, we will not be able to avoid participating in stopping it; and when we do, it will come at far greater risk and far greater cost.

Central America Summit

Now, let me talk a moment about what we have met about today, how to turn this region of peace and shared values into a region of joint endeavors and common progress. I have made it clear that the United States supports greater debt relief, and I outlined my proposal for that; that we support more open trade to create jobs and opportunity through an enhanced initiative of the Caribbean Basin, the countries of Central America and the Caribbean, and eventually through a free-trade area of the Americas.

We also discussed other economic issues: what can be done to increase investment in tourism, what can be done in the environment. Our United States Agency for International Development, I am pleased to say, will contribute another \$25 million to support CONCAUSA, the agreement we signed in 1994 in Costa Rica to promote environmental cooperation among us. This contribution will help the people of Central America to protect their forests and coastlands, to reduce industrial pollution, to fight climate change.

We talked a lot about immigration, as you might imagine. I reaffirmed my intention to support our immigration laws fairly and justly but to work strongly for the elimination of any disparities in our law so that they treat Central Americans equitably, whatever their country of origin.

We also spoke today about the danger of gangs and guns and drugs. In many ways, they represent the final stage of Central America's

internal conflicts. We talked about what we could do together to combat them.

Let me just say in closing that this has been a very moving trip for me, personally. When my wife came here a few months ago, in the aftermath of the hurricane, she came home and talked to me a lot about what she saw and what people were doing. But no description can adequately replace the personal experiences of what I have seen.

In Honduras and Nicaragua, I met people who were devastated, but undaunted, determined to rebuild in a way that reinforces the transformation of this region. In El Salvador, and today in Guatemala, I have been privileged to see two nations that have found the courage to face a painful past and move forward to build a truly hopeful future.

At this summit I have seen Central America's leaders working together for the future. And I have tried to demonstrate that for the future, beyond the service of my Presidency, America must be a partner and a friend, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it is in our interest to do so.

We have never been closer to realizing the dream of a hemispheric community based on genuine respect and genuine partnership. Something great has happened here in Central America in the last decade. As we move out of the past and away from the damage of the hurricanes, we do so in a way that we are determined to see this area emerge from adversity, in a way that places all of us on higher ground. I am proud to have been given the chance to be a part of it.

Thank you very much.

Global Strategy for Central America

Q. Good afternoon to all the Presidents. My question is for the President of the United States, Mr. Clinton. What do you think of the statement by President Alvaro Arzu with regard to the need to have a global strategy, a long-term strategy for the Central American region?

The President. I think he's right about that. One of the things that I pointed out in our morning meeting is that Central America, for all of its economic difficulties, basically is being well managed. And I believe that if there were a way for all these leaders together to demonstrate to the world that they are determined to avoid the kinds of financial problems and economic problems, for example, that have

caused such trouble in Asia and, frankly, caused difficulties for all developing economies—caused the interest rates for funds even in Central America to go up—if there were a way for this region to say as a region, look, we know what caused those problems there; we're not going to do that here; this is a good place to invest—then I believe not just the United States but people in Europe, people in South America, people in Asia would be far more likely to invest here, to bring Central America not just into a better partnership with the United States but with all the world in a way that would lift the lives of people here.

So I agree with President Arzu that there should be a global strategy. But I believe that because we're neighbors, for the foreseeable future, for the next 50 years, our major economic relationship should be one with another. And that imposes special responsibilities on the United States, but it also gives us a lot of opportunities.

The President said to me, and I'd like to say to my fellow Americans not only here but those who might be listening to this press conference or who will hear the reports of it, that our trade with Central America far outstrips our trade with countries that are much, much larger than the combined population of Central America. And it has an enormous potential to benefit not just the people of this region but the people of the United States, as well.

U.S. Congress and Kosovo/Apologies for Past Administrations

Q. For President Clinton. Mr. President, particularly given that part of your reason for being down here is to express your regret and apologies for what past White Houses have done over the objections of Congress, can you please explain why it is that your administration has been so adamant about Congress not registering its opinion on the situation in Kosovo, and what exactly is your exit strategy if U.S. troops are sent over there?

The President. Well, first of all, Congress has a right to express its opinion on anything it likes. I have two things to say about it. One is, it's premature. I do not believe that—until we know that we have maximized the chances for both sides to say yes to the peace agreement—it's not at all clear that they will—I do not believe that the Congress should take any action that will, in effect, preempt the peace

process or encourage either side to say no to it. So I thought it was premature. I don't object to Congress expressing its opinion on anything. That's their job.

Secondly, every President has reserved the right to both receive the advice and consent and support or endure the opposition of Congress, but not to give up the constitutional responsibility to deploy United States forces in peacetime. And I think that my predecessors were right about that.

It's not that—what I apologized for has nothing to do with the fact that there was a difference between the policy of the administration and the Congress in previous years, going back for decades, and including administrations of both parties. It is that the policy of the executive branch was wrong. And what we're doing here is in the open; it's not a secret.

What was your other question? Oh, the exit strategy. Well, the exit strategy should be defined by the missions. You will be able to see that we have an exit strategy if we define the missions properly—just as in Bosnia we defined the missions and we have cut, I think, reduced our troop strength by more than 70 percent now. And we continue to bring them down.

I'm in a sort of a double bind here, you know. We tried in Bosnia to give a date certain for when we thought we could withdraw, based on what the Pentagon said they believed would happen in cooperation with our other agencies. We turned out to be wrong. Then people said, "Well, maybe the President misled us about how long we would stay there."

So we decided in Kosovo the right thing to do was to say what the benchmarks of the mission would be, and the Congress has to approve money every year for such things so they would be able every year to see whether we were meeting the benchmarks, but we wouldn't mislead them about knowing in advance exactly how long it would take. So when we did it that way, then people said, "Well, we're making an open-ended commitment." That's not true. I don't intend to make an open-ended commitment; I think that would be wrong.

Guatemalan Peace Process

Q. Question for the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. What is your personal opinion of the peace process of Guatemala?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the fact that you had elections and that people are

free to speak their minds, that I met with an elected Vice President of Guatemala, who is a representative of the indigenous population, yesterday, that the differences are freely expressed, and that according to President Arzu, you have a free and sometimes contentious and critical press—I'd say that's all healthy.

I also think this commission report was a brave thing to do. And I think you know that the United States supports the peace process, including the effort to find the truth, even if it's not that favorable to the United States. We contributed a million and a half dollars to the work of the commission; we declassified 4,000 documents at the request of the commission. So I basically support what you are trying to do, strongly.

No nation can tell another exactly how to come to terms with its past and to move into the future. And the answer will necessarily be different from nation to nation. What South Africa did, what Chile did, what El Salvador did will not necessarily work in Guatemala. Neither will what you do necessarily work for some other country. The main thing is, is there an honest effort being made to bring about reconciliation and the rule of law and human rights and genuine freedom? And I don't think there is any question that Guatemala has been moving in the right direction. And for that, all of us who believe in freedom and human rights can be grateful.

Chinese Nuclear Espionage and National Security Adviser Berger

Q. President Clinton, did your administration ignore evidence of nuclear espionage by the Chinese in order to further your policy of engagement? And what do you have to say to Republicans calling for Sandy Berger's resignation?

The President. Well, first of all, we did not ignore evidence. Quite the contrary; we acted on it. Let me say for the benefit of all the press, both American and others, looking at this issue there are two questions that need to be looked at separately. One is, did we respond in an appropriate, timely, and aggressive way to indications of espionage? The second is, is our policy toward China of engagement the right one?

Now, the answer to the first question is, I believe the record is clear that we did respond in an appropriate way. In 1996 we were notified

that there was some indication of a breach of security at one of the Energy labs and that the appropriate agencies were investigating. The appropriate congressional committees were notified at the same time. Since then, they have received at least 16 briefings on this issue.

Now, in 1997, in July, we were notified that the scope of the potential espionage might be very broad and might be directly related to lax security at the Energy labs. At that time, we moved quickly and decisively not only with the continuing FBI investigation and with the CIA review but also with an intense review of the counterintelligence capacities of our Energy Department labs.

As a result of that, in February of '98, I signed a Presidential directive to dramatically improve the counterintelligence capacities of the lab. In April of '98 we set up a counterintelligence office by the Energy labs, headed by a 35-year FBI veteran with a record of dealing with espionage. We doubled the counterintelligence budget. We raised the standards for foreign visitors to the labs; we said foreign scientists had to be accompanied to the labs. I think we began to polygraph DOE employees at some point. Only two agencies, DOE and the CIA, have their employees subject to polygraphs.

Simultaneous with that, in terms of technology controls, we subject China to the tightest restrictions of technology transfer that we have on any country that is not on an embargo list for the United States. So I think the record is that we acted aggressively. I think Mr. Berger acted appropriately, and therefore, I would not release him or ask for his resignation. I just don't think there's any evidence to support that.

Now, let me say, the second question—and this affects the welfare of everybody else in the world, if you realize how China is growing, both economically and the size of their population; this affects the welfare of every person in Central America—whether the United States and China are at odds in a conflict or have a constructive relationship that has honest disagreements, where nobody is under any illusions that the facts are different than they are.

I would argue that our efforts to have an honest and open policy with China, so that they don't think that we have made a decision in advance to try to contain and limit them in their economic growth and their development as a nation, has paid dividends. I do not believe

that China would have signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; I do not believe they would have practiced the restraint they have practiced in the transfer of various dangerous materials to countries like Iran and Pakistan if we had not been constructively engaged with them.

I do not believe that we would have had the level of cooperation in Korea in trying to limit North Korea's ability to develop nuclear capacity that we have had. I do not believe we would have had the cooperation we have had in trying to limit the impact of the Asian financial crisis, which has plunged tens of millions of people from the middle class into poverty in Asia and represents the biggest short-term threat to democracy and to stability in Asia. I do not believe those things would have occurred if we had not had an open, candid, honest relationship with China, aware of all the facts.

Keep in mind, this is about a case that developed in the mid-eighties. We have known about China's nuclear capacity and their capacity to pose a strategic threat and, more or less, what the dimensions of that were since the 1980's. And this raises the question of whether some espionage in the eighties was somehow related to that capacity. We have investigated it; we continue to investigate it. We have dramatically increased our counterintelligence. I believe we have taken all appropriate steps.

I do not believe that that evidence justifies an isolated no-contact relationship with China when we have gotten the benefits, not only to ourselves but to the rest of the world, of our engagement policy.

Central American Immigrants

Q. I have a question for President Clinton. What are the commitments that the U.S. has acquired with Central America with regard to the migratory problem?

The President. Well, as you know, for one thing, I stayed all the deportations for all the countries affected by the hurricanes. I had to lift the stay for all the countries, other than Honduras and Nicaragua, because under our law a temporary stay because of the collapse, in effect, of the national infrastructure of a country due to natural disaster is very specific in our law.

The fundamental problem with American law is that, essentially, with regard to people who

have been in the United States a long time, is that we treat people from different Central American countries differently based on the source of the oppression of human rights, rather than whether people had hardships that caused them to come to the United States.

The commitment I made was twofold: One, that within the law—and I brought Doris Meissner, our Immigration Commissioner here with me—that within the law, I would do all I could to avoid a disruptive return to people because of the law that I think we all admit is unfair; but that in the end, to fix the problem entirely, we would require legislative change, and I would seek that from the Congress. And I believe there is support from Members of both parties for that sort of change.

Now, beyond that, I recognize that most of the people who might still want to come to the United States, particularly in the aftermath of the hurricanes, are not by nature lawbreakers. They're people looking for a better life for themselves and for their families. But we have to enforce our immigration laws. And if we don't, it's not fair not only to people in other parts of the world but to other Central Americans. There are thousands and thousands of Central Americans who have registered to come to our country, under the laws that exist now, in a lawful way. There is no reason that people who line up like that and try to do it should be deprived of their legal right to come to the United States as a result of a reaction in our country because of the large flow of illegal immigrants.

So I made a commitment to try to be as reasonable as possible under the existing law, but I have to uphold the law. I made a commitment to try to change the law to treat all people from all Central American countries the same. And finally, let me say, I believe the most important commitment that I made is the commitment on debt relief, to pass our aid package to help the reconstruction effort—which is a genuine emergency—to try to expand trade, to try to develop the economy. In the end, economic development at home will stem the flood of illegal immigration—genuine opportunities for people—more than anything else we can do. So those were the commitments that I made.

NATO and Kosovo

Q. President Clinton, you've said often that NATO is prepared to act if the Serbs attacked

ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. Violence is now on the rise. Why isn't NATO responding, and what are you doing to keep the peace talks from collapsing there?

The President. Well, as you know, Senator Dole has just come back from Kosovo, also I think quite frustrated. The real problem, of course, is—I don't want this to be misinterpreted. There is no, in my view, moral equivalence between what has been done by the Serbs and what has been done by the Kosovar Albanians to try to secure the autonomy which was unlawfully stripped from them a decade ago. But it is clear that in this interim period, when they went home from Rambouillet and they're arguing about whether they should take this peace agreement, there are a lot of tensions and crosscurrents.

The consensus among our NATO Allies now is that in the next few days we should be doing everything we possibly can to get these people on both sides to realize that this is—it is crazy for them to go to war, to kill each other, to compromise their children's future, when they have an agreement which, from the point of view of Mr. Milosevic, only requires him to do what the law requires him to do anyway, to respect the autonomy of the Kosovar Albanians; which, from the point of view of the Kosovars, avoids a bloody war and gives them a chance to establish the mechanisms of self-government without foreclosing or guaranteeing a future of independence, to see how they do in the next 3 years.

It seems to me that a present war is the worst of all circumstances. Now, if the prospect of the agreement were totally destroyed by an outright military offensive, I would be the first to argue that our NATO Allies have to take action and take action now. But the situation is, frankly—even though you're absolutely right; there have been some actions by the Serbs—the situation is sufficiently murky and the present status of the peace agreement and whether either side can bring itself to agree is sufficiently shaky that all the NATO Allies at this moment on this day believe that we should devote all of our energies trying to get the agreement.

But I can speak for myself and, I believe, at least for most of my NATO Allies, that if this thing come apart at the seams, we still have a commitment. And I'm determined to honor our commitment.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:07 p.m. in the Casa Santo Domingo, Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Arnoldo Aleman of Nicaragua; President Alvaro Arzu and Vice President Luis Alberto Flores of Guatemala; Edward Curran, Director of Counterintelligence, Department of Energy; former Senator Bob Dole; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Joint Central American-United States Declaration (CONCAUSA) and Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 61.

Declaration of Antigua

March 11, 1999

We, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, the United States of America, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, and the Prime Minister of Belize, meeting in Antigua, Guatemala, on March 11, 1999, welcome the special opportunity afforded by this meeting to secure a prosperous future for our peoples after the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Mitch and Georges.

Hurricane Mitch was the worst disaster in the history of our Hemisphere, killing nearly 10,000 people, affecting at least 6 million others,

and causing property damage totaling approximately \$6 billion. Aware of the enormous impact on our countries of this disaster, we are meeting to combine efforts to rebuild and transform the region in such a way as to bring swifter development that will ensure the prosperity of all our citizens.

For the first time in the history of our region, all our countries are enjoying peace, stability, democracy, and freedom. Preserving these achievements requires decisive, forward-looking action in order to avoid jeopardizing the stability

of our countries achieved through great sacrifice and to stay on the course of progress.

In a spirit of solidarity, the Central American Presidents gathered for a special, emergency meeting in Comalapa, El Salvador, on November 9, 1998, to appeal to the international community for solidarity and to adopt joint decisions on how best to coordinate our efforts to help one another in the task of rebuilding and transformation.

Despite the tragedy we face, we recognize that the current situation also offers a unique opportunity to reconstruct our economies, transform our societies, and lay the economic foundation for sustained growth to prepare our nations to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. With our own efforts and with the staunch, sustained support of the international community, we will overcome the challenges ahead.

The Central American nations and the Dominican Republic deeply appreciate the strong show of support, generosity, and solidarity to our peoples, and the valuable cooperation and emergency assistance provided by the international community. We take this opportunity to express particular gratitude for the speedy, timely response of the people and the Government of the United States of America. The President of the United States of America reiterates his commitment to contribute efforts to transform and rebuild Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Reconstruction and Transformation

We welcome the opportunity this Summit offers to intensify the frank dialogue we began in San Jose. We reaffirm the values we share as peoples and nations, based on democracy, the free market, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the effective rule of law, the campaign against international crime, and our commitment to environmental protection.

Based on these values, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, the United States of America, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and the Vice President of Guatemala, met in Washington, D.C., on December 11, 1998, to agree on mechanisms to rebuild and transform the region, and at that time received encouraging support and solidarity from the people and the Government of the United States of America.

Aware that our efforts should be complemented by long-term support from financial institutions, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Sal-

vador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and the Vice President of Guatemala, met in Washington, D.C., on December 10–11, 1998, to report to the international community, at the Consultative Group convened by the Inter-American Development Bank, on the magnitude of the damage and to establish mechanisms for effective coordination with donors, thereby ensuring the resources necessary to begin the difficult task of rebuilding and transforming our countries.

We agree that the effective, lasting transformation of the region means enhancing democracy; promoting sustained economic growth as the best antidote for poverty; strengthening the rule of law and national reconciliation; ensuring the full effectiveness of human rights; strengthening judicial systems and good governance; fostering transparency; combating international crime; approaching in a humane manner the issue of migration; expanding trade and investment opportunities; supporting debt relief and financial cooperation; and implementing a program of sustainable development that includes natural disaster prevention.

The Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, and the Prime Minister of Belize, reaffirm our determination to achieve the rapid rebuilding and transformation of our countries with a view to establishing prosperous societies with equal opportunity for all.

We agree to underscore the importance of obtaining, during this initial rebuilding phase, non-reimbursable funds and concessionary lines of credit to finance programs in those areas most essential for economic, agricultural, and industrial recovery and for the reintegration of the people affected into the productive life of our countries. To that end, the Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize express appreciation for the request for special funds for rebuilding Central America that President Clinton sent to his Congress, and again call upon the international community and international financial institutions to lend their firm support to the efforts to rebuild Central America.

Debt Relief and Financial Cooperation

The Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize welcome the commitment by the President of the United States of America to provide debt relief to Nicaragua and Honduras, whose

economies were especially devastated by Hurricane Mitch. Debt relief is critical to building a sustainable path to development for these countries as they work to rebuild and transform their economies.

The Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize view with approval the support provided by the United States of America within the Paris Club to extend a moratorium on debt servicing for Honduras and Nicaragua over the next two to three years, which will free up vital resources for reconstruction and transformation efforts. The President of the United States of America reiterated his commitment to play a leadership role in providing comprehensive external debt reduction for Honduras and Nicaragua under the Paris Club and consideration of eligibility under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. In addition, the President of the United States has requested authority for a \$25 million contribution to the Central America emergency trust fund in order to help pay debt service to the international financial institutions.

The President of the United States of America expressed his determination to support and contribute to both bilateral and multilateral initiatives, in order to obtain the maximum additional resources needed on an urgent and concessionary basis at the May 1999 meeting of the Consultative Group in Stockholm, Sweden. That meeting will be a pivotal event in donor coordination and in confirming pledges of resources for the reconstruction and transformation of the region. The Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize expressed their appreciation for the determination by the United States of America to increase substantially bilateral aid programs for the reconstruction of their countries.

Trade and Investment

We recognize that the formulation of a comprehensive program of reconstruction and economic recovery for the region in the wake of Hurricanes Mitch and Georges would be incomplete without the consideration of trade and investment as essential components for economic development, regional integration, and prosperity. It is through commercial opportunities generated by better and more secure markets that sustainable development, long-term political

and economic stability, and, therefore, widespread human development in the region can be achieved. We recognize that creating incentives for increased trade and investment will be advanced by our adherence to commitments agreed upon in multilateral trade negotiations such as in the World Trade Organization.

Two-way trade between the United States of America and its neighbors in Central America and the Caribbean has grown rapidly in this decade and has been highly beneficial for both sides. This reflects the continued success and relevance of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) in promoting greater trade flows and investment and generating employment in the United States of America as well as in the region. Free market economies and private sector participation are essential to rebuilding our countries, consolidating democracy, and promoting closer economic relations. As we approach the new millennium, we are determined to rededicate our commitment to open markets and to strengthen even more this mutually beneficial relationship.

We are aware of the importance of strengthening relationships that have developed in the areas of textiles and clothing, not only because of the enormous benefits for the United States of America and the nations of the Caribbean Basin, but also as a way of ensuring our mutual competitiveness in the context of the world market as we approach the year 2005.

President Clinton expressed his determination to work actively with the United States Congress to enhance the Caribbean Basin Initiative in a manner that responds effectively to the needs of the countries of the region. These enhancements should help prepare for the creation of a region of shared prosperity among Central America, the Dominican Republic, and the United States of America.

We welcome President Clinton's commitment to send the Bilateral Investment Treaties with El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua to the United States Senate for ratification. These treaties send a positive signal of the region's openness to foreign investment and its determination to protect property rights and to forge a partnership with business to rebuild and transform the economies victimized by Hurricane Mitch.

The leaders praised the excellent beginning to the negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The governments of the United States of America, the Central American

countries, and the Dominican Republic affirmed their commitment to work together to achieve concrete progress in the FTAA negotiations, including by implementing a series of business facilitation measures. For this purpose, the governments will consult on cooperative efforts they can undertake to help the countries of the region to advance in this direction. In this regard, we highlight transparency as an important element of the FTAA process. We, therefore, look forward to the ongoing work of the Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society.

Migration

We recognize that the effects of Hurricanes Mitch and Georges on Central America and the Dominican Republic have caused suffering for their population and have further complicated social and economic conditions for an adequate reintegration of their repatriated citizens. In this regard, the Presidents of the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize express appreciation for the temporary measures already taken by the Government of the United States of America aimed at mitigating the adverse impact of repatriations to the region, and we reaffirm our commitment to maintaining dialogue at the highest level with a view to finding humane and permanent solutions to the problems of migration.

Taking into account the origins, manifestations, and social, economic, and political effects of migration, and bearing in mind the interdependence of our countries, the Government of the United States of America will consider initiatives to address the disparities created by the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). We recognize that migrants contribute to the development and prosperity of their region of origin and of their new country of residence and also recognize that, in order for these benefits to be realized, migration should be orderly. We will also cooperate to address disorderly emigration and its consequences. We affirm our belief that long-term reconstruction, investment, trade, and assistance should include joint efforts to create sustainable employment opportunities that would provide alternatives to the need for future emigration.

We recognize the difficulties some repatriated citizens face as they reintegrate into their countries of origin and the socioeconomic implica-

tions this may entail for their countries. For this reason, we will pay special attention to the matter and will explore and encourage the adoption of new and comprehensive cooperative measures to ensure that they are treated appropriately, such as the signing of prisoner transfer treaties and memoranda of understanding on deportation procedures, to facilitate the reintegration of repatriated persons, with special emphasis on their well-being and on respect for their dignity and human rights.

We reiterate that illicit trafficking in persons is an affront to human dignity and reaffirm our commitment to increase cooperation in order to combat and punish this abominable practice. We commend the adoption of new laws in several countries against illicit trafficking in persons and urge other countries to implement similar measures. Our governments will continue multilateral cooperation in the Regional Conference on Migration and in other fora in order to exchange information and coordinate actions on migration matters in our countries. We will seek to establish mechanisms to share information and mutually collaborate to stop the organized smuggling of persons.

Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Human Rights

We applaud the achievement in the region of peace with harmony, mutual cooperation, and full respect for human rights. The end of internal conflicts in Central America has opened the way to reconciliation and the establishment of just, equitable societies that provide better opportunities for our peoples.

At this time of challenge and renewal, we reaffirm our commitment to continue the process of profound transformation, meeting the needs of our pluralistic democracies, based on strict respect for human rights, the effectiveness of the rule of law, mutual respect, the strengthening of local governments, and a more equitable and participatory civil society. We will continue doing our utmost to achieve economic well-being and the comprehensive development of our countries, and to preserve social peace, progress, and stability. We will also continue observing and promoting the rights of workers, including the elimination of any exploitative forms of child labor, in accordance with our respective Constitutions and with the Conventions of the International Labor Organization, as respectively ratified by our governments. In addition, working together within the Summit

of the Americas process and the Organization of American States, we will endeavor to strengthen democracy and to increase prosperity throughout the Hemisphere.

We will work together to restore and create greater opportunities for the population affected by the hurricanes and to meet their needs with alacrity in order to prevent regional security from being threatened by the establishment of criminal networks. We will continue enhancing cooperation among our countries in the campaign against drug trafficking and organized crime.

We reaffirm our determination to bolster mutual legal assistance and information sharing arrangements that will deny safe haven to criminals. We support the modernization of extradition treaties and their vigorous application, within the legal framework of each country, to prevent impunity and to ensure that criminals are severely punished, in accordance with the severity of the crime committed. We will continue to modernize our laws against drug trafficking and money laundering and jointly seek opportunities to assist one another, through education, training, and technical support to prevent drug abuse. For these purposes, we are intensifying our efforts to execute the plan of action developed from the San Jose Summit.

Sustainable Development

The economic reconstruction of Central America and the Dominican Republic must address basic priorities such as reducing poverty, ensuring human development, and satisfying basic human needs with a sustainable management of natural resources. The region's sustainable development depends on overcoming obstacles such as imbalances in patterns of production, consumption, and human settlement; accelerated population growth; and high levels of poverty.

We have before us an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the region and create jobs through domestic and foreign investment. We also have the opportunity of investing wisely, using sustainably our natural resources to ensure the well-being of present and future generations.

We recognize that global climate change has the potential to cause more frequent and severe natural disasters and thus recognize the need for all Parties to meet their responsibilities under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Industrialized countries should reduce their emissions and developing countries should participate meaningfully in global efforts to address climate change.

We underscore the continuing leadership of Central America in advancing implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and in the evolution of the Clean Development Mechanism for implementation of climate-friendly projects, including clean energy development and the enhancement of carbon sinks. Building on the commitment of the San Jose Declaration, we recognize the importance of the actions that are being developed in Central America with the participation of our private sectors, especially those that will permit the concession of credits and other initiatives that will mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

Recognizing the impact of climatic disturbances in the region, we agree that key components in the mitigation of disasters and in sustainable development include improved management of watersheds, reforestation, preservation of coastal wetlands, and efforts to prevent soil erosion through improved farming practices. It is, therefore, important to strengthen mechanisms of cooperation in the areas of natural disaster prevention and mitigation through education, training, institutional strengthening, and the transfer of technology.

We, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, the United States of America, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, and the Prime Minister of Belize, express our sincere gratitude for the hospitality shown to us by the people and Government of Guatemala during our sojourn in this historic city.

NOTE: The joint statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on Selection of the Director of the Vaccine Research Center at the National Institutes of Health

March 11, 1999

I am very pleased to join Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, National Institutes of Health Director Harold Varmus, and my AIDS policy office director, Sandra Thurman, in welcoming Dr. Gary Nabel as the first Director of the new Vaccine Research Center at the NIH. Dr. Nabel's long and distinguished career as a research scientist will be an incredible asset in our efforts to find preventive vaccines.

The first order of business for Dr. Nabel will be the effort to develop a vaccine for HIV. This is a top priority of our AIDS research efforts. Here in the United States, over 40,000 people are newly infected with HIV every year. Across the world, the rate is nearly 6 million people per year. These are lives in jeopardy. Though we have made remarkable progress in treating HIV and AIDS, there is still no cure. So our best hope of bringing an end to the

AIDS pandemic is to find a safe and effective vaccine.

I have issued a challenge to the scientific community to find an AIDS vaccine within the decade. We are making important strides towards that critical goal and the leadership of Dr. Nabel will help us progress even more. Dr. Varmus and his team of expert researchers at the NIH, working in collaboration with scientists from across the globe, have produced remarkable results in reducing AIDS mortality here and in many other developed nations. Their improved understanding of how HIV works will be invaluable in the effort to find a vaccine to prevent infection in the first place.

The human tragedy of AIDS throughout the world must move all of us to action. The search for a vaccine for HIV must continue to be a global priority because millions of precious lives hang in the balance.

Statement on Senate Action on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

March 11, 1999

I have long supported the ed-flex concept, and I was pleased when the congressional leadership decided to take up this bill as one of its first matters of business. Today, however, the Senate used this bill to undermine one of our most important educational achievements—an initiative to hire 100,000 well-prepared teachers to reduce class size in the early grades to a national average of 18. The Senate not only voted down an amendment to ensure long-term

funding for this initiative but passed an amendment that would allow local school districts to completely opt out of class size reduction. I will work hard for the elimination of this amendment in conference. We should be working together to make continued progress on obvious national needs such as reducing class size—not attempting to tear down the bipartisan work we did last year to address this problem.

Statement on House Action To Support Use of United States Armed Forces in Kosovo

March 11, 1999

I am pleased with the House vote which demonstrates the broad, bipartisan support for our efforts to bring peace to Kosovo. This vote sends a clear message to both parties that it is time now to sign an agreement that stops the fighting in Kosovo and creates real self-government for

the Kosovar people. The vote confirms the strong commitment of the United States to continue our efforts to provide the leadership necessary to bring about a peaceful resolution to this conflict.

Remarks on Arrival in Hope, Arkansas

March 12, 1999

I must say, I did not expect to see you here when I heard it was cold and rainy, and I am very grateful to you for coming. I want to thank all the Federal and State and local officials who came out to say hello to me there at the airport.

I'm delighted to be here. I want to just get out and shake hands with all of you and say again how very much I appreciate you coming out. I hope none of the kids get sick standing in this rain, and I hope it's something that when you dry off will always be a good memory for you.

I'd like to say just briefly to all the children that are here, you know, I'm coming home because we're going to dedicate the house that I lived in for the first 4 years of my life. And a lot of what I learned that was good, that I took with me for the rest of my life, I learned

back then. And I want every one of you to believe that people from Rosston and Chidester and all the other small places around here—doesn't matter where you came from in life; it matters what you do with your life. So make the most of your schools and have a wonderful time.

And again, you'll never know how much I appreciate you being here. I was stunned when I saw the crowd out here, and I knew what the weather was. I always say that the people here stuck with me through rain or shine, and now it is literally true.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. on the tarmac at Hope Municipal Airport.

Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the Clinton Birthplace in Hope

March 12, 1999

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. My friend Tilmon Ross, thank you for the prayer. And Joe, thank you for the introduction.

I have to say that I'm here with mixed feelings. This is the coldest March 12th in the last 100 years in Hope, Arkansas. *[Laughter]* You have totally destroyed the case I have been making for global warming for the last 5 years. *[Laughter]*

You know, we were out at the airport and the Congressman, the State officials, the judge, the county officials, the city board, everybody came out there, and it was worse there than it is here, believe it or not. It was raining a whole lot harder; the wind was blowing. And there must have been 600 people out there—all those school kids—I'm sure I made a lot of money for the hospitals in the area. *[Laughter]* There will be people being treated for flu

for 3 or 4 weeks after this. But I was very moved. And in a funny way, the rain makes this day more poignant for me.

I'd like to thank the young people who sang from the Hope and Yerger Choirs. I want to thank my good friends who are here from the State Legislature, and Jimmie Lou Fisher, Mark Pryor, and Gus Wingfield and Charlie Daniels, our State officials who came. I don't know if Congressman Dickey is still here—he was at the airport—I thank him. I thank all the people who had anything to do with this, the people on the foundation and those who gave their money and time, those who gave memorabilia and memories.

I'd like to thank all the members of my family who are here. I'd like to say a special word of appreciation because my brother and sister-in-law and my little nephew came all the way from California to be with us today, and they're over there. And I'm glad they're here.

I would like to thank all the people from Arkansas who came down here and who have been a part of my administration, but I have to single out my good friend Mack McLarty. He and Donna Kay came down and, as all of you know, he's been an integral part of every good thing that's happened since I've been President. And I want to thank him and thank them for coming down with me today.

And I'd like to thank—a lot of people from Arkansas came, but I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Bob Nash, because I'm going to Texarkana when I leave here and he's from there. Thank you, Bob. He also has the worst job in the White House, because he supervises my appointments, which means when I appoint somebody I write them a letter and they're happy; and when I disappoint them, which is about a 10:1 ratio, Bob has to tell them. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Beckie Moore and Joe Purvis and my longtime friend Rose Crane for all the work they've done and along with the foundation board. The three of them just gave me a tour of the house. I saw the old pictures and the toys and everything, and I'm just stunned by the work that has been done.

There are so many more people I'd like to thank: Brent Thompson—the architects—Stan Jackson; all of you who rescued this old place. Last time I was here before you started working on it was in 1990, and I thought when I walked through the front door it would come down

around my ears. And I cannot tell you how moved I am by this.

It's cold and it's windy and it's rainy and I won't keep you long, but I would like to say a few things that I worked on last night and this morning. A poet once wrote, "The accent of one's birthplace lingers in the mind and in the heart, as it does in one's speech." Well, so many accents of Hope linger in my mind and my heart.

We're not far from the site of the old sawmill where my grandfather worked as a night watchman and where, as a little boy, I used to go and spend the night with him, climbing the sawdust pile, and sleep in the back seat of his car. We're just minutes—I just drove by it—from the place on which his little grocery store stood, where I used to look up at the countertop and wish I could reach the jar of Jackson's cookies.

I still remember that my grandfather was the first person who taught me by his example to treat all people, without regard to their race, the same—and also without regard to their income, because he gave food to people without regard to whether they had a dime in their pockets.

We're not far from Miss Mary Purkins' kindergarten where I went with my friends Mack McLarty, Joe Purvis, Vince Foster, George Wright, and maybe some more people who are here today, and where I broke my leg in the first of many major mistakes I was to make in my life, jumping rope in my cowboy boots. [*Laughter*]

And we're not far from Rose Hill Cemetery, where my beloved mother, my grandparents, and my father, whom I knew only in my dreams and my mother's memory, lie now in eternal rest.

In this house, I learned to walk and talk; I learned to pray; I learned to read; I learned to count from the playing cards my grandparents tacked up on the kitchen windows which are directly behind us now.

Though I was only 4 when I left this place, it still holds very, very vivid memories for me, and I just relived a lot of them walking through the house. I remember we watched the house burn right across the street there, where the trucks are. I remember throwing a pocketknife into the ground in that backyard I shared with my friend Vince Foster. I remember hurrying

down the stairs on Christmas morning and dragging my little toys across the living room floor; waiting outside on that sidewalk for my grandmother to walk home from work.

I remember watching the old telephone when it rang, always hoping that it was mother calling from New Orleans, where she went to study anesthesia after my father died. And I still miss her every day. She would love what you have done here—the fact that you preserved her mother's rosebush and that her birthday club planted one of her bushes here. And I want to especially thank my good friends Elias and Jody Ghanem for this garden which they have made possible to be planted in her memory. Thank you, and God bless you.

In that wonderful video that my friends Harry and Linda Thomason made when I ran for President in 1992, I talked about how I used to fly all over this country, look out across the vast landscape of America, and think about how far I had come from this little woodframe house. Well, believe it or not, I still think about that no matter where I travel.

I said back then something I want to say again. In many ways, I know that all I am or ever will be came from here—a place and a time where nobody locked their doors at night, everybody showed up for a parade on Main Street, kids like me could dream of becoming part of something bigger than themselves. Of course, Hope wasn't perfect; it was part of the segregated South, and it's had its fair share of flaws. And as Mack and I were reminiscing this morning, it had a gossip or two. But in those long-ago days just after World War II, we were raised to believe in two great qualities that I have tried to bring back to America: a sense of personal optimism and a sense of community, of belonging, of being responsible for the welfare of others, as well as yourself.

I believed then, and I believe now, the places we come from say a lot about us. And places like this say a lot about America, Mr. Mayor. That's why people take family trips to towns like Lamar, Missouri, to see the birthplace of Harry Truman—it's a small white frame house, just 20 by 28 feet; why they go to Stonewall, Texas, to see the two-story farmhouse where Lyndon Johnson was born.

We visit these places not because great events happened there but because everyday events happened there, not because they're grand but precisely because they are ordinary, the modest

homes of modest people. We make them into landmarks because they remind us that America's greatness can be found not only in its large centers of wealth and culture and power but also in its small towns, where children learn from their families and neighbors the rhythms and rituals of daily life. They learn about home and work, about love and loss, about success and failure, about endurance and the power and dignity of their dreams.

I want to close with a story. Back when I was Governor, whenever I would come to Hope, I'd always drop by and visit with my Uncle Buddy and Aunt Ollie. They helped to raise me, and I loved them a lot. After they had been married well over 50 years, my aunt developed Alzheimer's, and she had to be moved to that nursing facility that's connected to the hospital.

One night, I stopped by to see my Uncle Buddy when he was living alone and going to see his wife, when most of the time she didn't really know who he was anymore. Our talk was like so many we had over the years; it was full of his country wisdom and full of funny jokes, and he was laughing and making me laugh. But when I got up to go, for the first and only time in our long, long relationship, he grabbed my arm, and I turned around and I saw tears in his eyes. And I said to my uncle, "This is really hard, isn't it?" And he said these words I will remember till the day I die. He said, "Yeah, it is. But I signed on for the whole load, and most of it's been pretty good."

Now, in this town, from my family and friends, that's what I learned: to sign on for the whole load. Though far from perfect, I have tried to do just that for my family and friends, for our beloved State and Nation. If I had not learned that lesson here 50 years ago, we wouldn't be here today.

And so to my family and friends I say, thank you for love and loyalty and the lessons of a lifetime; thank you for being there for me through this whole wonderful ride. To these young people I say, dream your dreams and know that you can best fulfill them if your neighbors get to live their dreams, too.

Because of these gifts, I can say with even greater conviction what I said to America back in 1992: I still believe in a place called Hope.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. in front of his birthplace home. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Dennis Ramsey of Hope; Hempstead County Judge Wallace Martin; Joe Purvis, chairman, and Beckie Moore, executive director, Clinton Birthplace Foundation; State Treasurer Jimmie Lou Fisher; State Attorney General Mark

L. Pryor; State Auditor Gus Wingfield; Commissioner of State Lands Charlie Daniels; the President's brother Roger Clinton and his wife, Molly, and their son, Tyler; former Special Envoy to the Americas Thomas F. (Mack) McLarty and his wife, Donna; and architects Brent Thompson and Stan Jackson.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Max Sandlin in Texarkana, Texas

March 12, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. You know, I told Leslie, I said, "Max is doing so well I don't need to say anything. If I say anything now, it's going to be an anticlimax." [Laughter] He had me halfway believing that stuff by the time he got through. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, I am delighted to see such a large crowd. I'm sorry, apparently some people had to be turned away; I wish I could have seen them as well. I thank you for coming. I thank you for coming to see me and for coming to support your Congressman. I want to thank—Mr. Mayor, thank you for making me feel so welcome. And I thank the whole committee that was involved in this: my longtime friend Judge Ed Miller—thank you, Judge—Molly Beth Malcolm and Willie Ray and all the others who are here on the host committee.

I want to thank my friend of many years, once my law student, John Rafaelli, who has got a lot more money than I do and is putting us up in this beautiful hotel now. I thank him for that.

Let me say just a couple of words. You know, I came today for two reasons. I came here to help Max, and I also went home to Hope to dedicate the birthplace that the local foundation there set up. They restored the old home that I lived in from the time I was born until I was 4 years old. And it was an interesting day. You know, it was cold and rainy, and the wind was blowing. I said, you know, I always got humbled when I came home, but this was the worst. I mean, for 5 years I've been trying to convince the American people that this global warming was for real. [Laughter] And we have

the coldest March day in 100 years in Hope; I don't know how much ground I lost today on that. [Laughter]

But as you might imagine, it was a very emotional day. A lot of my—my brother and his wife and my wonderful young nephew came in from California. My stepfather was there; a lot of my kinfolks from all over southwest Arkansas and from Texas came in on my mother's and my father's side of the family. And last night, when I was coming back from a remarkable trip I had to Central America to see the victims of the hurricanes there and the associated disasters and to reaffirm the partnership that we have for the future, I sat and tried to write down a few things that I wanted to say. And I had, surprisingly, since I was 4 when I moved out of that place, a lot of memories still of that wonderful old house.

And it occurred to me that in that little town where I was born and where I spent so much time in the intervening years, when I was a kid, nearly 50 years ago, there were two things that we were raised to believe in that town that I have tried to bring to this country and that I have tried to get every child in this country to believe: One is to be optimistic, to believe that you can create a life for yourself and live out your dreams. The other is to have a sense of belonging, to believe that we are part of one community in our towns, in our States, in our country, and increasingly with like-minded people all around the world, that we belong, and that because we belong we have a responsibility not only to ourselves and our loved ones but to others, and that the better our neighbors do, the better we'll do.

I've tried to convince every child in this country that both those things are true. And the evidence is I may have done better out in the country than I have in Washington, DC—[laughter]—but making the effort has been a joy for me.

I can say without any hesitation that much of the good things that have happened I was a part of, but certainly not solely responsible for. Many of the things which Max talked about could not have been achieved if I hadn't had strong allies in the United States Congress.

And I came here for him today not simply because he is a member of my party but because we share the same values, the same convictions, the same vision for the future of the country, because he fights for you up there, because he—and he does it, I think, in three ways. Number one, on issues that are specific to this district, he speaks to me about them.

Number two, he believes in things that are good for America that will have a special impact here: our efforts to lower class sizes in the early grades, our efforts to open the doors of college to all people with the tax credits and the student loans and the other initiatives of the administration. He believes that we ought to have a Patients' Bill of Rights to protect the quality of health care for people in managed care programs throughout the country. And I do, too. [Laughter] He believes in the proposal I made to save Social Security and Medicare before we spend the surplus, and I want to talk about that a little in a minute.

And finally, in this last year, even though he is a very junior Member of the United States House of Representatives, he was one of the most serious, substantive, thoughtful, and effective advocates, asking all the Members of Congress to read the Constitution, read the history, and uphold their oath to protect the kind of Government that we have preserved in this country for over 220 years. For all those reasons, you should be very, very proud of your Congressman, who is a remarkable person.

Now, I'm having a great time. You know, I can now go around, and I can go to fundraisers like this, and none of them are for me. [Laughter] And I love that. I love the idea that if I can stay healthy, I can spend quite a few years trying to give back to this political system and to candidates and to people that I believe in who have given me so much.

I want you to know that in the 2 years I have left, what I'm going to try to do is to take advantage of the good times we have now and the optimism and the self-confidence we have to ask the American people to look at the big, unmet challenges this country still has ahead of us when we start this new century.

You know, when I ran for President in 1991 and 1992, we had to get the country working again—literally, working. The unemployment rate was too high. Real wages for working people hadn't gone up in 20 years. The crime rate was going up. The welfare rolls were exploding. We had increasing social tensions between people of different racial and religious groups, manifested in civil disturbances in some of our cities. And it seemed to me that we clearly had to stop doing the same things we've been doing for the last dozen years and take a different course. And we did, and the results have been good, and Max talked about them.

But now we have to say, "Well, so now what?" Should we just sort of, like being at school, should we call a recess and just say, "Gee, we feel good. We're going to go out and play a while?" I think that would be a big mistake. I think it would be a big mistake for several reasons. Number one, we've still got some unaddressed problems. Number two, there are big challenges looming ahead of us that are not right in front of us now. Number three, the world is changing very, very fast, and people get punished for sitting on their laurels. You don't hire people to be Presidents, Senators, Members of Congress, Governors, mayors, hold other positions of responsibility, to go around and smile and say how great things are.

I never will forget one time in 1990 I was trying to decide whether to run for Governor again in Arkansas, and I had been Governor 4 times, and I had served 10 years. And I used to have Governor's Day at the State Fair, and I'd just sit out there in a little booth, and anybody that wanted to come by could come by and talk. And this old boy in overalls came up to me, looked to be about 70 years old, and he said, "Bill, are you going to run for Governor again?" And I said, "I don't know. If I do, will you vote for me?" He said, "I guess so. I always have." "Well," I said, "aren't you sick of me after all these years?" He said, "No, but everybody else I know is." [Laughter] And I said—it's a true story. And I said, "Well"—and I was sort of hurt, you know. I said, "Well,

don't you think I've done a good job?" He said, "Yes, but you also drew a paycheck every 2 weeks, didn't you?" He said, "That's what we hired you to do. What I want to know is what you're going to do tomorrow." Interesting point. Smart guy. Smart man.

And so while it's important to take our time to do what I did today—to honor our past, to water our roots, to cherish the ties that bind—it's also important to realize that the fundamental obligation of life is to make the most of today and tomorrow and to always be thinking ahead.

Now, let me tell you about this Social Security issue, for example. Here are the big challenges I think we face, and there are more, but I'll just say a few. Number one, we've got to figure out how to keep this economy going, because it's beginning to work for people. I mean, average people are finally beginning to get pay raises, with inflation under control, and we're beginning to get jobs to people who haven't been able to get jobs. So we've got to keep the economy going, and we've got to bring opportunity to people who haven't had it. There are still urban areas, there are still small towns, there are still rural areas, there are still Indian reservations where you couldn't prove it by the people who live there that we've got 18 million new jobs.

And we've got to figure out—one of the reasons I went to Central America, one of the reasons I travel around all over the world is, a bunch of our growth comes from our ability to sell what we make to other people, and if half the world is in a recession as they are today, it's hard. I'm telling you, we've got a lot of farmers in terrible shape—terrible shape—record low prices for commodities—but partly because we've been selling a ton of stuff to Asia and a lot of stuff to Latin America, and they can't buy, in the case of Latin America, as much as they did, and in some cases in Asia they can't buy anything they were buying before because of the economic problems. So I want to deal with that.

Now, the second problem we've got is the aging of America. Now, the older I get, the more I see that as a high-class problem. [Laughter] But the truth is, the average age in America today is over 76 years. If you're in this audience tonight and you're over 60 years old, if you're still in pretty good shape, you have a life expectancy of 80 or more.

Audience member. I hope so.

The President. Yeah. [Laughter] That's right.

So it's a high-class problem. This is the kind of problem every society wants. Wouldn't it be terrible if our friends—and I say that in a serious way. Our friends in Russia who are struggling to make their democracy stay alive and get their economy going again, because they've had such terrible economic problems, because their health care system has been in terrible disrepair, their life expectancy is going down; they don't have a Social Security problem. You wouldn't like it. This is a high-class problem, okay? So let's just—we have a challenge to Social Security and Medicare because we're going to have twice as many people over 65 in 30 years as we've got today. But it is as a result of the hard work of the American people, of our economic success, of better health care habits by ordinary citizens, and of stunning advances in medical science.

Nonetheless, we've got to deal with it. In about 30 years, there will only be about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. In 10 years, if we don't do something, Medicare is going to run out of money. And there are a lot of people who wouldn't have the life they have today if Medicare weren't in good shape. So the aging of America is a big challenge.

We've got the economy. We've got the aging of America. The third thing we have to realize is that for the future, more and more people are going to work and have children, and we have a big stake in seeing them do well at both jobs. If we have to choose, if parents have to choose between succeeding at home and succeeding at work, we're in trouble, because the most important job of any society is raising children well—ever—and because if people are sick at heart worrying about their kids when they're at work, they're not going to be very effective on the job.

So we have to do more in that regard, to help people with quality child care, to get them some time off without losing their job if the kids are sick or they've got sick parents or other problems. We have to do this to make sure we do continue to raise the minimum wage where it's appropriate, so people who work 40 hours a week and are doing the right thing and paying their taxes, they're not still living in poverty. These things are important.

The fourth thing we have to do is to make sure we give all our kids a world-class education. We now have the most diverse student population in history. At this little grade school in Hope, Arkansas, just up the road, named for me, there are 27 immigrant children in that little school—27 in Hope, Arkansas. In the school district across the Potomac River from Washington, DC, we now have people—listen to this—from 180 different national, racial, and ethnic groups. I went out to a school the other day, not very far from Washington, where the principal was elated to have me there talking to the students and all their parents, and the only thing that made her sad was we weren't able to arrange for a consecutive translation of my remarks, first in Spanish and second in Arabic.

Now, this is a good deal in a global society if, but only if, you can educate every child to world-class standards. I'm not trying to tell the Texarkana school district how to run their business, but I know we need more teachers. I know we need after-school and summer school programs so kids can learn, instead of just passing them whether they learn or not. I know that. So the education of our children is important.

And the fifth thing we have to do is, we've got to commit ourselves to live in the world of the 21st century, which means we have to deal with environmental challenges like climate change. It means that we can't run away from our responsibilities to try to be a force for peace, whether it's in Europe or Latin America or Northern Ireland or you name it—the efforts I've made in the Middle East. It's all in our interest.

It means that we have to stand up against terrorism and chemical and biological weapons and all these things that most people would rather not think about. My first National Security Adviser, Tony Lake, used to tell me that the most important thing a President could do to protect the security of the country was to have a lot of dogs that don't bark—in other words, for me to be able to go to Texarkana and tell you I'm working on a biological weapons issue, and you're not quite sure what I'm talking about because the dog has never barked.

But the President needs to keep those dogs at bay. So what I've tried to do and what I tried to do in the State of the Union Address, what I try to do in my conversations with Mem-

bers of Congress, like Max, is to say, "Look, we've got these big issues out there, and if we can take care of them, we're going to be all right."

I just want you to think about one—I'll just give you one example, though. We do have a surplus that is very strong. Now, you know when the economy is good, you have more surplus because you've got more people working and fewer people spending Government money and more people paying taxes. And then if the economy goes down, then you may run a little deficit because you've got fewer people paying taxes and more people on welfare and taking Government assistance.

But what happened to us for the first time in the 1980's was we made a decision to run a big deficit every year. And for 12 years we quadrupled the debt of the country, and we had high interest rates, and wages wouldn't go up. You all remember. And then when the economy went down, we couldn't spend our way out of it. We just got stuck in high unemployment. So I wanted to balance the budget so we wouldn't have to worry about that, so we could keep interest rates down.

Now I'm asking the American people to help me do something that may be hard for a lot of people to do. I think we ought to take about three-quarters of this surplus we've got and save it to do two things. We should save it in the next few years and save it in the following way: We should be buying back the public debt—in other words, pay our debt down—and as we do it, in effect, give a certificate of obligation for that money to Social Security and Medicare for 15 years, after which the Congress can do whatever they want to about it.

But let me tell you what will happen. If you do that, we can help to solve the Social Security problem. We can make Social Security solvent until 2050 or beyond; we can make Medicare solvent until 2020. We still ought to make some other changes in it, but we can do those things. We can keep interest rates down. That means more business loans, more jobs, lower car payments, lower mortgage payments, lower credit card payments, lower college loan interest rates, paying the debt down. It means that—you know what Max has to do every year when he votes on a budget? The first thing he's got to do this year is to take over 13 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes and put it to the side to pay interest on the debt we've run up. So when

you think about what we're spending money on and you say, "Well, Max, I want more for education," or, "Max, I want a tax cut," or, "Max, I want you to spend more money on building us some more highways here"—just keep in mind, you're thinking, "Well, I'm giving him \$100, right, in taxes." Well, you're not. You're giving him \$87 in taxes, because you've got to take 13 off the top just to pay interest on the debt we've run up.

Now, if we do what I'm suggesting, not only can we deal with the financial crisis in Social Security and Medicare, 15 years from now—and, again, it won't be me, I won't be there—but 15 years from now the Members of Congress will only be taking 2 cents on the dollar for interest on the debt. They'll be spending the money on Social Security, Medicare, education, investing in a peaceful world, giving you tax cuts, whatever. But don't you think it makes sense for us to take care of the Social Security and Medicare problems and to pay the debt down and to secure our economic strength? I mean, I think it makes a lot of sense.

So I came here today to help a man I admire. I came here today to thank you for sticking with me and for giving me the chance to serve and giving the country the chance to have these good things happen. And I'd like to make just a whoop-de-do speech. But I owe it to you to tell you that this new century will present

us with unparalleled new opportunities and unforeseen new challenges. And our predecessors, the people that were here 5 years ago and 10 years ago and 15 years ago were up to their ears in alligators. They did not have the opportunity that we have to take the confidence, the economic success, the things we've got now, and think about the long-term welfare of the country.

And if you believe what I said when I started and you clapped—50 years ago I was raised to believe that everybody could live out their dreams, but that we had responsibilities to one another to live in one community—then let's act like that now and give those gifts to our children.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:20 p.m. in the Stephen F. Austin Ballroom at the Four Points Hotel Sheraton. In his remarks, he referred to Leslie Sandlin, wife of Representative Sandlin; Mayor James W. Bramlett of Texarkana; event cohosts former Bowie County Judge Edward Miller, Texas Democratic Party Chair Molly Beth Malcolm, and Texarkana City Council member Willie Ray; John D. Rafaelli, owner, Four Points Hotel Sheraton; the President's brother, Roger Clinton, and his wife, Molly, and their son, Tyler; and the President's stepfather Richard Kelley.

Statement on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

March 12, 1999

I welcome the accession today of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as NATO's newest members. The people of these three nations know what it means to lose their freedom. For years they struggled with dignity and courage to regain their freedom. And now they will help us defend it for many years to come. Their membership will make America safer. It will make NATO stronger. And it will help us realize our common vision of a Europe that is for the first time undivided, democratic, and at peace.

For 3 days, beginning on April 23, NATO's 19 members will meet in Washington for the

50th anniversary summit of our alliance, joined by our partners from across the new Europe. We will honor NATO's achievements in protecting peace and security. We will also prepare our alliance to meet the challenges ahead, strengthen our partnership with Europe's newly democratic nations, and reaffirm our commitment that NATO's newest members will not be the last.

Message on the Observance of Saint Patrick's Day, 1999
March 12, 1999

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Saint Patrick's Day. Each year on this special day dedicated to Ireland's patron saint, I am proud to join millions of Americans in remembering our Irish heritage. We remember with pride our ancestors who stood on Ireland's western shores, yearning for the promise of America. Fleeing famine and injustice, they longed for a new world of opportunities. Millions of these courageous men and women set sail from Ireland to seek the promise of America. They gave to their new homeland their strength and spirit, sinew and determination, eloquence and wit. In return, America offered them the opportunity for a better life, the chance to rise above poverty and discrimination, and a future where they could live out their dreams.

The Irish who came to America endured many hardships, but they prospered and helped to build our country with innumerable physical and intellectual contributions. Irish Americans seized the opportunity of freedom that America promised. They gave us Presidents and patriots,

judges and journalists, social reformers, peacekeepers, artists, labor leaders, and educators. From their grand literary tradition to their deep religious faith, Irish Americans and their descendants have enriched every facet of American history. But this celebration is a time to look to the future as well as to the past. Today as we pay tribute to Saint Patrick and his example of faith and determination, we rejoice that the faith and determination of the Irish people have brought about the promise of peace in Northern Ireland and the resolve to approach differences not with weapons, but with words. Americans are a vital part of the process in Northern Ireland by virtue of our shared heritage and shared goal of lasting peace and a better future for all God's children. By lending our hearts, minds, and prayers to the work of peace, we can best fulfill our obligation to the generations of Irish men and women who have given so much to our Nation's life and history.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks at a Dinner for Representative Max Sandlin in Texarkana
March 12, 1999

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to begin just by thanking you all for giving me such a wonderful, warm welcome tonight, coming up, saying hello, shaking my hand, seeing if I still knew how to write my name—[laughter]—taking the pictures. It's wonderful to be back here. I have had a lot of incredible times in this community over the last 24 years or so. And I've seen a lot of old friends here tonight, and I'm delighted to see you.

I came here for a lot of reasons, but I want to begin by just thanking Truman and Anita and the Joyces, the Youngs, the Pattersons, everybody else who had anything to do with this. When I was Governor, and when I started running for President, no one but my mother thought I could win. [Laughter] Maybe on a good day, Hillary did. [Laughter] I don't know if anybody else did. Truman Arnold was there

for me. The people of Miller and Bowie Counties were there for me. And I have never forgotten it, and I never will.

I was sitting here looking at Truman, you know. I just want to tell you it's little things that mean a lot to me. I go all over the country, and I do these events. And I'm paying more attention to them, I think, than I ever have, maybe because they're not for me anymore because I can't run for anything. He thanked more people who worked for me who never get acknowledged by anybody, anywhere, tonight than anyone in the United States of America ever has at one of these events. And I appreciate that. That means a lot.

I also want to thank Molly Beth Malcolm, even though the Congressman ragged her a little bit for agreeing to be head of the Texas Democratic Party. No matter what you think, it is

alive and well, and we have a majority of the House delegation, and I hope we increase the numbers next time. And I thank you very much.

I'd like to thank the people who served the food, the people who cooked the food. This is the most I've gotten to eat at one of these things in a long time. *[Laughter]* And the people that let me eat, I appreciate that, too, although I really didn't need to. I enjoyed it. I'd like to thank the band. They were great.

You know, I wanted to be here tonight for a number of reasons. You know, I came home to Hope today, and we dedicated—we had a formal dedication of my—they call it my birthplace. I was actually born in a hospital, as near as I remember. *[Laughter]* But I lived there from the time I was born until I was 4 years old. And they restored this wonderful old house that was built in 1917, and the last time I saw it before they started in 1990, it needed condemning. But the people have done a wonderful job. And my kinfolks from all over here have given them memorabilia and things, and other people have contributed. A lady came from the Midwest today and stood out in that cold, driving rain, drove all the way from Iowa, I think, to give them a Lionel train, because she read that when I was 4 years old, I had a little Lionel train there. And she had one that was made in 1950, and she gave it to them. It was a wonderful thing for me. And I came here because I wanted to help Max Sandlin. And I'd like to tell you something about the connection between the two things.

As I said, I feel incredibly grateful to have had the chance to be President. I'm grateful for the people here who have supported me. I'm grateful for the people from Arkansas who went to Washington with me. Truman recognized Bob and Janis and Nancy Hernreich, and my good friend Mack McLarty's here, and we may have some more Arkansans here with me tonight.

But I want you to know that I hope that the good Lord gives me good health for a few more years, and I can spend my time being a citizen, trying to help other people I believe in stand up and fight for causes that I believe in. And after over 20 years in public life, I am acutely mindful of the fact that while every politician would like to have you believe that he was born in a log cabin that he made himself—*[laughter]*—the truth is that all—any of us, even a President, can hope to do, is to

be a part of setting a direction of taking the chains off people, creating the conditions in which people can make and live their own dreams.

But I'm here for Max, in part, because I think it's not only something I want to do, it's something I think would be good for the children of this district and this State and this country. I said today at the dedication of my birthplace that when I was born in Hope, yea long years ago, right at the end of World War II, it wasn't a perfect place. It was still segregated, and we had our fair share of flaws in that little town. And as Mack McLarty reminded me today on the airplane, we even had a gossip or two, God forbid. *[Laughter]*

But the children in the blush of optimism and national unity after World War II were basically raised to believe at least two things in little towns all across America like the one that I came of age in: One was to believe they should be personally optimistic, that they should have their dreams and live them and believe that they could. And the second was to be acutely sensitive to and respectful to other people, to never forget that they were part of a community, that the good news was they belonged to something bigger than themselves, but they also had a responsibility to care for people besides themselves.

And one of the biggest reasons that I ran for President in 1991 and '92 was to give the young people of this generation that feeling back. All these young people working for us tonight, you don't have any idea what they do when they're not serving you food. But unlike me, they've got most of their lives ahead of them. I want them to believe that they can live their dreams. I want them to, in fact, have a chance to do it.

I want them to also believe that in this country that is incredibly diverse—I told somebody today the little grade school named after me in Hope, Arkansas, now has 27 kids who are first-generation immigrants, whose first language is not English. The school district across the river, the Potomac River, from Washington, DC, now has children in one school district from 180 different national, racial, and ethnic groups. We had better remember that we are one community and that if any of us hope to do well, we ought to want our neighbors to do well, too. And we ought to be willing to go to some trouble to see that they have that chance.

And so that's what I said today at my little dedication in my home. I said I learned that lesson as a little boy in Hope. And if I hadn't learned it, we wouldn't be here 50 years later.

I came here tonight because I like Max Sandlin and because I admire him and because he has already had an unusual impact for a person that hasn't been in the House any longer than he's been there and shown an unusual amount of personal courage and responsibility. And I will just give you three examples—[*ap-
plause*—the other people also like him; otherwise my Congressman, former member of my administration, Marion Berry, the Congressman from eastern Arkansas, would not be down here tonight in the cold and the rain. You don't do that just out of some sense of obligation. And there are three reasons.

Number one, I want you to know he does his work for the district. On far more than one occasion, he has personally lobbied me about a specific issue relating to this district. That's part of his job. But you would be amazed at how many people—so has Marion Berry—[*laughter*]—but he took me to race 20 years ago, so he feels he has a right to. But you would be amazed how many people get around the President, and then they say, "Oh, I'd better not bother him with that. He's probably thinking about Kosovo." Well, I probably am. But the only reason I have a right to think about Kosovo is that people from Miller County and Bowie County gave me the vote to put me there to do it. And he never forgets that.

Second thing is, he really, deeply believes in the things we're trying to do. You could look at him when he was up here talking; he wasn't faking it. He believes we were right to fight those who oppose us, to put another 100,000 teachers in the classroom so every child in this country has a chance in the early grades to be in a small class with a teacher that can give that child individual attention so that all our kids learn to read and to speak and to be able to learn for the rest of their experience. He really believes that we ought to have a Patients' Bill of Rights to protect the patients and the right of medical professionals to practice medicine, even as we try to manage the health care system.

We shouldn't manage people's right to a specialist away. We shouldn't manage people's right to the nearest emergency room away. We shouldn't manage people's right to continue

treatment even if their employer changes their health care provider in the middle of a pregnancy or chemotherapy treatment or something else. He believes that. It's just not something he's saying because it happens to sound good this year. And he really believes, and this is important, because the Democratic Party used to have an image as the party that had promoted the deficits. It was never true.

Even in the 12 years—and remember, I'm not running for anything, so I'm entitled—and we've had a pretty good economy, so all I'm asking you for is the benefit of the doubt. But I'd like to put this down. Even in the 12 years before I became President, when the Democrats had a majority in Congress and we quadrupled the debt, the Congress actually spent less money than my predecessors asked them to spend. So what I wanted to do was to prove that you could be progressive—you could believe in community, you could believe in raising the minimum wage, you could believe in helping working families with child care, you could believe in opening the doors of college with more scholarships and tax credits—and first make the economy work by bringing the deficit down, balancing the budget, getting interest rates down so people would invest their money, run the stock market up, start new businesses, put people to work, and raise wages. I thought good economic policy and good social policy would go hand in hand. It turned out to be right. Well, I'm only going to be there 2 more years. Max Sandlin believes that. He wasn't kidding when he said we ought to pay down the debt.

If I had come to you in 1992 and said, "Now listen, before I'm done, I'll be coming back here telling you we can pay off the national debt," you'd have said, "That guy's too unstable to be President." [*Laughter*] Wouldn't you? Nobody would have believed that. We just took it for granted. You know, the deficit would always go up; crime would go up; welfare would go up; the country would grow unequal; working people would never be able to get ahead again. It turns out not to be true. If you do the right things and work at it, consequences flow from that.

So I'm telling you, I don't want to give you a whole policy speech tonight, but if you watch every elected official in Washington, DC, for the next year, there will be a zillion issues. You may think I'm wrong about some of them, but some of them will determine how the children

in this room and their children live, way into the 21st century.

One is, how are we going to handle the fact that America is aging? The Second World War baby boom generation, everybody born from 1946 to 1964, when we all get into the retirement system, there won't be but two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. Even before that, within 10 years, because life expectancy is going up and the older you get the more you need to have medical treatment, Medicare will run out of money under the present system, unless we put some more money in it and make some changes.

Now, that's a high-class problem. The older I get, the higher class problem that is. *[Laughs]* But if you think about it, that's a high-class problem. It's because of advances in medical science, advances in basic health care, things like clean water and immunizations, and because people are taking better care of themselves. But it will bankrupt the country and the Social Security system unless we make some changes.

So now we've got this chance. Why? Because we've got a surplus and because you've got a President who is not running for office and is not afraid to tell you a few things you might not like to hear about the changes we need to make to make sure this is going to be there 75 years from now. And this is not an issue for the elderly. Everybody over 60 in this audience, Social Security will be there if you live to be 85. Don't worry about it. It's not a problem. It's a problem for people my age and the nagging worry we have that if we don't fix Social Security, then our children will have to take care of us in a way that undermines their ability to take care of our grandchildren. That's what this is about.

And it's a big issue for America. And it's very easy for politicians to get out there and tell you, "Oh, we'll take care of this down the road, and I'm going to give you this surplus back right now in a tax cut." Well, we ought to have a tax cut this year, but we ought to save three-quarters of that surplus until we fix Social Security and Medicare. We ought to do that. And we have given the Congress a way to do it that will enable us for the next 15 years to buy down the national debt while we're making future commitments for Social Security and Medicare.

Now, you know, this is an alien subject in America. We had—as Max said, we hadn't bal-

anced the budget in 30 years; now we're talking about buying down the debt. But I've been thinking about this.

I just got back from Central America, one of the places in the world we actually have a trade surplus with. That's why I want to help them get over the hurricane and because they're our neighbors and our friends. A lot of people say, "I wish we didn't have so much illegal immigration." Well, a lot of people down there love their children and can't make a living for them. That's why they come up here. If we help them get over this hurricane and help them make a living down there, they'll be good trading partners, and you won't have to worry so much about illegal immigration.

But I got to thinking about it. I'm also trying to do it because we're trying to keep the world economy going. But if you talk to any farmer that grows crops or raises cattle or hogs, you know this is a very tough time to be a farmer. We may have 18 million new jobs; we may have the best American economy in history; but you couldn't prove it by the grain farmers in the high plains of America. You couldn't prove it by most farmers. Now, why is that? A big reason is, half the world's in a terrible recession because of the Asian financial crisis and because it gave the financial flu to a lot of countries in Latin America, and they can't buy our stuff anymore. Now, I've got to worry about how to keep this economy going.

So here's the good news: You can save Social Security and Medicare and because we'll be paying down the debt, we'll keep interest rates down, and we will be better off if things go bad in the world, and we'll do even better if they go well in the world. If you pay this debt down, it means business loans will be cheaper; therefore, there will be more taken, more businesses started, more jobs created. It means your kids' college loan will be cheaper. It means your car payment, your house payment, and your credit card payment will be cheaper. It means America will grow more. It means when Max Sandlin goes to Congress, every year from now on, every year he'll have to take less and less and less money off the top to pay interest on the debt.

When I became President, 14½ cents of every dollar you pay in taxes had to be taken off the top to pay interest on the debt that had been accumulated in the 12 previous years before we could invest in education, invest in

highways, invest in the environment, invest in health care, or give you a tax cut. In others words, when you hire a Congressman, you're basically getting 86 percent of a brain—[*laughter*]*—*or a capacity, because he can't think about 14 cents; 14 cents, he plunks down off the top end. Now, it's not always bad to go into debt. It's not always bad for a nation to do it. But it is a terrible thing for a nation to do what we did for 12 years and borrow money every year just to keep up with current expenses.

You build a new building in Texarkana, you borrow the money, build the building, advertise it, pay the debt off. You're making a long-term investment, so you can make a long-term payment on it. But to keep borrowing money to go to dinner every night, which is what America did for 12 years, is a terrible mistake.

And I am telling you, we can be out of debt in 17 years. In 15 years, if you will do this, we will be down to where only 2 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes goes to debt service, and the rest can then be spent for Social Security or Medicare or education or for a tax cut if that's what the people in Congress want then. But let's secure the American economy for the long run.

Let's say—I'm doing my best to help Asia, to help Latin America, to ward off wars that can wreck the economy, to keep things going. But we have limited control over events beyond our borders. Maybe I'll get this done. Believe me, I am trying. But I want America to be as strong as possible no matter what. If it rains, I want us to have a good roof up. If the Sun shines, I want us to be able to fly higher. This is the right thing to do. Max Sandlin believes that. You saw him up here tonight. He wasn't just giving a speech; that's what he believes.

And the third reason I'm for him is that at a time in the last year when a lot of people just worried which way the political winds were blowing, that guy was telling people to read the Constitution of the United States of America.

And so I thank you for coming here. I thank you for raising all this money. I thank you for sending a signal that you understand that good civic leadership is important and you'll stay with it. I thank you for everything you've done for me in two races for President and times in-between and many of you for many, many years before.

But I ask you to think mostly about tomorrow and all the tomorrows of the 21st century. I ask you to remember that in a time this dynamic, we cannot afford to sit back and rest on our laurels. Yes, we've got a great economy. Yes, we've got the lowest crime rate in 30 years. Yes, the welfare rolls have been cut in half. Yes, we seem to be making advances toward peace and security in the world. But things are changing in a hurry out there. We don't control everything. Therefore, it is very important, with all this prosperity and all this confidence we have, that we act on what we can control, which is what we do and what we care about and what kind of dreams we've got for our kids.

And you know, we're having a good time tonight, and I didn't really mean to get this serious, but I don't know if I'll get to talk to you again personally before I leave office. And I'm telling you, we've got a chance to make the next 100 years better for America than the last 100. But it will be a very different world, and it will move in a hurry. And we will have to work hard always to ask ourselves: Is what I am going to do going to make it easier for every kid to dream big dreams and have a chance to live them; and is what I'm going to do going to make it easier for us to come together as a community—in our community, in our State, in our Nation, and with our friends around the world?

And I'm telling you, you can boil all this stuff down to that: Are we going to make it easier for people to live their dreams? Are we going to make it easier and more likely that people will get along together and understand that for all of our differences, God made us more in common than different? And if the answer to those questions is yes, then that's probably the right thing to do. I trust Max Sandlin to find that answer.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. in the Truman Arnold Center at Texarkana Community College. In his remarks, he referred to event cohosts Truman and Anita Arnold, Gene and Mary Kay Joyce, Damon and Doris Ann (D.A.) Young, and Cary and Lois Patterson; Molly Beth Malcolm, chair, Texas Democratic Party; Mary Dotson of Oklahoma City, OK, donor of a 1949 Lionel model train set to the Clinton Birthplace

Foundation; Assistant to the President and Director of Personnel Bob Nash; and Special Assistant

to the President and Records Manager Janis F. Kearney.

The President's Radio Address *March 13, 1999*

Good morning. I'm joined here at the White House today by Members of Congress, Deputy Attorney General Holder, Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Bill Lann Lee, representatives from law enforcement and civil rights groups, all here to talk about what we must do to strengthen the bond of trust between police officers and the communities they serve, and make our streets safer than ever.

Six years ago I took office committed to lowering the crime rate and to raise the levels of trust and cooperation between police and the communities they serve. Working with law enforcement and community leaders, we put in place a comprehensive crime-fighting strategy with more police and better prevention, more positive activities for young people, and fewer guns in the hands of criminals. The strategy is working even beyond our expectation. Nationwide, crime is down to its lowest level in decades. In communities all across America, families feel safe again.

Community policing has been at the heart of our success, by giving police the chance to get to know the people on their beats and giving those people a chance to be part of law enforcement decisions that affect their lives. Community policing helps to prevent crime, to catch more criminals more quickly when crime does occur, and in the process, to build bonds of understanding and trust between police and citizens.

Our Nation's police officers every day put their lives on the line for the rest of us. I have done my best to support and to honor them. But I have been deeply disturbed by recent allegations of serious police misconduct and continued reports of racial profiling that have shaken some communities' faith in the police who are there to protect them.

While each specific allegation will have to be dealt with on its own merits, it is clear that we need a renewed determination as a nation to restore those bonds of trust that have been

absolutely critical to our success at lowering the crime rate. So today I am proposing five steps both to reduce crime and to increase the public's trust in law enforcement.

First, better training and better education lead to better policing. I'm asking the Justice Department to expand police integrity and ethics training to all 30 biregional community policing institutes and proposing a \$40 million increase in funding to improve police training nationwide and to help police officers raise their level of education and their level of understanding.

Second, communities and police must work as partners in the fight against crime. I am proposing to launch a new nationwide program to help more communities to establish citizen police academies that inform residents about police procedures and teach them new ways to make their own neighborhoods safer.

Third, police departments ought to reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. To help meet this challenge, I am proposing to increase funds for minority recruiting to build up the bond of trust where it is most needed.

Fourth, when police officers do break the law, they should be brought to justice. Our budget includes new funding to enforce our civil rights laws so that a few bad police officers do not undermine the progress and the support that hundreds of thousands of police officers have worked so hard to earn.

Finally, we must continue the revolution in community policing we began 6 years ago. Again I call on Congress to build on our progress by passing the \$1.3 billion 21st century policing initiative I have proposed, to put up to 50,000 more police on the street and give them the high-tech tools they need to do their job.

We know these efforts will work. Just to take one example: In Boston, a city that historically had had deep tensions between police and communities, law enforcement and community leaders came together to do something about it, establishing clear guidelines to involve residents

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in police decision-making and to hold police accountable for their actions. Today the crime rate in Boston has fallen to record lows, and reports of police misconduct are down as well.

Today I am asking Attorney General Reno to convene a series of meetings with law enforcement and community leaders to discuss how communities around the country can follow the example of Boston and other successful cities and ensure that our criminal justice system serves all Americans in a lawful, constitutional, sensitive way.

Together we will build safer communities and be one step closer to building our "One America in the 21st Century."

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:20 a.m. on March 12 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Attempted Bombing of a Family Planning Clinic in Asheville, North Carolina

March 13, 1999

I was deeply disturbed to learn of the attempted bombing of a family planning clinic in Asheville, North Carolina. We can all be grateful that no one was harmed and that the clinic suffered only minor damage. But whether or not a terrorist's bomb achieves its deadly purpose, such cowardly and criminal acts strike

at the heart of the constitutional freedoms and individual liberties all Americans hold dear. I strongly condemn this act of senseless violence. Federal agents are already in Asheville to assist local law enforcement officials. I am confident that the perpetrators of this terrible act will be brought to justice.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Former Senator Dale Bumpers in Little Rock, Arkansas

March 13, 1999

Thank you very much. Senator Lincoln, thank you very much. We're all very proud of you. Dale and I were looking up at you, listening to you speak, feeling a little bit better about his retirement and my imminent retirement in the next couple of years.

I'd like to thank Congressman Snyder and Congressman Berry for representing you fiercely and well and for being my friends and for doing our State proud. The three of them remind me of why I have always loved public life in Arkansas. And I'm always delighted to see people who have served others and worked for others and helped others and done others service be rewarded with higher positions. And all three of them deserve it richly, and I'm very pleased to see that.

I'd like to thank Rabbi Levy for being here tonight, and Bishop Walker, who is my longtime friend and whose vociferous and highly public defense of me may have won an election for me back in 1982, without which I wouldn't be here. Thank you, Bishop. I'm glad to see you.

I thank Rodney Slater for his remarks and for his extraordinary service. He has really done Arkansas proud. And there are a lot of other Arkansans who have been critical to the success our country has enjoyed in the last 6 years who are here tonight. I'll probably miss some of them, but I can't help mentioning Mack McLarty, Bob Nash, Janis Kearney, Bruce Lindsey, Nancy Harnreich, Carroll Willis, Kris Engskov; anybody else who is here from home in the administration, I apologize that I missed

you. But you should be very proud of your fellow Arkansans who are making a contribution in Washington.

I would like to thank Vaughn McQuary for his leadership of the party. He has done a great job, and I'm proud of him. And I'm glad he's coming—and to all the other dignitaries that are here tonight. I almost cried listening to David Pryor talk, until I remembered that he's gone over to the other side: David Pryor tonight gave me his Harvard card—[laughter]—says he's a fellow at Harvard. You know, I think I deserve some credit; I had enough guts to go to the Ivy League before I was elected to office in Arkansas. [Laughter] David was always one of them. He was just waiting to get out of office. [Laughter]

You know, one of the truly great joys of my life is that I got to serve as Governor when they were Senators together, Dale and David. I admired them. I liked them. I was so proud of what we were able to do together. I rarely ever called them about any issue they had to vote on, and when I did, they tolerated what I had to say and then did what they thought was right. [Laughter]

But when I saw David up here talking about Dale and I, and then Dale whispered to me a story about two friends of ours who were Senators from another State who, to put it charitably, do not like each other—and it interferes, I think, with what they're doing—I thought of how many examples I have seen, State after State after State, where good people let their egos get in the way in the Senate and don't work together. And there was no State that had a better team of Senators, but they were made 10 times better because they respected and liked and even loved each other, and they never let themselves get in the way of doing their jobs. And I appreciate it.

You know, the thing I'm going to miss most about having Dale Bumpers not in the Senate and not handy is that when I get really low, I can't call him and hear his latest joke. [Laughter] There has never been a person who liked jokes better than Dale Bumpers, I'm sure, in all of human history. [Laughter]

You know, the three of us, we'd go on these road shows when we were all down here, we'd go to these roasts, and we'd tell each other's jokes. And if one of us would forget to tell one of our best jokes, somebody else would tell it and never give credit. [Laughter] But it

got so bad one time, Dale Bumpers called me and said, "You remember that joke you told me about a month ago?" He said, "I can't remember the punch line to save my life." He said, "Tell it to me again." So I was really happy, because his jokes were funnier than mine, by and large. And I got in the middle of the joke, and he remembered it, and he started laughing. And I never to this day—that was 10 years ago—I still haven't finished that joke. [Laughter]

I have crashed a plane with Dale Bumpers. [Laughter] I have been through all kinds of adversity and shared a lot of joy. But I would like to say something, if I might, to try to add my poor pittance to what Senator Pryor and others have already said.

Yesterday I got to go home to Hope to dedicate the birthplace foundation, the home I lived in for the first 4 years of my life, and it was a very emotional thing. I had a lot of my family there. And I was coming back from Central America, night before last, thinking about what I could say and how I could say it in a very few words. And I said to them that in the heady days after World War II, when I was a child and first coming of age, my hometown wasn't perfect. It was still segregated and had its share of flaws, Mack McLarty reminded me, including a pretty bad town gossip or two. We glorify those types today. [Laughter] At least people used to be embarrassed about it.

But I knew then that every child was raised with at least two things in my time, when I was a child coming of age. One was an immense sense of personal optimism that life was good and that you could live your dreams if you worked for them. And the other was a sense of belonging, a sense of community, a sense of responsibility to others as well as to your own life, and a clear understanding that a lot of the richness and texture and meaning of life came from being a part of a web of relationships with other people.

And in that time, we also thought of, from my earliest childhood, public service as a truly noble endeavor, not that the people who were in it were perfect but that they were well motivated and that they wanted to serve and they wanted to advance our common dreams.

Dale Bumpers represents all that to me in a time when it has been under assault from many quarters. And I tried to think about what it was about him that made him stand up all

these years for our State, for the children, for the country, for the environment, for the Constitution, for all the things he fought for, made him believe he could cast unpopular votes, like the Panama Canal vote, and still come home and tell the people why he did it and have them stick with him.

I think there are three things: He never forgot the lessons of the past, beginning with the Constitution of the United States; he never stopped dreaming of the future; and he never lost his essential humanity. Our public life is poorer when people forget the past and ignore the future. It is poorer when they choose power over purpose because they forget we're just here for a little speck of time, and in 100 or 200 years nobody will remember any of us, and all that will endure is whatever contribution we made to make life better and richer and more decent.

I've watched Dale Bumpers in a way that the whole world got to watch him when he spoke in the Senate. But when you strip it all away, it comes down to that, to humility, humanity, a sense of one's own mortality and one's own capacity for incredible dignity and glory. He has represented all that.

So if a child asks you if he or she should ever go into public life in this country, you should say yes. But don't ever forget the lessons from the past and how smart the people were that started this country. Don't ever stop dreaming about a better future. And do not ever lose your essential humanity. And all the complexities of all the problems I face and all the battles

I see come before me, 90 percent of them would go away tomorrow if people could just understand they do not have to define their lives in terms of putting someone else down, defeating someone else, thinking they're better than someone else, ignoring their common humanity.

I was looking at Dale and David tonight, and I was thinking, it seems like yesterday I first saw David Pryor running for Congress in 1976. It seems like yesterday I was first excited about Dale Bumpers coming out of Charleston in 1970. It seems like yesterday when we were all young and beginning and everything was new. And it passes in the flash of an eye. And when it's over, what remains is the feeling that you have been human and alive to the needs and aspirations of other people. There is nobody in public life in this country today who embodies it better than Dale Bumpers, and I am honored and proud to have served with him.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. at the Statehouse Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Rabbi Eugene Levy, Temple B'nai Israel, who offered the benediction; Bishop L.T. Walker, Church of God in Christ, who offered the invocation; Vaughn McQuary, Arkansas State Democratic Party chair; Carroll Willis, director, community services division, Democratic National Committee; Kris Engskov, the President's Aide; and former Senator David H. Pryor.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With NATO Secretary General Javier Solana and an Exchange With Reporters

March 15, 1999

President Clinton. Let me just say that I'm delighted to have Secretary General Solana here. I think he has done a superb job in leading NATO. We are very much looking forward, in just a little over a month, to celebrating the 50th anniversary of NATO by admitting new members. The documents were issued over the weekend. The Secretary of State went to Missouri with the representatives of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, and we're very pleased. I'm looking forward to the meeting and

looking forward to NATO's missions in the 21st century.

Let me say I'm also very, very pleased by the news we received this morning that the Kosovar Albanians have agreed to sign the peace agreement. And I want to thank Mr. Solana and Secretary Albright and all the others who have worked on this so hard. And again, I would encourage Mr. Milosevic to agree to the terms, as well, so that we can avoid further conflict and bloodshed.

Kosovo

Q. Do you think they will—the Serbs will go along with it?

President Clinton. I don't know. I hope they will. And I think it is clearly the right thing to do. From his point of view, I think it's the best chance to preserve the integrity of Serbia and avoid economic and other adversity. So I would hope that he would do that.

Q. Mr. President, is it a certainty that NATO will strike if he doesn't sign? Is that for sure?

Q. Well, do you have anything to talk him into it?

President Clinton. One at a time. Wait. Wait.

Q. Is it a certainty that NATO will strike the Serbs if Milosevic does not sign?

President Clinton. Well, all I can tell you is I think we have a clear statement out there about what our policy is. And if he shows intransigence and aggression, I think from our point of view we would have little option. You might want to ask Mr. Solana what he thinks about that.

Q. Do you agree with that, Mr. Secretary General?

Secretary General Solana. I agree. Yes, yes. As just said, the President—I do agree, yes.

Q. Mr. President, how long are you prepared to let these talks in France go on?

President Clinton. Well, I think they ought to be able to talk this through a little bit. I don't know that anyone was absolutely sure the Kosovar Albanians would sign this morning. And peace is better than war. But obviously, they can't go on indefinitely. We need to give everybody time to assess the current situation and where they're going to go from here.

But again, I think the most important thing now is that Mr. Milosevic and the Serbs agree to sign. And it's clearly the right thing to do.

Q. Mr. President, in the past, NATO has only been willing to act in the wake of extreme atrocities. Why is it credible to threaten the use

of military force in this situation if that doesn't take place?

President Clinton. What would your answer be?

Secretary General Solana. My answer is that if an agreement is not reached—if President Milosevic doesn't sign, the risk of a catastrophe will be very likely. And we have to prevent that from happening. And NATO will prevent that from happening.

President Clinton. Let me say, in sort of support of the other NATO allies as well, the reason we—you're absolutely right, there's not a lot of precedent for what we're trying to do here. But the reason that we worked so hard—that Secretary Albright, Secretary Cohen, the rest of us—the reason we worked so hard to get NATO to take this position is to avoid the level of atrocity and death that we saw in Bosnia. We didn't want to go down that road again. We wanted to try to dramatically shorten the timetable from aggression and the loss of innocent life and upheaval to action.

And so far I would say that it seems to have been a successful policy, in the sense that we at least have one side now signing on to this peace agreement. We just have to stay with it. We have to be firm about this.

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. Thank you, pool.

Q. Thank you.

President Clinton. Thank you.

Q. Going to hold a news conference soon, right?

President Clinton. Good morning. That's what—I think so. I just miss you so terribly and not having any questions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Interview With Michael Jackson of KRLA Radio March 15, 1999

Mr. Jackson. Forgive me. There we had the Deputy Director of the Office of Management

and the Budget with us, Sylvia Mathews. We are supposed to be at the end of the show,

but I'm changing the rules. I'm going to carry my microphone and stand up for a moment. I'm truly honored to have the opportunity of saying good morning to the President of the United States.

The President. Good morning, Michael. Or good afternoon, here.

President's Accomplishments and Goals

Mr. Jackson. It's good to see you again, sir. I have had most of your Cabinet here this morning. The enthusiasm that they show for the jobs that they have—and they all come from different worlds. It's something uniquely and distinctly American. And I also said to, I think it was Donna Shalala—I said, when I see pictures of you with the leadership of Japan or the Central American countries most recently, you look America. And when I see you standing next to Al Gore, you look America. And when I see you standing with the First Lady and Al Gore's wife, Tipper, you look America.

What are you most proud of, sir?

The President. You mean about what we've done here?

Mr. Jackson. Yes.

The President. I think I'm most proud that we've been able to pull the country together and give people a sense that we're going in the right direction again. I'm proud of the opportunities that millions of Americans have had to live out their dreams and shape their destinies and take care of their children. I'm proud of the fact that we have faced the tough challenges that our country has, instead of dodging them. I'm proud of the fact that—I think Americans have a lot of confidence now that we can deal with all the things that are before us and move into the future in a very good way.

I'm proud of all that. I'm just grateful that I have the chance to serve and that we've got almost a quarter of our time left to get some of the things done that I very much want to do before it's over.

Mr. Jackson. Isn't that expression "lame duck" a painful one? A quarter of your time still remains.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Jackson. Do you know a full agenda of what you would like to be able to accomplish in that time, sir?

The President. Well, sure. I mean, I talked about it at great length in the State of the Union Address, but I very much want to secure the

long-term economic well-being of the country as much as I can, and to do that, we have to deal with the challenges of Social Security and Medicare and paying the debt down.

I very much want to make a lot more headway on bringing economic opportunity and a better quality of life to the urban and rural areas where there is still trouble. There are places within the sound of our voice now, in Los Angeles, where we still haven't seen the level of recovery I would like to see. And I've got a major initiative designed to leave no one behind as we go into this new century, and I'm hoping that we can pass that this year. And of course, around the world there are a lot of places that I'm still trying to build bridges to and bring peace to. That's what my trip to Central America was all about.

China

Mr. Jackson. Nothing is black and white, or simple, is it, in your position? I mean, China makes the news, but not all for the constructive things that are going on in our relationship with them.

The President. That's right. Well, one of my predecessors once said that he never got any easy decisions because all the easy ones were made before they got to the President's desk. So there are a lot of complex issues. You know, with China we have our differences. We differ with them on their human rights policy. We differ with them on their Tibet policy. We are struggling to establish an economic partnership that is fair and good and—good for them, good for us.

But because we have worked with them, instead of trying to isolate them, we've also made the world a safer place. They've helped us with the nuclear problem in Korea. They've helped us in refraining from giving dangerous technologies to other countries that we believe might misuse them or would aggravate tensions where they are. They've helped us to try to limit the Asian financial crisis.

So I believe that the best policy with China is an honest one: Where it's in our interest and theirs, we should work together for world peace and for economic prosperity, and where we have honest differences, we ought to state them.

The American Century

Mr. Jackson. Mr. President, earlier this morning in a conversation with Bill Daley, your Secretary of Commerce, I said, only a short while ago people would say, "This is the American Century; the next one won't be." Now, everybody's convinced it will be; the 2000's will be ours as well. What is it we've got?

The President. I think an infinite capacity for renewal, for change, anchored in a magnificent set of common values in our Constitution.

Every year, in one way or the other, we see the wisdom of our framers ratified. We've got a Government that's a democracy but also has protections against abuse of power. We've got a Government that has some absolutely unbending rights for its citizens but is infinitely flexible. And I think that—what I hoped to do when I came to the Presidency, over 6 years ago, was to give people a sense of possibility again and to give our country a sense of community again.

You know, I was deeply moved by all the troubles in Los Angeles in the early nineties, and it became almost a metaphor for what was going on through the country. We had more and more diversity, more and more people whose family's first language was not English. I saw that as an enormous opportunity in the global society of our children's future. But I knew we had to find a way to come together as well as to move forward. I think we're doing that now, and I feel very good about it.

Central America

Mr. Jackson. How was the trip to Central America?

The President. Well, it was sobering but heartening. It was heartening in the sense that all those countries are democracies now. They've overcome bitter, bitter civil wars. People that were shooting each other a few years ago are now dressed in suits and ties and nice dresses, sitting in parliaments, you know, working with each other. And that's good.

It was sobering because the hurricane was the worst natural disaster, perhaps ever, in Central America, devastating to a lot of those countries. And I'm hoping the United States will do more to help.

I want the American people to know that Central America is one of the few regions of the world where we actually have a trade sur-

plus. And if we want to reduce illegal immigration from Central America, the best way to do it is to strengthen their democracies and their economies, make them good business partners for us. They help us fight drugs; they help us promote democracy; and they'll help us grow our economies.

Immigration

Mr. Jackson. Interesting, sir, in a conversation earlier this morning with your Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala, she made a comment, just in passing, that most of the people that come here would rather—in the main—stay home in their own countries. It's opportunity here that brings them.

The President. I think that's right. Most of the people who wish to emigrate to America and stay sign up, get on the list, wait their turn, and do it in a legal way. Most of the illegal immigrants who come here come because they literally can't make a living at home, and many of them have children.

For example, the largest source of foreign exchange that El Salvador has is \$1 billion a year that Salvadoran citizens working in the United States send home to their families. So if we could stabilize their economies, make it possible for them to make a living at home by doing business with us, instead of having to come here and try to sneak through the borders, the illegal immigration problem would go way, way down.

Participation in Broadcast

Mr. Jackson. Mr. President, I have been given the word. You have a very busy schedule. I am thrilled; this was very unexpected.

The President. Well, I just wanted to thank you, Michael, for what you do on your program, the people whose voices you give the opportunity to be heard, and for giving all of our people a chance to come by and talk. I think it is true, we are still enthusiastic. We act like we got here last week, most days. But I think that's because we try to stay busy. We try to focus on not what we did yesterday or last year or 5 years ago but what we're going to do tomorrow.

Kosovo/2000 Democratic Convention

Mr. Jackson. Sir, last night I went to a restaurant, and there's your Secretary of State working over dinner. You're overworking her, sir.

The President. I am overworking her. She—we got some good news today there, you know. We had two announcements today of note. One is that the Kosovar Albanians said that they would sign the peace agreement——

Mr. Jackson. Congratulations.

The President. ——which means that now we just have to convince Mr. Milosevic and the Serbs to go along. If they do, we can avoid a major war there.

Of course, the other big announcement today is the Democrats are going to have their convention in Los Angeles.

Mr. Jackson. In our town.

The President. That's right.

Mr. Jackson. I'm going to be there every day doing my show.

The President. Well, we're all very excited about it. You know, bringing back California became an obsession around here in my first term. And we know now that in the State, and even, indeed, within the confines of Los Angeles County, there is an example of virtually every good thing that this administration has tried to do over the last 6 years. So we're excited about going there, and we think America will like it, seeing it on television. They'll see, I think, a very good picture of America's future, and that's what we'll hope to provide.

Gov. Gray Davis of California

Mr. Jackson. If I can just throw one more quick one. Rodney Slater, your Secretary of Transportation, was on this morning, sir. And we were talking about the impact that you've had on our new Governor, the fact that he did what Pete Wilson never did in 8 years. He went

to Central America—he went to Mexico, I beg your pardon——

The President. Yes.

Mr. Jackson.——and built a bridge there. And our State's almost a nation.

The President. Well, I think, first of all, I think Governor Davis is doing a terrific job. And I suppose I've learned as much from him as he's learned from me. But I think the thing that Californians can be proud of is that he will, in my view, he will keep the State focused on the future. He'll keep working on the big issues, and he'll get results. He will stay at something until he gets results.

And I personally thought his decision to go to Mexico and establish a relationship with the President there, who is a progressive, able person and an honest person, was a very smart decision for the people of California. But it's one of many smart decisions he's made. And I think that when we come there for the convention, it will give America a chance to see a lot of the good things that are going on in California.

Mr. Jackson. Mr. President, thank you very much indeed for your time, sir.

The President. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 3 p.m. The President spoke from Room 415 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks to the Legislative Conference of the International Association of Fire Fighters

March 15, 1999

Thank you. That's a true story. [Laughter] But the truth is that Al didn't need to have any fear because by the time I called him, Harold had gone over the whole list, and I had written it down. Do you remember that? I mean, he had been very tough, very specific, very firm. And I actually wrote it down. And I think if I hadn't written it down, he would

never have let me off the hook. [Laughter] I just called Al because sometimes people get better care in the hospital after I call them. [Laughter]

I was with a guy over the weekend—I went home to Arkansas over the weekend—I was with a guy over the weekend who is about 83 years old. And he literally was at death's door. And

I called him in the hospital, and I don't—this sounds more insensitive than it is, but this guy is like a brother to me, and we've been friends for 30 years. And I call him up, and I say, "You old coot. You can't die. I'm not done with you yet." [Laughter] And all of a sudden, everybody rushed into his room. The next thing I know, 2 weeks later he's at a Democratic event, last weekend. So if you get in the hospital and you don't think they're doing right by you, let us know, and I'll see what I can do. [Laughter]

I want to thank Al and Harold and Vince and all the officers of the IAFF for working with us. I want to thank my good friend James Lee Witt, and Kay Goss, who has now worked with me as my liaison to firefighters as Governor and as President. Thank you very much. I want to thank Congressmen Neil Abercrombie and Bill Pascrell, both of whom are here and are good friends of the firefighters and good friends of mine.

You know, I was thinking about how much we have in common on the way over here. When I was a boy, like most kids I used to love to go to the fire station, slide down the pole, crawl on the truck, do all that. I never became a firefighter, but I believe I've learned about as much as you have about putting out fires in the last few years. [Laughter]

I'm working on about 20 years now of working with firefighters, working with the IAFF. When I was Governor, I worked with our local IAFF members to create a statewide fire and police pension system and to establish death benefits for firefighters killed in the line of duty. And I asked Al where Pete Reagan was standing over there because he's the president of the Arkansas Professional Fire Fighters, and whenever I go back to northwest Arkansas, he still leads the motorcade.

I haven't been asked to pick up a hose or anything on any of these trips, but a few years ago when we were in Fayetteville, where I used to teach and where Hillary and I were married, I asked him if we could go by and see the home where we first lived in and where we were married. Pete redirected the entire motorcade to go past the house. You cannot imagine how this traumatized the Secret Service. [Laughter]

Everybody else—I just said, "I want to go by my house." And so, boom, boom, boom, all of a sudden we're going by the—then, they had to take us down a dirt road in order to get

back on the motorcade route, which makes the point I want to get into, which is that now people who are firefighters have to do a lot more than battle fires.

You all know that Benjamin Franklin started the country's first fire department in 1736. It was called the Union Fire Company, but it was not a union shop. It was a private company. And in those days, different companies would actually show up at a fire, and then they would fight over who would put it out, because you actually got paid if you put the fire out. Meanwhile the building would burn down. Kind of the way Washington works today. [Laughter]

That bickering system ended with the rise of municipal fire departments in the 19th century. And ever since, I think that almost every American would agree that firefighters have embodied the best values of this country: teamwork, professionalism, helping your neighbor, showing courage when it's necessary. These things are at the core of this country's character, and they're what we think about—the rest of us—when we think about you and the people you represent.

But the job has changed. From reviving heart attack sufferers, to cleaning up hazardous chemical spills, to rescuing victims of earthquakes and floods, firefighters have been called upon to assume ever-broadening responsibilities for helping our fellow country men and women.

As we approach a new century, we have to ask our firefighters to meet yet a new challenge: to protect our citizens from terrorists armed with chemical and biological weapons. Today I want to talk about these new threats and about the efforts we're undertaking to equip and train our Nation's firefighters to deal with those threats, thanks in large part to the IAFF.

America's municipal firefighters are already the best trained and best equipped in the world. All Americans benefit from that. The number of Americans killed in fires has dropped by one-third since 1988. I don't think the American people know that, and since the press is covering it, I want to say that again—I hope this gets on, if nothing else does—the number of Americans killed in fires has dropped by one-third since 1988. Thank you very much.

This is due, of course, to the prevention measures you have tirelessly advocated, to your bravery and skill. With the help of better safety equipment that you have fought for, such as flame-retardant suits, firefighters have been able

to get to the heart of fires quicker and pull more victims to safety.

Firefighting is still extremely dangerous. Firefighters are 6 times more likely to be injured on the job than the average private sector worker. That's why I have worked very hard with your leaders to better the lives of firefighters. We've improved the pay system for Federal firefighters, supported efforts to give all firefighters the right to join unions and bargain collectively, strengthened Federal rules—[*applause*]*—thank you. Thank you. And we strengthened the Federal rules that protect the lives of firefighters. But we have to do more.*

The 21st century will be a fascinating time. I envy those of you who are in this audience who are younger than me, which is most of you, because you'll live to see more of it. It will be a century in which limitless opportunities will be linked to dangerous new threats. Here's why: Open borders and fast-paced technological change fuel our prosperity; they create new job opportunities, new business opportunities every day; they also make life more interesting and they spread the message of freedom quickly around the globe.

You may have noticed last week I was in Central America visiting four countries that were ravaged by the hurricane. All these countries once were gripped by horrible civil wars. Today, they're all governed by freely elected leaders, people sitting in the assemblies who fought each other for years. There's a lot of good things going on.

But the more open and flexible societies are, the more vulnerable they can become to organized forces of destruction. They give new opportunities to the enemies as well as the friends of freedom. For example, scientists now use the Internet to exchange ideas and make discoveries that can lengthen lives. But fanatics can also use it to download formulas for substances and bombs that can be used to shorten lives.

In most instances of domestic terror, the first professionals on the scene will be the firefighters. They're becoming the frontline defenders of our citizens, not just from accidents and arsonists but from those who would seek to sow terror and so undermine our way of life. The truth of this is apparent to anyone who saw that unforgettable photograph of firefighter Chris Fields, cradling in his arms a tiny victim of the Oklahoma City bombing.

Since 1996, the number of weapons of mass destruction threats called in to firefighters, police, and the FBI has increased by fivefold. The threat comes not just from conventional weapons, like the bomb used in Oklahoma City, but also from chemical weapons, like the nerve agent that killed 12 but injured thousands in Tokyo in the subway just 4 years ago, and even from biological weapons that could spread deadly disease before anyone even realizes that attack has occurred.

I have been stressing the importance of this issue, now, for some time. As I have said repeatedly, and I want to say again to you, I am not trying to put any American into a panic over this, but I am determined to see that we have a serious, deliberate, disciplined, long-term response to a legitimate potential threat to the lives and safety of the American people. [*Applause*] Thank you.

The only cause for alarm would be if we were to sit by and do nothing to prepare for a problem we know we could be presented with. Nothing would make me happier than to have people look back 20 years from now and say, "President Clinton overreacted to that. He was overly cautious." The only way they will say that is if we are over cautious, if we're prepared, we can keep bad things from happening.

Now, last fall the Attorney General announced plans to create a national domestic preparedness office, a one-stop shop where State and local first responders can get the equipment, the training, the guidance they need from a variety of Federal agencies. I proposed and Congress agreed to a 39 percent increase in resources for chemical and biological weapons preparedness.

In the budget I submitted last month to Congress, I asked for \$10 billion to combat terrorism, including nearly 1.4 billion to protect citizens against chemical and biological terrorism here at home, more than double what we spent on such efforts just 2 years ago.

Today I want to talk about the specifics of our domestic antiterrorism initiative that will most affect the people in this room and those whom you represent.

First, equipment: Later this year, the Justice Department will provide \$69½ million in grants to all 50 States and the large municipalities to buy everything from protective gear to chemical/biological detection devices. Next month, we'll be asking you to tell us what you need.

Second, training: This year, the Departments of Justice and Defense, along with FEMA, will invest nearly \$80 million in new and existing training efforts for firefighters, EMS personnel, and other first responders. We want all of these resources to be accessible to the National Domestic Preparedness Office.

Third, special response teams: The Department of Health and Human Services has helped 27 metropolitan areas develop specially trained and equipped medical response teams that can be deployed at a moment's notice in the event of chemical or biological attack. These teams, composed of local medical personnel, will get to the scene quickly, work closely with firefighters and police, and ensure that patients are safely transported to hospitals. Our goal is a response team in each of the Nation's major metropolitan areas, and my new budget moves us in that direction.

But the need is too urgent to wait for Congress to act on the budget at the end of the year. Therefore, Secretary Shalala will notify Congress today that she plans to spend an additional \$11 million this year to create medical response teams in 12 more metropolitan areas, including Salt Lake City, the home of the 2002 Winter Olympics.

Fourth, advice from the frontline: Later this year, the Department of Defense will name members of a new weapons of mass destruction advisory panel. Three of the seventeen panel members will be firefighters. *[Applause]* Thank you. Next month, the National Domestic Preparedness Office will hold a conference with fire and police chiefs and hazardous materials experts to develop guidelines for dealing with biological and chemical threats and incidents.

With action in these four areas, to better equip and train local firefighters and other first responders, we can save lives and show terrorists that assaults on America will accomplish nothing but their own downfall.

Let me tell you again how grateful I am to have had the chance to work with you over these last 6 years, and for the next 2, how important I think it is that we always be preparing for the future, how strongly I believe—I was glad when you—and touched—when you stood up when I said I believed in the right of firefighters to organize and bargain collectively. I do. I think most people don't understand, until they go through a fire or some other emergency,

exactly how many different things you do and how dangerous it can often be.

I also think that because you are leaders of your community, because your kids play on the ball teams, because you show up at the PTA meetings, because you're involved in the civic clubs and the other activities, you can help to sensitize people to this issue I've talked with you about today.

And again I say, I don't want any American to go around in mortal fear of a biological and chemical attack. But you have—a lot of you have kids that are better on the computer than you are. As a matter of fact, anybody here who is better than his or her child on a computer deserves a medal. *[Laughter]* But you know there are millions of websites now. You know what people can pull up. Now, it's not unusual now for children to turn in term papers where they never have to go to the library, and every single source they cite came off the Internet. And with that sort of access to information, people who want to do bad things with elemental chemical and biological products that can be poisonous or spread disease is a legitimate possibility. I will say again, the best chance we have for this not to be a problem is to understand the dimensions of it and prepare for it, with discipline, in the quickest possible way.

And so I hope you will talk to your friends and neighbors about it, again, not to overly frighten them but to sensitize them so they expect their elected officials and their other leaders to take appropriate steps. That is the way to deal with it.

You know, I remember, it wasn't so many years ago that people were panicked that every airplane they took might be hijacked. And then we had the airport metal detectors. And then some people said, "Well, is this too much of an infringement on our liberty?" I can only speak for myself; I never once minded being stopped and asked to empty my pockets when I set off the metal detector, because I knew it was a way that we could prepare for a problem so that we wouldn't have to go around frightened all the time.

That's all we've got to do here, to deal with this in an aggressive, comprehensive, professional, disciplined way. And I really think that you understand this. And I ask you when you go home, try also to make sure in all kinds of ways, perhaps formal and informal, that your fellow citizens do as well.

Mar. 15 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Al said today that this is the first time a President has ever addressed the IAFF in person. The others made a mistake; that's all I can say. [*Applause*] Thank you. And I was a little slow off the mark. [*Laughter*] But I would like to point out that IAFF has hardly gone unnoticed by past Presidents. One I particularly admire, Harry Truman, sent this letter on August 1st, 1952, to the then-president of your organization, John Redmond. He described you and your union in plain words that I cannot improve upon. So I would like to close with them:

"Your members are at their posts, day and night, ready to accept the call of duty, to protect

the lives and property of their fellow citizens. They do so at risk of life and limb. For their devotion and heroism, they deserve the praise of all Americans."

Amen. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Alfred K. Whitehead, general president, Harold A. Schaitberger, executive assistant to the general president, and Vincent J. Bollon, general secretary-treasurer, International Association of Fire Fighters.

Statement on Signing Legislation on Guaranteed Loans for Farmers and Ranchers

March 15, 1999

I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 882, a bill that will accelerate the availability of federally guaranteed loans to our Nation's farmers and ranchers to give them continued access to credit that is necessary to operate their farms and ranches.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that it will soon exhaust the funds available to guarantee loans for farm ownership and operations. This bill will make available more than \$450 million in guarantees to qualified farmers and ranchers. Normally, these funds are reserved for beginning farmers and ranchers until April 1, when they are made available to all qualified farmers and ranchers. This bill will not affect a separate reserve for minority farmers.

These additional amounts, however, will not fully address the unprecedented increase in demand for USDA financing caused by low commodity prices, which are expected to continue. For this reason, I recently submitted to the Congress an emergency supplemental request for an additional \$1.1 billion in USDA loan authority. I call on the Congress to work expeditiously to include these amounts in a supplemental bill I can sign that does not include unwise and unnecessary offsets.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 15, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 882, approved March 15, was assigned Public Law No. 106-2.

Statement on the Killing of Rosemary Nelson in Northern Ireland

March 15, 1999

The killing today of Rosemary Nelson, a leading human rights lawyer in Northern Ireland, was a despicable and cowardly act by the enemies of peace. Our deepest sympathies go out to her family and friends. It is long past time

for the bloodshed to end once and for all. We urge all the proponents for peace to unite to condemn this act and reject the violence. We urge the parties to move forward with implementing the Good Friday accord.

Statement on Senator John H. Chafee's Decision Not To Seek Reelection
March 15, 1999

For more than a generation, Senator John Chafee has been a strong leader for his beloved Rhode Island and for America. He has been a tireless champion of our environment—helping to lead the fight against global warming, promoting wetlands conservation, and crafting legislation for clean air and safe drinking water. On

behalf of all Americans, I thank him for his many contributions, including his leadership in expanding health care to more women and children and improving services for people with disabilities. It is truly a rich legacy for America. Hillary and I wish John and his family all the best in the years to come.

Statement on the Cuban Government's Sentencing of Human Rights Activists
March 15, 1999

I am deeply disappointed that the Cuban Government has sentenced four courageous human rights activists—Vladimiro Roca, Felix Bonne, Rene Gomez Manzano, and Marta Beatriz Roque—to prison terms. They did nothing more than assert their right to speak freely about their country's future, call on their Gov-

ernment to respect basic human rights, and seek a peaceful transition to democracy for the long-suffering Cuban people. They were tried without a fair process, behind closed doors. I call on the Cuban Government to release them immediately.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
March 15, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-

month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 15, 1999.

Remarks at the Sixth Millennium Evening at the White House
March 15, 1999

The President. Thank you. First of all, let me welcome all of you here tonight and thank our participants. I will be very brief, because

the only thing that frustrates me about these Millennial Evenings is that you will be amazed—we will get literally thousands of

questions that will start coming in on the Internet and lots of frustrated people out there. So I don't want to take a lot of time.

I would like to say again—I think I speak for all of us—when Hillary had the idea to do these evenings, I thought they sounded interesting or at least maybe most of them would be interesting. *[Laughter]* They have all turned out to be fascinating, and each in their own way better than the ones before. And I think this is a great gift she has given our country for the millennium, and I thank her for it.

The remarks generated scores of questions in my mind and one fact I want to say. If you ever want an example of whether or not the gender gap exists, you are looking at it—*[laughter]*—because I would not be here if it did not exist. Or if it did not exist in the right way, I would have had bigger margins, depending on how you look at it. *[Laughter]*

One of the things I wish that somebody would comment on before we get through—although, it's not my question—is, if women learn different ways of doing things through the century of struggle, how would this Congress be different if the party divisions were exactly the same, but 55 percent of the Members were women? That would be interesting. I don't know the answer to that, but feel free to comment if anyone wants to. *[Laughter]*

I want to ask Professor Kessler-Harris to answer a question that has concerned me quite a great deal, just from remembering the patterns of life with my working grandmother and my working mother. Now that we have opened more opportunities for women in the workplace, but they still are spending, I think, even in two-parent households, more than half of the time spent raising children, and we've even opened more opportunities for women in the political workplace, and more are being opened all the time, I would like to have you comment on what you think the potential is for voluntary citizens' groups of women to still produce both social movements and specific legislative changes. That is, will voluntary groups still have the same impact? And if so, how are we going to continue to encourage that?

Because I think that that's really the unique story of the whole 20th century, all those parades and everything we saw in the films. Will more women in the workplace, still having to raise the kids—and in the political workplace, which may make women think they're rep-

resented in more ordinary ways—lead to a reduction or an increase in these voluntary associations? And what are some specific examples where we might see voluntary movements produce social movements and legislative change?

[At this point, the discussion continued.]

The President. I just wanted to say one thing that I have learned from a lifetime of sort of listening to the way people talk and relate. And this goes to Deborah's—the previous question, too. I think if you will really study the Americans and how they vote, you will see that sometimes they vote based on income, sometimes they vote based on racial experience, sometimes they vote on philosophy. But a lot of the gender gap is a cultural gap; it's almost about the way we relate to one another and define winning and losing in our own lives.

And I think in order for men to ever get through this, one of the things that men are raised to believe is that fulfillment and success is defined in terms of winning and control; whereas people who—women, historically, have had more nurturing roles. They have to raise their children. So you don't think—maybe you have to control your child for a while, but sooner or later you even give up on that. But winning is defined not just as winning against someone else, but it's doing something in the context of your family, in the context of your childrearing.

And I think a lot of subconscious patterns that men are raised with make it almost impossible for them to really get there on this issue. And I think that for a father to raise a son to believe that there is a way to win in life and find fulfillment in a shared victory and shared decisionmaking and not always victory over someone else and continued control over someone else, I think it's something that takes some doing.

But it's something that doesn't come naturally to men once we've been socialized. And I think that's an important part of this, and that until we can change it, it will never be just like it should be.

[At this point, the discussion continued.]

The President. Thank you, Vicky. First of all, I'm sure all of you here know how deplorable the conditions are for women in Afghanistan. Hillary and I had an event here at the White

House not very long ago; we had two Afghan women here, among others, to sort of stand for what women in their country are going through.

I want someone in the audience to help me. There is a national organization of women, a group now focused on this, and most of the leaders are in California, although some in the East Coast—Ann, what's the name of it?

Ms. Ann Lewis. The Feminist Majority. And Ellie Smeal is here—

The President. Yes, Ellie is here working—Feminist Majority is working on it. And I'm going to have a meeting with some of their leaders pretty soon to talk about what more I can do, aside from not recognizing the Taliban and speaking against it.

I think the important thing is that we need people to support this organization. We need women and men around the country to engage in contributing to a common effort to highlight what is going on, who is being hurt, what the consequences are to the society as a whole, and what we can do to help the people that are being hurt.

This is the 50th anniversary of the International Declaration of Human Rights. It is simply not acceptable to say that this is nothing more than an expression of religious convictions. We just had an election in Iran, local elections. There were hundreds of women candidates. We see, even in Iraq, a country we have serious differences with, their women are not subject to these sorts of constraints because they are women.

And I think that the most important thing I could say to an ordinary citizen is, write your Member of Congress and tell them not to acknowledge or recognize the Government under any circumstances until there are changes, and get in touch with the Feminist Majority and get all the material and make sure that you are doing whatever you can do to help those women over there and to give support for the ones that are sticking their necks out to try to change things.

[At this point, the discussion continued.]

The President. When the Founders wrote the documents that got us all started, they said they were doing all this so that we could better protect life and liberty and pursue happiness. And even they were smart enough to know that they weren't really writing that for white male prop-

erty owners only, even though those were the only folks that could vote then.

So a great deal of the history of this country is about the expansion of the notion of liberty, with notions of equality and justice. And we hardly ever think about what they meant by the pursuit of happiness. They didn't mean riding the rides at the county fair. They really meant the pursuit of a good life, dreaming dreams and trying to live them.

When I think about what the women's issues of the 21st century will be, I do think there will still be some significant liberty, equality issues related to wealth and power, closing the wage gap, the earnings gap, dealing with the enormously complicated problem of the fact that there are more elderly women than men—because you may be genetically superior to us after all—[laughter]—and that, as a consequence, their poverty rate is twice the rate of elderly men, breaking all the glass ceilings that have been alluded to.

But I predict to you that there will be increasing focus, more than any time in our history, on the latter purpose of our getting together as a nation, and that is the pursuit of happiness. And I believe that will require us to deal with questions of balance and interdependence, more than ever before. The one we talked about a little tonight is a balance between work and family. There is no more important job for any society than raising children. And men have to recognize that, too. But I think that will be a big deal, how to balance work and family.

The other big balance questions will come involved with how do you keep society together with all the diversity we share, not just gender but the racial diversity, the cultural diversity, the religious diversity? And women will be uniquely positioned to play a major role in that.

And finally—I'll just give one other example because we're running out of time—how do we balance our obligation to prosper as well as we can and preserve the planet in the face of the evidence on climate change and other things?

So I believe there will be a huge challenge, which is an enormous opportunity for women, in the whole area of our pursuit of happiness, properly defined.

When Susan B. Anthony came here in 1906 and gave what turned out to be her last public comment, in a church here in Washington, DC, the last public words she ever uttered were, "Failure is impossible." I am persuaded by the

presence of you in this crowd and those whom you represent that on the edge of a new century, she's still right.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The White House Millennium Evening began at 7:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The panelists participating in the program, entitled "Women as Citizens: Vital Voices Through the Century," were: Alice Kessler-Harris, professor, Columbia University; Nancy Cott, professor, Yale University; and Ruth Sim-

mons, president, Smith College. In his remarks, the President referred to Deborah Tannen, professor, Georgetown University; Vicky LeBlanc, attorney in Delafield, WI; and Eleanor Smeal, president, Feminist Majority. The discussion following the panelists was moderated by Ellen Lovell, Director, White House Millennium Council. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady and the panelists and the question-and-answer portion of the evening. The lecture was cybercast on the Internet.

Remarks to the Conference on United States-Africa Partnership for the 21st Century *March 16, 1999*

Thank you. Good morning. Let me say, first of all, to Minister Ouedraogo, thank you for your fine address and for your leadership. Secretary General Salim, Secretary-General Annan, Secretary Albright, to our distinguished ministers and ambassadors and other officials from 46 African nations and the representatives of the Cabinet and the United States Government. I am delighted to see you all here today. We are honored by your presence in the United States and excited about what it means for our common future.

A year ago next week I set out on my journey to Africa. It was, for me, for my wife, and for many people who took that trip, an utterly unforgettable and profoundly moving experience. I went to Africa in the hope not only that I would learn but that the process of the trip itself and the publicity that our friends in the press would give it would cause Americans and Africans to see each other in a new light, not denying the lingering effects of slavery, colonialism, the cold war, but to focus on a new future, to build a new chapter of history, a new era of genuine partnership.

A year later, we have to say there has been a fair measure of hope, and some new disappointments. War still tears at the heart of Africa. Congo, Sierra Leone, Angola, Sudan have not yet resolved their conflicts. Ethiopia and Eritrea are mired in a truly tragic dispute we have done our best to try to help avoid. Violence still steals innocent lives in the Great Lakes re-

gion. In the last year, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam became battlefields in a terrorist campaign that killed and wounded thousands of Africans, along with Americans working there for a different future.

But there have also been promising new developments. The recent elections in Nigeria give Africa's most populous country, finally, a chance to realize its enormous potential. It's transition may not be complete, but let's not forget, just a year ago it was unthinkable. This June, for the first time, South Africa will transfer power from one fully democratic government to another.

More than half the sub-Saharan nations are now governed by elected leaders. Many, such as Benin, Mali, and Tanzania, have fully embraced open government and open markets. Quite a few have recorded strong economic growth, including Mozambique, crippled by civil war not long ago. Ghana's economy has grown by 5 percent a year since 1992.

All of you here have contributed to this progress. All are eager to make the next century better than the last. You share a great responsibility, for you are the architects of Africa's future.

Today I would like to talk about the tangible ways we can move forward with our partnership. Since our trip to Africa, my administration has worked hard to do more. We've created a \$120 million educational initiative to link schools in Africa to schools in this country. We've created

the Great Lakes Justice Initiative to attack the culture of impunity. We have launched a safe skies initiative to increase air links between Africa and the rest of the world; given \$30 million to protect food security in Africa and more to be provided during this year. In my budget submission to Congress I have asked for additional funds to cover the cost of relieving another \$237 million in African debt on top of the \$245 million covered in this year's appropriation.

We're working hard with you to bring an end to the armed conflicts which claim innocent lives and block economic progress, conducting extensive shuttle diplomacy in an effort to resolve the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In Sierra Leone, we're doing what we can to reduce suffering and forge a lasting peace. We have provided \$75 million in humanitarian assistance over the last 18 months. And with the approval of Congress we will triple our long-standing commitment of support for ECOMOG to conduct regional peacekeeping.

We have also done what we can to build the African Crisis Response Initiative, with members of our military cooperating with African militaries. We've provided \$8 million since 1993 to the OAU's Conflict Management Center to support African efforts to resolve disputes and end small conflicts before they explode into large ones.

Nonetheless, we have a lot of ground to make up. For too much of this century, the relationship between the United States and Africa was plagued by indifference on our part. This conference represents an unparalleled opportunity to raise our growing cooperation to the next level. During the next few days we want to talk about how these programs work and hear from you about how we can do better. Eight members of my Cabinet will meet their African counterparts. The message I want your leaders to take home is, this is a partnership with substance, backed by a long-term commitment.

This is truly a relationship for the long haul. We have been too separate and too unequal. We must end that by building a better common future. We need to strive together to do better, with a clear vision of what we want to achieve over the long run. Ten years from now, we want to see more growth rates above 5 percent. A generation from now, we want to see a larger middle class, more jobs and consumers, more African exports, thriving schools filled with chil-

dren—boys and girls—with high expectations and a reasonable chance of fulfilling them.

But we need the tools to get there, the tools of aid, trade, and investment. As I said when I was in Africa, this must not be a choice between aid and trade; we must have both. In my budget request for the next fiscal year, I've asked for an increase of 10 percent in development assistance to Africa. But the aid is about quality and quantity. Our aid programs are developed with your involvement, designed to develop the institutions needed to sustain democracy and to reduce poverty and to increase independence.

To expand opportunity, we also need trade. Our administration strongly supports the "Africa Growth and Opportunity Act," which I said in my State of the Union Address we will work to pass in this session of Congress. The act represents the first step in creating, for the first time in our history, a genuine framework for U.S.-Africa trade relations. It provides immediate benefits to nations modernizing their economies, and offers incentives to others to do the same. It increases U.S. assistance, targeting it where it will do the most good.

The bill clearly will benefit both Africa and the United States. Africans ask for more access to our markets; this bill provides that. You asked that GSP benefits be extended; this bill extends them for 10 years. You said you need more private investment; this bill calls for the creation of two equity investment funds by OPIC, providing up to \$650 million to generate private investment in Africa.

We agree that labor concerns are important. This bill removes GSP benefits for any country found to be denying worker rights. You told us we needed to understand more about your views on development. This bill provides a forum for high-level dialog and cooperation.

It is a principled and pragmatic approach based on what will work. No one is saying it will be easy, but we are resolved to help lower the hurdles left by past mistakes. I believe it represents a strong, achievable, and important step forward. There are many friends of Africa in Congress and many strong opinions about how best to help Africa. I hope they will quickly find consensus. We cannot afford a house divided. Africa needs action now.

There's another crucial way the United States can hasten Africa's integration. One of the most serious issues we must deal with together, and

one of truly global importance, is debt relief. Today I ask the international community to take actions which could result in forgiving \$70 billion in global debt relief—global debt. Our goal is to ensure that no country committed to fundamental reform is left with a debt burden that keeps it from meeting its people's basic human needs and spurring growth. We should provide extraordinary relief for countries making extraordinary effort to build working economies.

To achieve this goal, in consultation with our Congress and within the framework of our balanced budget, I proposed that we make significant improvements to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative at the Cologne Summit of the G-7 in June: first, a new focus on early relief by international financial institutions, which now reduce debt only at the end of the HIPC program. Combined with ongoing forgiveness of cash flows by the Paris Club, this will substantially accelerate relief from debt payment burden.

Second, the complete forgiveness of all bilateral concessional loans to the poorest countries.

Third, deeper and broader reduction of other bilateral debts, raising the amount to 90 percent.

Fourth, to avoid recurring debt problems, donor countries should commit to provide at least 90 percent of new development assistance on a grant basis to countries eligible for debt reduction.

Fifth, new approaches to help countries emerging from conflicts that have not had the chance to establish reform records, and need immediate relief and concessional finance.

And sixth, support for gold sales by the IMF to do its part, and additional contributions by us and other countries to the World Bank's trust fund to help meet the cost of this initiative.

Finally, we should be prepared to provide even greater relief in exceptional cases where it could make a real difference.

What I am proposing is debt reduction that is deeper and faster. It is demanding, but to put it simply, the more debtor nations take responsibility for pursuing sound economic policies, the more creditor nations must be willing to provide debt relief.

One of the best days of my trip last year was the day I opened an investment center in Johannesburg, named after our late Commerce Secretary, Ron Brown, a true visionary who knew that peace, democracy, and prosperity would grow in Africa with the right kind of

support. I can't think of a better tribute to him than our work here today, for he understood that Africa's transformation will not happen overnight but, on the other hand, that it should happen and that it could happen.

Look at Latin America's progress over the last decade. Look at Asia before that. In each case, the same formula worked: Peace, open markets, democracy, and hard work lifted hundreds of millions of people from poverty. It has nothing to do with latitude and longitude or religion or race. It has everything to do with an equal chance and smart decisions.

There are a thousand reasons Africa and the United States should work together for the 21st century, reasons buried deep in our past, reasons apparent in the future just ahead. It is the right thing to do, and it is in the self-interest of all the peoples represented in this room today. Africa obviously matters to the 30 million Americans who trace their roots there. But Africa matters to all Americans. It provides 13 percent of our oil, nearly as much as the Middle East. Over 100,000 American jobs depend upon our exports to Africa; there could be millions more when Africa realizes its potential. As Africa grows it will need what we produce, and we will need what Africa produces.

Africa is home to 700 million people, nearly a fifth of the world. Last year our growing relationship with this enormous market helped to protect the United States from the global financial crisis raging elsewhere. While exports were down in other parts of the world, exports from the United States to Africa actually went up by 8 percent, topping \$6 billion. As wise investors have discovered, investments in Africa pay. In 1997 the rate of return of American investments in Africa was 36 percent, compared with 16 percent in Asia, 14 percent worldwide, 11 percent in Europe.

As has already been said, we share common health and environmental concerns with people all over the world, and certainly in Africa. If we want to deal with the problems of global warming and climate change, we must deal in partnership with Africa. If we want to deal with a whole array of public health problems that affect not only the children and people of Africa but people throughout the rest of the world, we must do it in partnership with Africa.

Finally, I'd like to just state a simple truth that guides our relations with all nations: Countries that are democratic, peaceful, and prosperous are good neighbors and good partners. They help respond to crises. They respect the environment. They abide by international law. They protect their working people and their consumers. They honor women as well as men. They give all their children a chance.

There are 46 nations represented here today, roughly a quarter of all the countries on Earth. You share a dazzling variety of people and languages and traditions. The world of the 21st century needs your strength, your contribution, your full participation in the struggle to unleash the human potential of people everywhere.

Africa is the ancient cradle of humanity. But it is also a remarkably young continent, full of young people with an enormous stake in the future. When I traveled through the streets of the African cities and I saw the tens of thousands, the hundreds of thousands of young people who came out to see me, I wanted them to have long, full, healthy lives. I tried to imagine what their lives could be like if we could preserve the peace, preserve freedom, extend genuine opportunity, give them a chance to have a life that was both full of liberty and ordered, structured chances—chances that their parents and grandparents did not know.

The Kanuri people of Nigeria, Niger, and Chad say, "Hope is the pillar of the world." The last decade proves that hope is stronger than despair if it is followed by action. Action is the mandate of this conference.

Let us move beyond words and do what needs to be done. For our part, that means debt relief, passage of the "Africa Growth and Opportunity Act," appropriate increases in assistance, and a genuine sense of partnership and openness to future possibilities. For your part, it means continuing the work of building the institutions that bring democracy and peace, prosperity and equal opportunity.

We are ending a decade, the 1990's, that began with a powerful symbol. I will never for-

get the early Sunday morning in 1990 when I got my daughter up and took her down to the kitchen to turn on the television so that she could watch Nelson Mandela walk out of his prison for the last time. She was just a young girl, and I told her that I had the feeling that this would be one of the most important events of her lifetime, in terms of its impact on the imagination of freedom-loving people everywhere.

We could not have known then, either she or I or my wife, that we would have the great good fortune to get to know Mr. Mandela and see his generosity extended to our family and to our child, as it has been to children all over his country. But in that walk, we saw a continent's expression of dignity, of self-respect, of the soaring potential of the unfettered human spirit.

For a decade, now, the people of South Africa and the people of Africa have been trying to make the symbol of that walk real in the lives of all the people of the continent. We still have a long way to go. But let us not forget how far we have come. And let us not forget that greatness resides not only in the people who lead countries and who overcome persecutions but in the heart and mind of every child and every person there is the potential to do better, to reach higher, to fulfill dreams. It is our job to give all the children of Africa the chance to do that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:38 a.m. in the Loy Henderson Auditorium at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Youssouf Ouedraogo and Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim, Organization of African Unity (OAU); United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. The President also referred to the Economic Community of West Africa Observer Group (ECOMOG) and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).

Remarks on Medicare Reform and an Exchange With Reporters March 16, 1999

Amtrak Crash in Illinois

The President. Good afternoon. I would like to begin by saying that our thoughts and prayers are with all those people who were involved in this morning's Amtrak crash in Illinois. We've dispatched safety officials from the National Transportation Safety Board and other Federal investigators to the site to lead the investigation. I want you to know that we will do everything we can to help the victims and their families and to ensure that the investigation moves forward with great care and speed.

Medicare Reform

Now, before I leave for Florida, I would also like to comment on an issue of vital importance to our future: how to strengthen the Medicare program for the 21st century.

Today Senator Breaux and Representative Thomas will hold a final meeting of their Medicare Commission. Although it did not achieve consensus, the Commission has helped to focus long overdue attention on the need to modernize and prepare the program for the retirement of the baby boom generation and for the present stresses it faces. The Commission has done valuable work, work that we can and must build on to craft Medicare reform.

Make no mistake, we must modernize and strengthen Medicare. For more than three decades, it has been more than a program. It has been a way to honor our parents and grandparents, to protect our families. It has been literally lifesaving for many, many seniors with whom I have personally talked.

In my 1993 economic plan that put our country on the path to fiscal responsibility, we took the first steps to strengthen Medicare. In 1997, in the bipartisan balanced budget agreement, we took even more significant actions to improve benefits; expand choices for recipients; to fight waste, fraud, and abuse; and to lengthen the life of the Trust Fund.

But as the baby boomers retire and medical science extends the lives of millions, we must do more; we must take some strong and perhaps difficult steps to modernize Medicare so that it can fully meet the needs of our country in the new century. If we don't act, it will run

out of funds. That would represent a broken promise to generations of Americans, and we cannot allow it to happen.

As I said in January, we must act, and when we do our actions should be grounded in some firm principles. We must seize the opportunity created by our balanced budget and surplus to devote 15 percent of the surplus to strengthen the Trust Fund. We must modernize Medicare and make it more competitive, adopting the best practices from the private sector and maintaining high quality services. We must ensure that it continues to provide every citizen with a guaranteed set of benefits. And we must make prescription drugs more accessible and affordable to Medicare beneficiaries.

The plan offered by Senator Breaux and his colleagues included some very strong elements, which should be seriously considered by Congress. However, I believe their approach falls short in several respects. First, it would raise the age of eligibility for Medicare from 65 to 67, without a policy to guard against increasing numbers of uninsured Americans.

I know that back in 1983, the Commission voted in Social Security and the Congress ratified a decision to slowly raise the Social Security age to 67. But there is a profound difference here. Perhaps the fastest growing number of uninsured people are those between the ages of 55 and 65. We cannot simply raise the age to 67 without knowing how we're going to provide for health insurance options for those who are already left out in the cold between the ages of 55 and 65. It is simply not the right thing to do.

Also, the proposal has the potential to increase premiums for those in the traditional Medicare program beyond the ordinary inflation premiums that keep the percentage paid by the beneficiaries the same. It does not provide for an adequate affordable prescription drug benefit.

But most important of all, it fails to make a solid commitment of 15 percent of the surplus to the Medicare Trust Fund. That is the biggest problem. Even if all the changes recommended by the commission were adopted, because of the projected inflation rates in health care costs,

it would not be sufficient to stabilize the fund. Only by making this kind of commitment can we keep the program on firm financial ground well into the next century.

Every independent expert agrees that Medicare cannot provide for the baby boom generation without substantial new revenues. Beyond that, it is clear that it will also require us to make difficult political and policy choices. Devoting 15 percent of the surplus to Medicare would stabilize the program and improve our ability to modernize and improve its services and to make those hard choices.

I want to thank the members of the Medicare Commission for their hard work and for their recommendations. Today I am instructing my advisers to draft a plan to strengthen Medicare for the 21st century, which I will present to this Congress. I look forward to a good and healthy debate about how best to strengthen this essential program. We must find agreement this year. Medicare is too important to let partisan politics stand in the way of vital progress. I believe if we make the hard choices, if we

work together, if we act this year, we can secure Medicare into the future.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, your critics are suggesting that by not endorsing the Breaux plan you're simply assuring that there will be a campaign issue, something the Democrats can run on.

The President. I want an agreement this year. I have given my best assessment of where we are now, of what my objections are. I think it is now incumbent upon me to present an alternative proposal, and I will do that.

But I want to make it clear that I believe we owe it to the American people to make an agreement this year, and I'm going to do my dead-level-best to get it done.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:55 p.m. outside the Oval Office at the White House, prior to his departure for Palm Beach, FL. In his remarks, he referred to the derailment of Amtrak's City of New Orleans train in Bourbonnais, IL.

Statement on Proposed Child Care Legislation

March 16, 1999

Making child care better, safer, and more affordable is at the heart of my effort to help America's parents balance their responsibilities at home and at work. Today, more than ever, parents struggle to find high quality, affordable child care for their children. That is why I have proposed significant new investments in child care, expanding subsidies and providing greater tax relief for working families, increasing after-school opportunities for children, improving child care quality, and providing new tax relief for parents who choose to stay at home.

I am pleased that today key Members of the House of Representatives took steps to move us closer to enacting meaningful child care legislation. Representative Ben Cardin introduced important new legislation—the "Child Care Im-

provement Act of 1999"—that, like my proposal, addresses the critical child care needs of working families. And Representative Ellen Tauscher and numerous Democratic colleagues introduced a comprehensive child care package—the "Affordable Child Care, Education, and Security Act"—that incorporates many of my proposals and would go a long way to fully addressing the child care demands of working families. These bills would help Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers and their even more important responsibilities as parents. I look forward to working with Representative Cardin, Representative Tauscher, and other Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to meet the child care needs of America's families.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Stuart, Florida
March 16, 1999

If I had any judgment at all, I would not say a word. [*Laughter*] I had forgotten we did some of those things. [*Laughter*]

You know, when we came in this magnificent home tonight and I was looking around and commenting on the spiral staircase, Reverend Jackson said, "You know, Mr. President, you and Hillary live in the White House. Willie and Gloria live in a white house. The only difference is they've got more floor space, and they're not term limited." [*Laughter*]

Let me say to the Garys, to Willie, to Gloria, to your mother, your children, your grandchildren how honored I am to be here with all of our crew from the White House tonight, along with Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz from the Democratic Party; how delighted I am to be here with my good friend Reverend Jackson who is also my Special Envoy to Africa. And I'll say a little more about that in a moment.

I thank Congressman Hastings and Congressman Deutsch for coming down here with me tonight. I thank Bishop Ray and my good friend Bishop Graves and the other members of the clergy who are here, and the college presidents. I thought the Drifters and Ernestine Diller were both just great. And I thank them for entertaining us. And I'd like to thank the people who prepared and served our food and our drinks tonight. I thank them very much for what they did.

You know, when Willie was talking about raising the average income of African-American households, I thought, you know, I didn't have to do anything; he did that all by himself. [*Laughter*]

Let me say—I have to say one thing on a serious note—some of you are here tonight who meant to be here at noon in Palm Beach. I was supposed to have a lunch in Palm Beach at noon. And the reason we couldn't do that is that the son of two of our hosts, Mel and Bren Simon, dropped dead of a tragic heart attack at a very young age in London a couple of days ago. And they're good friends of mine; they're wonderful people. They're part owners of the Indiana Pacers basketball team, among other things. And I would just like to ask all of you tonight—I know that all of us—I called

Hillary, who knows Mrs. Simon, in particular. I called her today when we heard about this, and I just talked to them. It just took her breath away. All of us who have been parents can only imagine the agony that we would feel. So I ask for you tonight, I want to go back to having a good time, but I ask you to say a little prayer for them when you go home tonight. It's going to be a hard night for them and a hard few days. And they were very generous and very kind. They've been very, very good to me, and they've been good citizens for our country. And I just would like for you to all remember them.

Let me say—I really admire—I made a little fun of Willie tonight, but I really admire him and Gloria. And I love the fact that they have not forgotten where they came from. I love the fact that they had all these children up here. I know that we have at least one person here from North Carolina who is involved in a similar program of giving young people college scholarships for when they're at pivotal points in their life, and telling them, "Look, if you'll just stay in school and make your grades, you can go to college." And I want to say a little more about that in a minute, but that says a lot.

Now, I was thinking about—I've had all this on my mind a lot because, some of you may have noticed, over the weekend I went home to this little town in Arkansas where I was born, and they dedicated the house that I lived in with my grandparents until I was 4. And they've rebuilt it, and they've gotten some of the things back, some pictures we had on the walls when I lived there—unbelievable things they've done. It's just a little two-story, wood-frame house that my grandparents lived in when my grandfather ran a store, little grocery store, and my grandmother was a private-duty nurse.

And before that, my grandfather was a night watchman at a sawmill. That was my favorite job he had because I used to go and spend the night in the back seat of his car and climb in the sawdust pile. And some of you from the South may be old enough to remember when not all sawmills were big. They used to be little bitty sawmills, and ordinary people could go and fool around in them. It was a great thing.

And I was thinking about Willie's upbringing and Gloria's upbringing and Jesse's upbringing that I know a lot about. And I thought the four of us sitting here tonight—all people in politics would like for you to believe they were born in a log cabin they built all by themselves. [Laughter] And the truth is not any of us would be here tonight at this nice dinner if we hadn't gotten a lot of helping hands along the way. But still it is a great testament to the enduring power of the idea of this country that people who have the backgrounds of we four, and the backgrounds of many of the rest of you, could be here.

It is also a great testament to the enduring power of the American idea that those of you here who were born prosperous and got more prosperous came here tonight to help us and our party because we believe we can do better when more Americans do better.

And I've been thinking a lot about this because I had to go home and speak at my birthplace and talk to, among other things, three boys that I went to kindergarten with and all my kinfolks, many of whom are way up in years now, and think about my remarkable grandfather who—I was born on his birthday, and I loved him more than life. He died when I was young. But he was the first white person I ever knew in the segregated South who told me that segregation was wrong. And he had a fourth or a fifth grade education.

And I watched him live it every day. It was a great gift. I watched him run a grocery store before food stamps, and if people came in, they were honest and working hard, and they didn't have any money, he gave them food anyway. And when he died, my mother told me what it was like when they finally found his old books from his grocery store. And he had been gone from there 10 or 15 years, and all these people who had owed him money—he carefully kept it in his book, and when they paid off a little, he'd carefully keep it. But he never—he always said, "They're working hard. They're doing the best they can. I've got food. They should have it, too."

And I was raised in those heady days after World War II, with two simple ideas that I've tried to bring back to America in the last 6 years. One is the idea that everybody should have a chance to live his or her dreams. And the second is that we are part of a community. It gives us a sense of belonging and imposes

on us a sense of responsibility, that we can never fully realize our own aspirations unless we are doing our part to give others the same chance.

And I believe that it's very important that we think about that today. Willie told you about all the good things that have happened in the last 6 years, and I'm glad he did because it would be unseemly for me to talk about them. But also because I don't think that that's the most important thing. I said to the American people in my State of the Union Address that one of the things that I knew before I became President but I couldn't see and feel until I took this job, is just how profoundly and how rapidly the world is changing and how we are changing the way we work and live and relate to each other, not just in our neighborhoods but in our States, in our Nation, and with people way beyond our borders.

And I'll bet whatever it is you do for a living, if you think about it, it's different than it used to be because of technology and because of who can participate. And what I'd like for you to think about just for a few moments tonight is not just how far we've come but what do we still have to do. What will the 21st century look like? What about all these young people around here who are going to be alive much longer than I am; what's it going to be like for them when they raise their children and their grandchildren? And what could we do now at this unbelievable moment of prosperity and confidence, where our security is not seriously threatened, what can we do now to keep the good times going, but also to deal with the challenges of America over the long run, so that more people have a chance to live their dreams and so we have a better chance to come together as a community?

And I'll just mention a few. Willie mentioned one. America is aging, and it's aging for two reasons. One is, health care is better and life expectancy is going up. It's already over 76 years. Anybody in this audience tonight over 60 who's still healthy has got a life expectancy of well over 80 years already. Children being born will do better still. And then the baby boomers are going to retire—I'm the oldest of the baby boomers, and when we all retire there will only be two people working for every one person eligible to draw Social Security.

So we have to prepare for the aging of America. The first thing I'd like to say is, this is a high-class problem. We shouldn't bemoan this.

The only big country in the world where the life expectancy is dropping is in Russia because their economy has collapsed; their health care system has collapsed; their rate of disease and other problems have gone up. They don't have a Social Security problem. We do. And other wealthy countries do. It's a high-class problem. We should be happy for this. And the older I get, the better it looks. *[Laughter]*

But it is wrong for us to let all these folks retire and let us all get older, and then say, "Well, we're not going to take care of that, even though we have the money to do it now, because we know our children will." That would be a terrible thing to do, because the last thing we need to do is to have all of us in my generation retire and impose on our children a big burden which will undermine their ability to raise our grandchildren. It is not right.

And the reason I've said we ought to save more than half of this surplus for Social Security is that we can save the Social Security system without imposing a burden on our children. We have to do the same for Medicare. We have to give families tax credits for long-term care. More and more people are taking care of their own parents, or their parents are doing something other than going into a nursing home. We need to make provisions for this. There are going to be a multitude of different things that older people will do when they need some help, but they don't have to be completely taken care of 24 hours a day. And we've got to help families deal with that.

So that's the first thing. The second thing we have to do is to keep the economy going and reach out to people who have not been part of this free enterprise system yet. And let me say—I just went up to Wall Street with Reverend Jackson for his second annual conference where we're trying to get the people on Wall Street and in New York to invest in the areas of America from neighborhoods in New York City to Appalachia, to the Mississippi Delta, to south Texas, to the Indian reservations of this country, to East Los Angeles, which still haven't felt the economic recovery. And increasingly, that includes more and more farmers who are getting hurt because of the problems around the world.

And I presented to the Congress a plan that would get private capital—not Government money, private capital—into the inner cities, into these small rural areas, on the same terms that

we give people to invest in other countries today. And I think we ought to do it.

We've got all these people who are dying to go to work, and there aren't any jobs in their neighborhoods; there aren't any jobs in their towns; they don't have any investment opportunities; or they're businesses that would like to expand, and they can't get capital. And all I've asked the Congress to do is to provide the tax credits and the loan guarantees for people to invest in high-unemployment areas in America that we give them to invest in other parts of the world, not to take away the investments from the other part of the world but to just give poor American communities the same shot we're trying to give to people in other countries. And I think it's the right thing to do.

The third thing we have to do is to guarantee 100 percent of our kids a world-class education. I like this college program because I tried to open the doors of college to all Americans. Now every child in this country who comes from an upper-middle-income family down can get a \$1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, tax credits for the last 2 for graduate school. We've improved the student loan program and more work-study programs. We've now got a mentoring program going on where we're bringing college kids in to help work with children who are in the seventh and eighth grade, to get them to think about going to college.

But if we can have more people doing what you're doing and telling these kids, "Okay, here's what you can get from the Government in tax credits; here's what you can get in the student loans; and by the way, here's a scholarship to help defray your costs," it will make a huge difference.

We did pass the first installment on that 100,000 teachers. Let me tell you what a big deal that is. We have 53 million kids in school today. We've got the largest number of children we've ever had and by far the most diverse student population. In my little hometown in southwest Arkansas, there is an elementary school they have named for me, in a little town with 9,700 people now—it's a lot bigger than it was when I was born there—9,700 people. In my one little grade school in southwest Arkansas, there are 27 children whose parents were not born in America and whose first language is not English.

In Fairfax County School District, across the Potomac River from Washington, DC, there are children from 180—let me say this again—180 different racial, national, and ethnic groups speaking over 100 different native languages—in one school district.

Now, if we're growing more diverse—this also is a high-class problem—if we're living in a global society, where we have to relate to people all around the world, it is good that America is the place that has the largest number of people that come from everywhere if, but only if, we can have a uniform educational system that gives opportunity to everybody and then if everybody has a chance to make a decent living. But it's got to start with the schools, which is why we want smaller classes, better trained teachers, higher standards, no social promotion. But don't brand the kids failures if the system fails them. Give them the after-school programs. Give them the summer school program. Give them the tutoring programs they need. That is what we need to do.

So the fourth thing we have to do, let me mention, is to deal with the problem of balancing work and family. Hillary and I had an evening at the White House last night, one of these Millennial Evenings that she has organized to discuss big issues that we'll face in the next 20 years. And we talked about the changing role of women, what had happened to women in the 20th century, how women got the vote, how women began to get economic rights, how women assumed larger and larger influence in our national life. And I said something about the role of women that also might be true for the role of African-Americans and other racial groups. I said, you know, for most of this century we've been focused on giving people more rights, stopping them from being oppressed, then making sure they had absolute opportunity. Once you get those things, you then run into questions of how you balance the different rights you have, how people work out the different opportunities they have. With most families now, both the husband and wife work if there are two parents in the home. And most families, they have to do it. Others, they choose to do it, and everyone should have the right to do it. But I predict to you that one of the biggest challenges for this country for the next 10 or 20 years will be how we're going to work out the balance at home and work, because no society has any more important job than raising

children. And if we could do that just right, we'd have about 10 percent of the problems we have today. There is no more important job.

So if we put parents in the position of having to choose between being successful at home and successful at work, we have lost before we start. There is no way to win that, no way for America to come out ahead.

That is why I've asked to expand the family and medical leave law. That's why I've asked for another increase in the minimum wage. I don't think anybody that works 40 hours a week and has a kid at home should be in poverty. I just don't believe that. I don't think that's right. That's why I've asked Congress to pass a child care program that would give families on modest incomes a tax credit and other support, so they could get quality child care while they have to be at work. That's why we have tripled the amount of money we want to give to the schools for the after-school programs and the summer school programs—to help people balance home and work.

And the next thing I'd like to say is I think we have to broaden our horizon of community and what it means to be a good citizen. I think we need, all of us, to think of ourselves in terms of not just the jobs we do and how well we do it, not just whether we pay taxes or not and obey the law, but whether we have some way of serving our community.

I was very moved when the bishop told me that these fine young athletes who were all introduced earlier and their families are members of his church and participating in the mission of reaching children and helping them. And I thank them for that. One of the things that I am proudest of is that we passed what I like to think of as a domestic Peace Corps bill to set up AmeriCorps, our national service corps, and now over 100,000 young people, some from very poor backgrounds, some from wealthy, many in-between, have taken a year or 2 years of their lives, earned some money for college, just like GI's do under the GI bill, and served in their communities, helping to do all kinds of things.

We need to create in our children an ethic of service. And it needs to be a part of what it means to be an American. And we need to do it in a way that gets us all in touch with people who are different from us, so we can learn what the world will be like.

We need to make sure that we relate not only to ourselves but to the rest of the world. I told you Reverend Jackson is my Special Envoy to Africa. Today we had members of the governments of 46 African nations meeting in Washington. They'll be there tomorrow. I talked to them today. He's going to talk to them tomorrow. We're trying to have a new partnership with Africa. We're trying to turn a new page. We're trying not just to say, "Oh, yes, 30 million Americans have roots in Africa, and yes, we're sorry about the legacy of colonialism and slavery." We're trying to say, "Let's open a new chapter. Let's have a new future. Let's help both countries. Let's do something good."

And I just got back from Central America last week. We have millions of people in the United States who trace their roots to Central America, one of the few regions of the world where we have a trade surplus. All those countries racked by civil war, military dictatorship, all kinds of oppression—for decades. Now they're all governed by people who got elected in honest elections. They all have parliaments full of people that used to be at war with each other. They want to be our friends and neighbors.

We see all kinds of people concerned about illegal immigration. We ought to be good neighbors. If we're good neighbors, good partners, and they can make a living at home by selling to us and buying our things, then they won't be coming up here as illegal immigrants. They'll be home, raising their kids, because they can make a decent living. That's being a decent neighbor, and we ought to do it.

So I want you—tomorrow my people are coming to the White House. Tomorrow is Saint Patrick's Day. And it has been my great honor to be the first American President deeply involved in the Irish peace process. The next day we have a group from Israel coming. And many people in this audience tonight have worked with me on the Middle East peace process. I have tried to do this because I want America not to see the world as either a hostile place or just a place where we try to make a buck. I want us to have a larger conception of our community responsibilities.

We have common environmental challenges, like global warming. We have common public health challenges, like HIV and AIDS. We have a common future to make. And I believe with all my heart if we think about the 21st century

as a period where we will work on creating opportunity and community, where we will realize our interdependence, one with another, where we will celebrate all these differences and all this diversity, but underneath understand that we're basically all the same, I think we're going to have a very good future.

And let me just close with this story. I want to tell you a story that I thought about that I told the folks at home when I went to dedicate my birthplace. Last year I had a 91-year-old great uncle who died. He was my grandmother's brother. And I loved him very much, and he helped to raise me when my mother was widowed and went off to study so she could be a nurse anesthetist, and my grandparents were raising me. And this old man and I were close from the time I was born.

He and his wife were married for over 50 years, and she came down with Alzheimer's. And they had one of these old-fashioned houses with gas stoves, so they had to take her to the local nursing facility that was tied to our nursing home in this little town because they were afraid she'd turn on the stove and forget about it and blow the house up. We can laugh—we all laughed about it. It's okay to laugh. I've lost two relatives to Alzheimer's; you have to laugh to keep from crying half the time.

And it was an amazing deal. When she got over to the nursing facility, for weeks she'd know who she was for about 15 minutes a day. And she'd call my uncle, and she said, "How can you abandon me in this old place? Get your rear end over here, and take me home. We've been married for 56 years." And he'd get over there, and half the time by the time he got there she wouldn't know him again. [Laughter]

And any of you who have had this in your family know. I mean, I lost an aunt and an uncle, and you have to laugh to keep from crying. It grinds on you. So anyway, my uncle, who also had a grade-school education, was one of the smartest men I ever knew. All he ever did the whole time I was a boy, no matter how sad I was, or I missed my mother or whatever, or whatever was going on, or when I got to be a grown man and I lost an election, all he did was keep me in a good humor. He'd tell me jokes. He'd tell me not to feel sorry for myself. He'd always say funny things.

So I went to see him one night, about 10 years ago, after his wife went into this nursing

home. And they'd been married over 50 years. And the first 20 or 30 minutes we talked, all he did was tell me jokes and tell me stories and think about the old days. And I was walking out and for the only time in our life, he grabbed me by the arm. And I looked around, and he had big old tears in his eyes. And I said, "This is really hard on you, isn't it?" And he said this, he said, "Yes, it is. But," he said, "you know, I signed on for the whole load, and most of it was pretty good."

When you were up there singing "Stand By Me" tonight and I thought about how the American people have stood by me through thick and thin, I would just like to say to all of you, when I talk about community, that's what I mean. [Applause] Now, wait a minute. You don't have to sit down, because I'm nearly through. [Laughter] Don't sit down. Don't sit down. I'm nearly through. Here's the point I want to make: The reason I wanted you to come here tonight, the reason I'm thankful for your contributions,

the reason I'm thankful for what you do is, this country has got to get over believing that our political life is about beating each other up and hurting people, instead of lifting people up and bringing them together. That is what I've tried to do. That is what we stand for. And if we remember that, we're going to do just fine in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Willie E. Gary and Gloria Gary; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair-designate, and Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair-designate, Democratic National Committee; Bishop Harold C. Ray, Redemptive Life Fellowship, who gave the invocation; Bishop William H. Graves, vice chairman, NAACP Board of Directors; vocal group the Drifters; and Ernestine Diller, who sang the National Anthem.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Luncheon March 17, 1999

Well, I'd like to say, first of all, Mr. Speaker, thank you for inviting us here, for a wonderful lunch. We welcome all of our friends from Northern Ireland and the Republic—[inaudible]—welcome them home.

Father, we thank you for your invocation and for the plug for the town of my roots. You should know that after—I'm convinced that the chamber of commerce there encouraged this, because after the invocation he came over to me and said, "Don't you ever come back to Ireland without going there." [Laughter] So I thank you.

Taoiseach, Secretary Albright, Secretary Daley, and to all the Members of Congress. I congratulate Senator Kennedy on his award from the American Ireland Fund.

The Speaker said something I'd like to pick up on. You know, normally, at this time of year, for the last several years, John, David, Gerry, Seamus—somebody's come here and thanked some American for supporting the Irish peace process. But the truth is that we should all be thanking you, because it's only when you come

here that you bring us all together—[inaudible]—add to that, to your citation. [Laughter] But we're very grateful.

Let me also say that we look forward to the day when this will be a total celebration. What a different year we had this year, *Taoiseach*, because of the Good Friday accords. We're grateful that Senator Mitchell was able to take a leading role—[inaudible]—all you have done. We know, not only in Ireland but indeed in other places, that the closer you get to peace, the more desperate the enemies of peace become. And we have seen the tragedy of the Omagh bombing. We have seen the tragedy of the murder of Rosemary Nelson. We just had another loss last night—[inaudible].

This is perfectly predictable. It happened in the Middle East. I've seen it happen all over the world. Whenever people in responsible positions stick their necks out, there's always someone who knows the best way to rekindle a sense of mistrust necessary to destroy the peace is to kill someone and focus on violence.

Your presence here today is a strong commitment to the peace process and therefore gratefully noted. And all I can say is, I think I can speak for every Member of Congress in this room without regard to party, for every member of our administration—you know that we feel, *Taoiseach*, almost an overwhelming and inexpressible bond to the Irish people. We want to help all of you succeed. It probably seems meddlesome sometimes, but we look forward to the day when Irish children will look at the Troubles as if they were some part of mystic Celtic folklore, and all of us who were alive during that period will seem like relics of a bygone history.

We hope we can help you to achieve that. And believe me, all of us are quite mindful that it is much harder for you—every one of you here in this room who have been a part of this—than it is for us. We don't mean to meddle, but we do want to help.

And we've had a lot of great Speakers of the House who were Irish: McCormack, O'Neill,

Foley. I think we ought to rename the Speaker "O'Hastert" after—[laughter]—his words today, because they were right on point.

So you know that across all the gulfs of American politics, we join in welcoming all of our Irish friends. And right now, I'll ask *Taoiseach* Bertie Ahern to take the floor and give us a few remarks.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately noon in Room H207 of the Rayburn House Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Father Sean McManus, who gave the invocation; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume; Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble; Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams; Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon, Northern Ireland Assembly; and former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Ceremony With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland

March 17, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Welcome, ladies and gentlemen. Happy Saint Patrick's Day—and what a beautiful day it is.

We are following the custom today, which is, first of all, I received my shamrocks, for which I am very grateful. And with the year ahead I'd say we are very much in need of them, and we'll make good use of them. I would like to ask the *Taoiseach* to come up now and make his remarks, as is customary, and then I'd like to say a few words about where we are in the peace process.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome back to the United States.

[Prime Minister Ahern made remarks on the peace process.]

The President. Thank you very much, *Taoiseach*. Thank you for the beautiful crystal bowl of shamrocks, its promise of spring, which is reflected in the weather we enjoy today, and

its symbol of our shared heritage, our shared values, and our shared hopes for the future.

Let me say first a few words of tribute to you for your leadership of the Republic and the success you have enjoyed. Last year was Bertie Ahern's first Saint Patrick's Day in Washington as *Taoiseach*. I talked then about Frank McCourt growing up in poverty in Limerick, about Van Morrison growing up in Belfast and hearing a new world through music, about a generation of children growing up in the shadows of the Troubles. Together on that day, the *Taoiseach* and I reaffirmed that the parties in Northern Ireland had the chance to find common ground.

Now, a year later, look at what's happened. First of all, as I told the *Taoiseach* over lunch, Frank McCourt's book "Angela's Ashes" is being made into a movie. But Ireland and Limerick are doing so well economically, as I had a chance to see for myself last summer, that the producers could not find in all of Limerick

enough dilapidated buildings to use in the film. And so in order to film in Ireland, they actually had to construct new dilapidated buildings. That is true economic progress. Meanwhile, Van Morrison's music continues to inspire people seeking to end the violence. And of course, most importantly, in the last year the negotiators did the job with the Good Friday agreement. The people of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic overwhelmingly endorsed it, and as the *Taoiseach* has said, enormous progress has been made in its implementation.

We are grateful for the work of the leaders in Northern Ireland, in Ireland, and in Great Britain for their support and their efforts in this regard. We are grateful, in particular, for the *Taoiseach*, for Prime Minister Blair, for Mo Mowlam, and all those who have taken an especially leading role. We are grateful for the Nobel Prize winners, John Hume and David Trimble, and all the other leaders of the various factions in Northern Ireland.

But as Bertie said, the enemies of peace are still rearing their head. We saw it in Omagh. We saw it on Monday with the murder of Rosemary Nelson. We saw it with another act of violence yesterday.

Now, in a few short weeks, the time will come to bring the new institutions to life so that the people of Northern Ireland finally can begin to take their destinies into their own hands.

To fully implement the Good Friday accord, the parties simply must resolve their differences. And to do it, they have to have the same spirit of cooperation and trust that led to the first agreement. They must lift their sights above the short-term difficulties. They must see that distant horizon when children will grow up in an Ireland trouble-free, and not even remember how it used to be.

You know, on Saint Patrick's Day, we all rejoice in being Irish; even people that aren't Irish in America claim to be Irish. I told the *Taoiseach* at the Speaker's lunch—we just came from that—I said, "You know, every time we have these Saint Patrick's Day events, the Prime Minister of Ireland and all of the leaders of all the factions in Northern Ireland, they come here to the United States and they thank us for helping to promote the peace in Ireland. But the truth is, we should be thanking them because it's the only time we can be absolutely sure there will be peace between Republicans and Democrats in the United States. When they come here, all the Irish Republicans and the Irish Democrats in the United States and all the people who claim to be Irish on Saint Patrick's Day actually behave in a very civil and cooperative way toward one another."

I think it's worth remembering that when Saint Patrick came from England to Christianize Ireland, he did it without a sword, without the order of law. It was the only time in all history that a whole nation had converted without any force or bloodshed. He did it by carefully listening to the Irish people, understanding what they needed to do, how they could change, how they could not, and treating them with a profound amount of care and respect.

We pray now that the Irish people on opposite sides of this last divided peace process will heed the example of Saint Patrick and give us an even bigger celebration here next year.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam, United Kingdom; Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume; and Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble.

Statement on National Missile Defense Legislation

March 17, 1999

I am pleased that the Senate, on a bipartisan basis, included in its national missile defense (NMD) legislation two amendments that significantly change the original bill, which I strongly

opposed. By specifying that any NMD deployment must be subject to the authorization and appropriations process, the legislation now makes clear that no decision on deployment has

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been made. By putting the Senate on record as continuing to support negotiated reductions in strategic nuclear arms, the bill reaffirms that our missile defense policy must take into account our arms control objectives.

We are committed to meeting the growing danger that outlaw nations will develop and deploy long-range missiles that could deliver weapons of mass destruction against us and our allies. Next year we will, for the first time, determine whether to deploy a limited national missile defense against these threats, when we review the results of flight tests and other developmental efforts, consider cost estimates, and evaluate the threat. In making our determination, we will

also review progress in achieving our arms control objectives, including negotiating any amendments to the ABM Treaty that may be required to accommodate a possible NMD deployment.

This week the Russian Duma took an encouraging step toward obtaining final approval of START II. We want to move ahead on the START III framework, which I negotiated with President Yeltsin in 1997, to cut Russian and U.S. arsenals 80 percent from cold war levels, while maintaining the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability. The changes made in the NMD bill during Senate debate ensure these crucial objectives will be fully taken into account as we pursue our NMD program.

Statement on Proposed Patients' Rights Legislation

March 17, 1999

Today the Congress is beginning its work on patients' rights legislation. This issue is critical to assuring Americans high quality health care in the 21st century, so I am pleased that we are moving forward.

Unfortunately, the proposal by the Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee falls far short of the legislation the American people deserve. Because it applies patients' rights only to those in self-insured plans, this proposal leaves 120 million Americans in insured and individual plans without the guarantee of critical protections. Millions of Americans should not be held hostage to the hope that their State might pass legislation providing these protections. In fact, while States have the authority to pass patient protections for these plans, not one has enacted all of these protections. That is why we need strong Federal legislation to ensure that all health plans provide patients these important rights.

Even for those it does cover, the Chairman's proposal leaves out many of the most fundamental protections. For example, it does not have an adequate enforcement mechanism to ensure that patients are compensated when they are injured or die as a result of a health plan's decisions; it does not assure patients access to specialists, such as oncologists or heart specialists; and it leaves our continuity of care protections. That is why every major patient, doctor, and nurse advocacy organization has concluded that this proposal is simply inadequate.

Today represents the first test of whether this new Congress is serious about providing Americans with a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights to assure high quality health care. I urge the Committee to do everything it can to pass this test and give Americans the health care protections they need.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to George J. Mitchell

March 17, 1999

The President. Well, thank you very much. I am very grateful for your warm reception.

I take it you had a good time inside. *[Laughter]* You not only put me out of the White House,

you put all of yourselves out, too, because we wanted to be here where we could sit as one, to participate in this very important ceremony.

I thank you, *Taoiseach*, Celia. I thank all the party leaders who are here: Mr. Trimble, Mr. Mallon, John Hume, Gerry Adams, all the others. I thank Mo Mowlam for her tireless work. And the members of the Irish Government who are here, I thank all of them.

Mo Mowlam has got a great sense of humor, so I'm going to tell you a story she told me upstairs, and I'll never live over it, I know. But she said one night she spent the night here with Hillary and me, and she got in rather late. We stayed up rather later speaking. And then she went to sleep, and something happened, and she had to get on the phone early in the morning, London time, which is in the middle of the night our time. And the operator called back and said that she was having trouble finding Secretary Mowlam; she was in Mr. Lincoln's bedroom. [*Laughter*] She said it was quite obvious the operator did not know who Mr. Lincoln was or that he had been deceased for quite some time. [*Laughter*] But she at least felt that she was in good company. [*Laughter*]

I would like to thank the members of our administration who are here and the rather astonishing number of Members of Congress who are here. I'd like to ask all the Members of the United States Congress who are here to please stand, wherever you are. [*Applause*] Thank you. Many have come with their spouses. Congressman King came with about 15 members of his family—[*laughter*—represents about 5 percent of the total brood. [*Laughter*] We're delighted to see them all.

I'd also like to say a special word of welcome to Senator Mitchell and to Heather and to all of George's family and friends who are here. As all of you know, in addition to the entertainment, which we'll talk about in a moment, our primary purpose here is to give me the opportunity, in front of the Irish-American community and so many of our friends from Ireland, north and south, to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Senator George Mitchell. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I really don't know if this is going to mean anything to George anymore; he's gotten so many honors lately. He can't walk two blocks down any street without someone throwing some sort of trophy at him—[*laughter*]—Irish-American of the Year, Honorary Degree from Dub-

lin's Trinity College. He even got an honorary knighthood from the Queen of England. George Lucas offered to give him "the Force"—[*laughter*]—but he said "the Force" was already with him. [*Laughter*]

Few Americans have served with such distinction in so many different capacities: prosecutor, judge, Senator, Presidential envoy, chair of Northern Ireland's historic peace talks. His, as most of you know, is a great American story. His father, born to Irish immigrants, adopted by Lebanese immigrants; his mother herself born in Lebanon. She worked a night shift at a textile mill; his father cleaned the buildings at Colby College. They stressed education and hard work, and George supplemented his scholarships with jobs as a steward, dorm proctor, construction worker, night watchman, truck driver, and insurance adjuster. Now we all know why he fought so hard for the working people of our country. At one time or another, he did everything that they do all day, every day.

I've heard George say on more than one occasion that his favorite part of being a Federal judge was administering the citizenship oath to new American citizens. He said he was very moved when one of them told him, "I came here because in America, everybody has a chance."

Well, this son of immigrants has done his dead-level-best to make sure that in our country everybody does have a chance. And he replaced a remarkable man, Senator Edmund Muskie, in the Senate and in just 8 years became the majority leader.

In our time together, he pushed through crucial laws that enabled us to turn around our horrendous deficit, get our budget in order, and start to grow our economy again, to give tax breaks to working people, to broaden voter registration, to give 20 million people, now, access to the family and medical leave law, to put 100,000 police on the street, protect religious freedom, clean up the environment, stand up for our veterans. That's just a few of the things that he did.

When he announced his retirement, it was a bittersweet moment, for friends and colleagues wished him well but also knew we would miss him dearly in this town. And I devised a scheme, the dimensions of which George would only later appreciate. [*Laughter*] I think it is the only time in our long relationship where

I outsmarted him, instead of the other way around. [Laughter]

I asked him to take a small, part-time commitment as my special economic adviser to Northern Ireland. [Laughter] Then the British and Irish Governments stepped in and asked him to chair talks on disarmament and then on bringing a comprehensive peace after a generation of bloodshed. The small, part-time commitment became more all-consuming than being Senate majority leader. I got even with him for leaving me. [Laughter]

He drew up principles of nonviolence, aimed at preventing further tragedies while the talks proceeded. In building common ground among longtime antagonists he was a patient listener when he needed to be and a decisive leader when he had to be. He earned the respect of all parties for fairness, integrity, and judgment. And he built the trust necessary to move toward an agreement.

Through more than 100 trips across the Atlantic—shall I say that again? Through more than 100 trips across the Atlantic, he continued to press ahead in the cause of peace. Northern Ireland learned what his sister and brothers knew from endless nights of cribbage, what his college basketball teammates saw from their tenacious starting guard, what his fellow legislators learned on the Senate floor and on the tennis court, and what I learned as his friend and colleague: Don't be fooled by the calm demeanor; this guy is a ferocious competitor, determined to succeed.

During the course of this endeavor, George and Heather's son, Andrew, was born. George thought of Andrew, and also of the 61 children born in Northern Ireland on the same day. He wanted to champion their future as well, to give them the same chance for a good life he wanted for his own son.

What motivated George brought to mind for me a letter I read last summer at Omagh when, together, we met with survivors of the bombing there. It was sent to our then-Ambassador to Ireland, Jean Kennedy Smith, who is also with us tonight, and thank you, Jean. I want to read this to you so you will understand from a personal point of view why I'm giving this medal to George tonight and why I want every person who is a part of this process to leave here tonight determined to get over this last hurdle and to remember that we do not have a day to waste. Easter is coming again. Good Friday

is coming again. We have to give an accounting of ourselves. So remember this:

"Dear Ambassador, you may not know me. You may not even get this letter. But after yesterday's tragedy, I wanted to do something. I'm 29 years old, an Irishman to the very core of my being. But throughout my life, there has never been peace on this island. I never realized how precious peace could be until my wife gave birth to our daughter, Ashleen, 20 months ago. We don't want her to grow up in a society that is constantly waiting for the next atrocity, the next batch of young lives snuffed out by hatred and fear.

"Ashleen's name means 'vision' or 'dream,' and we have a dream of what Ireland might be like when she grows up. Ireland could be a place where dreams would come true, where people would achieve things never imagined before, where people would not be afraid of their neighbors. We know America has done much for Ireland and all we ask is that you keep trying. Please keep Ireland in mind because Ashleen and all Irish children need to be able to dream."

Well, my thanks go to the *Taoiseach*, to Prime Minister Blair, to Mo Mowlam, the leaders of the parties, our Government, but especially to my good friend George Mitchell, who never meant to sign on for quite the job he got but who did it as an act of love and devotion.

George, thank you for your service to our Nation. Thank you for your wisdom. Thank you for being so tenacious. Thank you for your friendship and for being a truly fine human being.

Major Everhart, read the citation.

[At this point, Maj. Carlton D. Everhart, USAF, Air Force Aide to the President, read the citation. The President then presented the medal, and Mr. Mitchell made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you, George, for your service and your remarks tonight.

You know, when you stay in this work as long as Senator Mitchell and I have, you're not often moved by what other people in public life say. And even sometimes when you're moved, you doubt the ability of one person's words to move another. Tonight I think I can speak for all of us when I say we were genuinely moved by what George Mitchell said.

And I believe I can speak for all of us who are not parties and will have no direct say, that

we hope and pray that they were moved and emboldened and redetermined by Senator Mitchell's words. I will say what I have said from the beginning: The United States will support all sides in Ireland that take honest steps for peace. And I hope and believe that the necessary steps can be taken before we pass another Good Friday.

Thank you very much.

Now, enough of this really too serious stuff. Now we're going to have Saint Patrick's Day fun. Let me begin by thanking the performers who already have been entertaining you here and in the White House. Let me mention them all, and then I think we should give them a round of applause: the Irish Fire band and dancers from the O'Hare School of Irish Dance; the Culin School of Traditional Irish Dance and The Next Generation Band; the harpists, Ellen James and Michael O'Hanlan; the Prince George's County Police Pipe Band; and the U.S. Marine Band Irish Ensemble. Thank you very much. Hillary and I appreciate it. [*Applause*]

There is another great performance ahead: Both Sides Now, music and spoken words celebrating the people of Northern Ireland. You will hear the great music from our friends Phil Coulter and James Galway, two of Ireland's and the world's great musicians. Last December they performed together in Oslo on a great day, the day John Hume and David Trimble received the Nobel Peace Prize. They are joined by some familiar faces, Roma Downey and Aidan Quinn. We thank them for being here. And you will hear from the musicians of Different Drums of Ireland, whose sounds represent a melding of Ireland's traditions.

Finally, you will hear from a truly beautiful and remarkable young woman, Claire Gallagher. She lost her sight in the terrible bombing at Omagh, but she did not lose the vision and strength of her spirit and soul. And her mission for peace is powerful and clear. Claire came here tonight with her parents, her siblings, her teacher, and we are genuinely honored to have her. Hillary was so moved by her before in Northern Ireland, and I can't say enough about my respect for what she has done to carry on with what will still be a genuinely remarkable life.

I thank all of our performers in advance. And again, I say I hope the music and the spirit embodied by the Irish who are here will also help to give us the strength and resolve to fulfill the final promises of the Good Friday accord.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; Celia Larkin, who accompanied Prime Minister Ahern; First Minister David Trimble and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of the Northern Ireland Assembly; Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume; Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams; Queen Elizabeth II, Prime Minister Tony Blair, and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam of the United Kingdom; "Star Wars" creator George Lucas; and actors Roma Downey and Aidan Quinn. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Mr. Mitchell.

United States-Africa Ministerial Joint Communique *March 18, 1999*

From March 15–18, 1999, the United States hosted the first-ever meeting of African and American Ministers to enhance the U.S.-Africa partnership in order to foster greater economic development, trade, investment, political reform, and mutual economic growth in the 21st century. The President, eight members of the Cabinet, and four agency heads met for the first time with the African delegations. Eighty-three

Ministers from forty-six sub-Saharan African nations, representatives from four North African nations, and the heads of eight African regional organizations participated in this historic and successful meeting. African Ministers also met with members of the U.S. Congress.

In an effort to consolidate and build upon the significant progress achieved in Africa in recent years, Ministers and senior U.S. officials

discussed concrete ways to accelerate Africa's integration into the global economy. African Ministers expressed strong support for the immediate passage by Congress of the African Growth and Opportunity Act and for continued implementation of the President's Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity.

U.S. and African Ministers engaged in an active exchange on a broad range of economic, political, and social issues. They shared the view that high indebtedness constitutes a serious constraint to sustainable development in many African countries. In response to African requests for more effective debt relief, President Clinton proposed a six-point expanded debt relief program for highly indebted poor countries, which was warmly welcomed by the African ministers.

African and American officials discussed trade finance, market access, and access to private investment capital for ventures in Africa. Initiatives to enhance trade and investment links and economic policy dialogue were discussed as well as efforts to improve transportation and communications infrastructure and cooperation in agribusiness and energy. Ministers also reaffirmed the importance of addressing environmental issues. They noted that early ratification by the U.S. Senate of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification will help to mobilize community and international efforts to better manage land and water resources.

African Ministers and their U.S. counterparts exchanged ideas on how to enhance Africa's ability to compete in the global market through

the development of its greatest resource—its people. Emphasizing the need for accelerating reform and continued development assistance as well as trade and investment, participants examined ways to bolster human capacity through investment in education, skills training, gender equity, micro-enterprises and health, particularly the prevention of HIV/AIDS. All agreed that these steps will accelerate the ability of Africa to sustain socio-economic development and reduce poverty. They also recognized the crucial role of regional cooperation in the overall development process and in the integration of African states into the global economy.

Recognizing that sub-Saharan Africa is a vast and diverse region marked by serious problems as well as significant successes, Ministers examined ways to enhance U.S.-Africa cooperation to prevent and resolve conflicts. They also agreed on the importance of strengthening democratic institutions and respect for worker and human rights, accelerating economic reform, and creating a positive climate for business through political and social reforms. Ministers noted that the Ministerial illuminated the breadth and depth of the U.S.-Africa partnership, and set it on a firm foundation for future mutual advancement in the 21st century. All recognized the need for continuing dialogue and agreed to work out the means of ensuring regular and timely follow-up.

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

Joint Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process by United States President Bill Clinton, the Irish *Taoiseach* Bertie Ahern, and the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair

March 18, 1999

As we approach the first anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, we can all take heart at how far we have come in a year.

The Agreement has provided the basis for the two traditions to work together, both in Northern Ireland and on the island as a whole, for the first time in 200 years. Democratically endorsed by an emphatic majority of people in both the North and the South, it gives a unique opportunity for peace and reconciliation in

which all the signatories can take pride. It has rightly been acknowledged as an example to the rest of the world of how dialogue can bring an end to conflict.

Much progress has been made in implementing the Agreement. The basis for a new partnership government in Northern Ireland has been agreed. Elections have been held. Last week, the Irish and British Governments signed treaties providing for the establishment of

North/South implementation bodies, a North/South Ministerial council, a British-Irish Council and a British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference. With these treaties, arrangements have been finalized for institutions which will provide for a new level of cooperation and partnership. This will bring real, practical benefits to everyone concerned.

Implementation of the provisions of the Agreement, ensuring that the future is based on full respect for equality and freedom from discrimination for all, is also well advanced. The review of the criminal justice system is well under way, as is the work of the commission examining the key area of policing.

The balanced constitutional accommodation set out in the Agreement, based on consent, is ready to become operational. The solemn commitment that the future will be shaped by exclusively democratic and peaceful means, provides the framework within which the new institutions can work and enjoy the confidence of all sides.

Large numbers of prisoners have been released on both sides of the border. That is an essential part of the Agreement, although one that has caused undoubted pain to those who have lost loved ones during the years of conflict. The ceasefires remain solid. General de Chastelain continues his vital work to achieve progress on decommissioning.

There is much work still to be done to implement all aspects of the Agreement. But the substantial progress already achieved gives us hope for the future.

Despite the progress, Omagh demonstrated that the peace has not been a perfect peace.

The cruel and senseless murder of Rosemary Nelson is a further reminder. But the response to Omagh showed that, despite the pain, there is deep determination in both the North and the South that peace is the only path. We call for an end to all the killings and punishment beatings. Violence of the kind we have seen again this week must not be allowed to unsettle the peace process.

The Agreement endorsed by the people last May must be implemented in all its aspects and the remaining difficulties must be resolved.

We, as leaders, bear that responsibility and that means all of us, whether we live in Northern Ireland, the Republic, Britain, or the United States.

This is what the people want and we must not fail them.

A year ago, people said it was hopeless, that the sides were too far apart. But the people and political parties in Northern Ireland proved them wrong. We all persevered. People compromised. People showed courage.

One year on, we can meet the deadline that has been set. More courage will be needed. But we are nearly there.

The prize is very great indeed and it is now in sight. We have come too far to go back now. Let us finish the task between now and Good Friday.

NOTE: The statement referred to Gen. John de Chastelain, Canadian Defense Forces (Ret.), Chair, Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement Announcing a Review of Security at the Department of Energy Weapons Labs

March 18, 1999

Today I have asked the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, chaired by Warren Rudman, to undertake a review of the security threat at the Department of Energy's weapons labs and the adequacy of the measures that have been taken to address it. The Board is a bipartisan, independent advisory body responsible,

among other things, for assessing the quality and adequacy of our counterintelligence efforts.

I have asked the Board to address the nature of the present counterintelligence security threat, the way in which it has evolved over the last two decades and the steps we have taken to counter it, as well as to recommend any additional steps that may be needed. I have

asked the Board to deliver its completed report to the Congress, and to the fullest extent possible consistent with our national security, to release an unclassified version to the public.

I am determined to do all that is necessary to protect our sensitive national security information and to prevent its diversion to foreign

countries. Last year I signed Presidential Decision Directive 61 to strengthen security and counterintelligence at the labs, and since 1995, we have increased the Department of Energy's counterintelligence budget fifteenfold, from \$2 to \$31 million.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

March 18, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 19(3) of the Public Telecommunications Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-356), I transmit herewith a report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. This report outlines, first, the Corporation's efforts to facilitate the continued development of superior, diverse, and innovative programming and, second, the Corporation's efforts to solicit the views of the public on current programming initiatives.

This report summarizes 1997 programming decisions and outlines how Corporation funds were distributed—\$47.9 million for television program development, \$18.8 million for radio programming development, and \$15.6 million

for general system support. The report also reviews the Corporation's *Open to the Public* campaign which allows the public to submit comments via mail, a 24-hour toll-free telephone line, or the Corporation's Internet website.

I am confident this year's report will meet with your approval and commend, as always, the Corporation's efforts to deliver consistently high quality programming that brings together American families and enriches all our lives.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 18, 1999.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Endowment for Democracy

March 18, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the provisions of section 504(h) of Public Law 98-164, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4413(i)), I transmit herewith the 15th

Annual Report of the National Endowment for Democracy, which covers fiscal year 1998.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 18, 1999.

Remarks on Receiving the Peace Garden Scroll and the Shalom Chaver Award for International Leadership *March 18, 1999*

Leah and Dahlia, Noa, Yuval, Tali, Rachel: Hillary and I are honored to welcome you here. We are honored by the Shalom Chaver Award and the Peace Garden and the power of your example. Thank you, Noa, for the beautiful song.

I thank the members of the Cabinet who are here, the administration, especially Secretary Albright and Mr. Berger, and I want to say a special word of thanks to all those who have been on our peace team, now and for the last 6 years: Mr. Ross, Mr. Indyk; before them, Secretary Christopher, Mr. Lake, and others.

I welcome the members of the diplomatic corps who are here. I think it would be worth noting, as a particular tribute to Prime Minister Rabin, that the members of the diplomatic corps who are here are the Ambassadors of Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Qatar, Oman, and the PLO. Welcome.

I thank Congressmen Lantos, Lewis, and Lowey for being here. We have many distinguished guests from Israel, including General and Mrs. Mordechai and Mrs. Barak. We thank you for being here, all of our guests from Israel, and all of our American guests. Thank you for coming, in the words of Prime Minister Rabin, to make a stand against violence and for peace.

We are gratified to know that this Rabin Center will promote Yitzhak's legacy and his vision of a Middle East in a world where people do not have to die for peace but can actually live in peace and enjoy it.

I still remember quite clearly the meeting we had in March of 1993, when the Oslo agreement was still months away, but he had already foreseen the bold steps he would have to take. He shared with me his assessment of the danger posed by the adversaries in the Middle East. As I recall, he called it a marriage of extremists and missiles. He understood that Israel needed a strategic peace, a circle of peace with others in the region to isolate and weaken extremists.

All I could say to him then and all I can do now is to state again that as Israel takes risks for peace, the United States will do everything in its power to minimize those risks and advance that cause.

Today I also thank Leah and Dahlia for remembering our friend His Majesty King Hussein. In a humorous moment in an otherwise profoundly somber day, at his funeral, I was standing with another leader of the Arab world whom I dare not mention for fear of embarrassing him, and we noticed standing there at the King's funeral Prime Minister Netanyahu, General Barak, and General Mordechai. And the leader looked at me, and he said, "This is truly an amazing world. King Hussein is the only thing they agree on." [*Laughter*]

Hussein and Yitzhak Rabin were brave soldiers who had the courage to tell the hard truth that there would be no security for any in the Middle East without fairness for all, that the time had come to lift people's hopes, not exploit their fears, to reach across the divide of history and hatred, to fulfill the true promise of the Promised Land. They knew well enough that extremists would try to derail the peace accord by keeping fear and frustration, mistrust and misery dominant in the lives of ordinary Palestinians and Israelis. But they were determined to turn back the tide, and so they did.

How we gloried in those brilliant days in 1993 and 1995 when the leaders of the Middle East gathered here to grasp hands and pledged to build a safer and better future. How we enjoyed those first halting steps toward reconciliation. Even then there was humor: I will never forget when Yitzhak promised me in September of '93 that he would shake Mr. Arafat's hand as long as there was no kissing. [*Laughter*]

But it wasn't long after that when they came here to sign all the maps to embody in concrete terms the accord which had been reached, when a dispute arose. And it was at the last minute, and no one knew how to resolve it. So I showed them back to my private dining room, and I said, "I believe I could find Jericho, but otherwise I don't know much about this map. You guys go in that room and solve it. We'll wait until it's done." And they sat there alone and resolved the problem.

Today, the people of the Middle East still have a chance to build the secure peace of Prime Minister Rabin's dreams, to isolate the

extremists, to weaken their ability to shatter the peace with terrorism or missiles or weapons of mass destruction. But it is just a chance.

I can still hear the strong voices of Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein speaking to us today and saying: Push ahead with the peace process. Build on Oslo and Wye River—before it is too late. But today, their voices must be embodied by others all across the Middle East. *Tzarich chaverim li-shalom*. We need friends of peace.

The loss of Yitzhak Rabin, the premature death of His Majesty King Hussein make it time—and past time—for all in the Middle East to remember the wisdom of the ages: Life is fleeting. When we return to dust, our differences are as nothing. All that remains is our legacy. It must be an affirmation of our common humanity. Why is it we can only see the humanity we share when we lose someone we love?

Long ago, Leah said it very well in 1975 at a women's conference in Mexico City. She said this: "War solves nothing. Our area thirsts for peace, for the benefit of all peoples living there. Our true enemies are poverty, illiteracy, disease, and inequality of opportunity."

Leah, you and Yitzhak lived the history of Israel together, from your marriage in the year of your nation's birth, from the ashes of the Holocaust and the seeds of the Diaspora. You fought for independence and survival. You helped to build the enlightened, vibrant democratic society that Israel is today. And I want to say that we are very grateful to you for your sacrifices, for your contributions to help build an Israel that is strong and free, prosperous and at peace. We thank you.

That is also America's cause in the Middle East; and in Central America, where I visited last week, and where longtime adversaries in civil wars now reach across great divides; and in Northern Ireland, the land of my ancestors, whose leaders I met with yesterday, where we are so close to finishing the job; and in the former Yugoslavia, where we are determined to avoid in Kosovo a repeat of the terrible senseless bloodshed of Bosnia; and in Africa, where too much blood still is being shed, but whose leaders came here this week in a remarkable display of unity to seek a partnership of freedom and opportunity with the United States.

In all these places the struggle for peace continues. And we must continue it in the Middle East, between Israelis and Palestinians and all across the region, because every day we delay the process of peace strengthens the extremists and supports their violent designs.

I would like to close with three admonitions. We must not grow weary. The psalmist says, "Do good; seek peace, and pursue it." We must not harden our hearts in the face of all that has been lost. Shakespeare said it best:

The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

Let us give it and take it. And finally, we must not lose faith. Yitzhak Rabin once quoted these words from the poet Tchernichovsky: "I believe in the future. That day will come when peace and blessings are borne from nation to nation." And he added, "I want to believe that that day is not far off."

With the help of a merciful God, we will hasten the day of Yitzhak Rabin's dreams.

Shalom. Salaam. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:49 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the following members of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's family: Leah Rabin, widow; Dahlia Rabin-Pelossof, daughter; Noa Pelossof, granddaughter; Yuval Rabin, son, and his wife, Tali; and Rachel Jacob, sister. The President also referred to Ambassadors Marwan Muashir of Jordan, Ahmed Maher El-Sayed of Egypt, Noureddine Mejdoub of Tunisia, Mohamed Benaissa of Morocco, Saad Muhammad al-Kubaysi of Qatar, and Abdallah bin Muhammad bin Aqil al-Dhahab of Oman; Hasan Abdel Rahman, the Palestine Liberation Organization representative in Washington, DC; Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, and his wife, Cochi; Gen. Ehud Barak, chairman, Israeli Labor Party, and his wife, Nava; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. The scroll and the award were presented by the Yitzhak Rabin Center.

Remarks at the Radio and Television Correspondents Association Dinner March 18, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Jim. I want to thank all the officers for making me feel so welcome. Evelyn, thank you for the great dinner conversation—Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress, my fellow Americans. I want to thank you for your invitation to come have dinner with 2,000 members of the Washington press corps. [Laughter] I accepted. If this isn't contrition, I don't know what is. [Laughter]

I know you can't really laugh about this. I mean, the events of the last year have been quite serious. If the Senate vote had gone the other way, I wouldn't be here tonight. I demand a recount. [Laughter]

Look, this is just the beginning of my week with the press. Tomorrow I've got a press conference and then the Gridiron dinner the day after that. You'd think I was selling a book. [Laughter] Now, I know it's been a long time since I had a press conference, but I remember it well. [Laughter] All those questions that day about the nomination of Zoe Baird. [Laughter]

Look, you can probably tell I'm a little nervous being around all these reporters tonight. So if you will forgive me, I'd like to employ a method that has worked pretty well for me over the last year.

[At this point, a fanfare was played and the "Prime Minister" of a fictitious nation, played by actor Nick Olcott, was announced.]

The President. Your Excellency, welcome to the United States. [Laughter] The podium is yours. [Laughter]

[The "Prime Minister" spoke briefly in a "foreign language."]

The President. Well, your Excellency, without my headphones, I have no idea what you just said. [Laughter] But it sounded very much like words of praise. I want you to know that they mean more to me than I could possibly express. [Laughter]

[The "Prime Minister" replied briefly in a "foreign language."]

The President. I agree with that, as well. [Laughter]

Now, your Excellency, this is just a dinner with the press. Tomorrow is the real press conference. I look forward to seeing you there. [Laughter]

Now, I know that the press corps has been busy preparing questions for me. So I've been working on the answers. Never mind the questions; here are the answers. [Laughter]

"Yes, Helen." "She was first, Sam. I'll get to you, Sam. Not yet, though." "The longest peacetime expansion in history." "No, I didn't watch it." [Laughter] "No, I haven't read it." [Laughter] "Yes, Wolf, I am doing this press conference because Joe made me do it."

Your Excellency, why don't you just have a seat right here, just listen to the translation, and I'll ask you to join me again if I need some cover. [Laughter]

Now, I know there's been a lot of interest in the future political career of the First Lady. I honestly don't know what she'll decide, but I can tell you this. Yesterday at breakfast, she was complaining that it is impossible to get a decent bagel in Washington. [Laughter] By the way, I'm from Arkansas. You know, what is a schmear? [Laughter]

The "Prime Minister." [Unintelligible]—Philadelphia Cream Cheese.

The President. Cream cheese. Thank you very much. I got it.

And you know, the Vice President's been busy, too. When I was in Central America, I turned on my trusty C-SPAN, and I saw the Vice President talking about how rough it is to travel on airplanes these days, the delays, the lost baggage, the disgusting meals. [Laughter] Al, I didn't know it was that bad on Air Force II. [Laughter] I think he's due for an upgrade.

Aren't you glad Garrison Keillor is here? I welcome you, sir, to Washington, where all the lobbyists are strong, all the politicians think they're good-looking, and all of the lawyers are above average. [Laughter] I'm glad Governor Ventura let you out of the headlock, and I hope he lets you go home to Minnesota.

Folks, I was going to make jokes about the House Republicans tonight, about the managers. It wouldn't be fair; they're not here to defend

themselves. They're all at the "Taliban Correspondents Association Dinner." [Laughter] You know, the House managers were really unhappy with the Senate verdict. In fact, they're appealing it to the judges in the Holyfield-Lewis fight. [Laughter]

This is a pretty tough time for the right wing. The president of the Council of Conservative Citizens had to resign because of his alleged ties to Bob Barr. [Laughter]

Now, look, as I have often said, politics aside, this is truly a great moment for America. Since I took office, more than 18 million new jobs—opportunity abundant. But there are pockets of our economy that have been hurt by change—

The "Prime Minister." Oh, Bob Barr! [Laughter]

The President. He and I liked it better than you did. [Laughter]

Anyway, as I was saying, in spite of all this prosperity, there are some pockets of our economy that have really been hurt by change. For example, now that the trial is over, we have a responsibility to do something about the growing ranks of dislocated pundits. [Laughter] You know, in this era of technological change, the average worker will change jobs 7 times. And now we know that for a full 50 percent of them, one of those jobs will be a short stint as a panelist on MSNBC. [Laughter]

My friends, when their time in Washington is up, we simply must help displaced pundits make the most of the opportunities of the 21st century. This is a challenge best met at the State level. [Laughter] So I propose a new relocation grant to move Washington's pundits out to our 50 States, the laboratories of democracy—[laughter]—to give them new, fresh, vibrant opportunities to torment our Nation's Governors—[laughter]—from Trenton to Tallahassee and Albany to Austin.

I also want you to know that I am absolutely firmly committed to passing the long overdue Pundits' Bill of Rights: You have the right to a fresh danish in the green room, the right to interrupt others, the right to shout down Chris Matthews—I think that's an obligation, myself—[laughter]—and never, never should you have to make the painful choice between the beat you cover and the talk show you love. [Laughter]

Now, the cable networks have to fill 24 hours of news programming with 24 minutes worth of actual news. [Laughter] That's pretty tough.

Anyway, here are a few of the better ideas for new shows: "MSNBC in Crisis"—[laughter]—"Inside the Politics of 'Burden of Proof'"—[laughter]—"Totally Subpoenaed Videos." [Laughter] But just for you tonight, we got our hands on a preview of cable news' next really big show. Here it is; look on the video screen.

[At this point, a video called "Punditubbies" was shown, with journalist Robert Novak hosting characters from the children's television program "Teletubbies."]

The President. I'll explain it to you later, your Excellency. [Laughter]

Well, there has been some real news this week. The DNC announced it will hold the 2000 Democratic Convention in Los Angeles. But what you may not know is that the Los Angeles planning committee insisted on some minor changes in the convention format. For example, the Democratic candidate must start his acceptance speech by thanking the Academy and saying what an honor it is just to be nominated. [Laughter] In addition to the red-meat rhetoric of usual, there will be a fabulous vegetarian plate prepared by Wolfgang Puck. Tough questions will now be handled by stunt doubles. There'll be a fundraiser at Grauman's Chinese Theater. And basically—even after it's over—in Hollywood, Oscars will still be bigger than the convention.

Speaking of the Oscars, everybody's got his or her own pick for Best Picture. Now, I like some in particular, but none of these were nominated. But there were a lot of pictures about Washington this year, and I think they deserve a little consideration.

There was "Leaving Los Alamos," "You've Got Subpoenas"—[laughter]—"Throw Momma in the Grand Jury." One of my favorites, the prequel to "Starr Wars," "The Robert Fiske Story"—[laughter]—and "Saving Private Life." [Laughter]

Now that this speech has gone on long enough, I know we should work together to bring it to closure. So I want you to let me say something, just for a moment, serious.

There are three journalists here tonight from Radio Free Asia who sought to cover my trip to China last year but had their visas canceled by the Chinese Government. I was pleased to sit for an interview with them before I left and took the opportunity to say that China had made a serious mistake.

This, of course, is part of a larger problem, because around the world, still, journalists are barred, harassed, imprisoned, sometimes even murdered, for the crime of seeking and speaking the truth. When leaders in China or anywhere else do this, it is a cause for dismay. And what leaders everywhere must realize is that a robust and independent press actually strengthens a nation. It promotes debate. And in a free society, given enough time, the people pretty much always get it right.

Together we must continue to state forcefully our belief that free expression and independent journalism are absolutely essential to building better societies and protecting the rights of all people. In the daily push and pull of our jobs and lives, we should never lose sight of that one goal, which I know every person in this room shares, not only tonight but every night.

All in all, this hasn't been too bad. I'd do it again. In fact, I'm dumb enough to do it again tomorrow. So I'll see you tomorrow in the East Room. Look for me. I'll be the guy without the red sash. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Jim Mills, president, Radio and Television Correspondents Association; Evelyn Thomas, CBS News; former Attorney General nominee Zoe Baird; Helen Thomas, United Press International; Sam Donaldson, ABC News; Wolf Blitzer, CNN; radio entertainer Garrison Keillor; Gov. Jesse Ventura of Minnesota; boxers Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis; Chris Matthews, CNBC; chef Wolfgang Puck; and Radio Free Asia journalists Arin Basu, Patricia Hindman, and Xiao Ming Feng.

The President's News Conference *March 19, 1999*

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, as all of you know, we have been involved in an intensive effort to end the conflict in Kosovo for many weeks now. With our NATO Allies and with Russia, we proposed a peace agreement to stop the killing and give the people of Kosovo the self-determination and government they need and to which they are entitled under the constitution of their government.

Yesterday the Kosovar Albanians signed that agreement. Even though they have not obtained all they seek, even as their people remain under attack, they've had the vision to see that a just peace is better than an unwinnable war. Now only President Milosevic stands in the way of peace.

Today the peace talks were adjourned because the Serbian negotiators refused even to discuss key elements of the peace plan. NATO has warned President Milosevic to end his intransigence and repression or face military action.

Our allies are strongly united behind this course. We are prepared, and so are they, to carry it out. Today I reviewed our planning with my senior advisers and met with many Members of Congress. As we prepare to act, we need

to remember the lessons we have learned in the Balkans. We should remember the horror of the war in Bosnia, the sounds of sniper fire aimed at children, the faces of young men behind barbed wire, the despairing voices of those who thought nothing could be done. It took precious time to achieve allied unity there, but when we did, our firmness ended all that. Bosnia is now at peace.

We should remember the thousands of people facing cold and hunger in the hills of Kosovo last fall. Firmness ended that as well. We should remember what happened in the village of Racak back in January—innocent men, women, and children taken from their homes to a gully, forced to kneel in the dirt, sprayed with gunfire, not because of anything they had done but because of who they were.

Now, roughly 40,000 Serbian troops and police are massing in and around Kosovo. Our firmness is the only thing standing between them and countless more villages like Racak, full of people without protection, even though they have now chosen peace.

Make no mistake, if we and our allies do not have the will to act, there will be more

massacres. In dealing with aggressors in the Balkans, hesitation is a license to kill. But action and resolve can stop armies and save lives.

We must also understand our stake in peace in the Balkans and in Kosovo. This is a humanitarian crisis, but it is much more. This is a conflict with no natural boundaries. It threatens our national interests. If it continues, it will push refugees across borders and draw in neighboring countries. It will undermine the credibility of NATO, on which stability in Europe and our own credibility depend. It will likely reignite the historical animosities, including those that can embrace Albania, Macedonia, Greece, even Turkey. These divisions still have the potential to make the next century a truly violent one for that part of the world that straddles Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

Unquestionably, there are risks in military action, if that becomes necessary. U.S. and other NATO pilots will be in harm's way. The Serbs have a strong air defense system. But we must weigh those risks against the risks of inaction. If we don't act, the war will spread. If it spreads, we will not be able to contain it without far greater risk and cost. I believe the real challenge of our foreign policy today is to deal with problems before they do permanent harm to our vital interests. That is what we must do in Kosovo.

Let me just make one other statement about this. One of the things that I wanted to do when I became President is to take advantage of this moment in history to build an alliance with Europe for the 21st century, with a Europe undivided, strong, secure, prosperous, and at peace. That's why I have supported the unification of Europe financially, politically, economically. That is why I've supported the expansion of NATO and a redefinition of its missions.

What are the challenges to our realizing that dream? The challenge of a successful partnership with Russia that succeeds in its own mission; the challenge of a resolution of the difficulties between Greece and Turkey so that Turkey becomes an ally of Europe and the West for the long term; and the challenge of instability in the Balkans. In different ways, all those things are at stake here.

I honestly believe that by acting now we can help to give our children and our grandchildren a Europe that is more united, more democratic, more peaceful, more prosperous, and a better

partner for the United States for a long time to come.

I will say again to Mr. Milosevic, as I did in Bosnia: I do not want to put a single American pilot into the air. I do not want anyone else to die in the Balkans. I do not want a conflict. I would give anything to be here talking about something else today. But a part of my responsibility is to try to leave to my successors and to our country in the 21st century an environment in Europe that is stable, humane, and secure. It will be a big part of America's future.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Hunt [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, as you mentioned, Yugoslav forces seem to be mobilizing for war in Kosovo despite the warnings of NATO airstrikes. After so many threats in the past, why should President Milosevic take this one seriously? And is there a deadline for him to comply? And is it your intention to keep pounding Serb targets until he agrees to your peace terms?

The President. Well, there are several questions there, but let me say, I think he should take this seriously, because we meant—we were serious in Bosnia. And it was the combined impact of NATO's action in Bosnia, plus the reversals they sustained on the ground in fighting, plus the economic embargo, that led them to conclude that peace was the better course.

Now, he says here that this is not like what happened last fall, that this threatens Serbia's sovereignty to have a multinational force on the ground in Kosovo. But he has put that at risk by his decade—and I want to reemphasize that—his decade of denial of the autonomy to which the Kosovars are legally entitled as a part of Serbia.

My intention would be to do whatever is possible, first of all, to weaken his ability to massacre them, to have another Bosnia; and secondly, to do all that I can to induce him to take—it is not my peace agreement. It was an agreement worked out and negotiated and argued over, with all the parties' concerns being taken into account.

I will say again—for the longest time, we did not believe that either side would take this agreement. And the fact that the Kosovar Albanians did it, I think, reflects foresight and wisdom on their part. They did not get everything they wanted. And in a peace agreement, nobody

ever gets everything they want. We've seen it in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, everywhere else.

So it is not my agreement. It is the best agreement that all the parties can get to give us a chance to go forward without bloodshed. I believe also, as I have said publicly to Mr. Milosevic and to the Serbs, it is their best chance to keep Kosovo as a part of Serbia and as a part of Yugoslavia. And so I would hope that the agreement could be accepted, and I'll do what I can to see that it is.

Q. And the deadline, sir—is there one?

The President. I don't want to discuss that. We're working on that. I expect to be working on this all weekend.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Chinese Nuclear Espionage

Q. Mr. President, how long have you known that the Chinese were stealing our nuclear secrets? Is there any trust left between the two nations? And some Republicans are saying that you deliberately suppressed the information from the American people because of the election and your trade goals.

The President. Well, let me try to respond to all those things. First of all, the latter charge is simply untrue. We were notified—Mr. Berger was notified sometime in 1996 of the possibility that security had been breached at the labs, the Energy Department labs where a lot of our nuclear work is done, in the mideighties—not in the 1990's, but in the mideighties—and that there was an investigation being undertaken by the FBI.

Then, sometime in the middle of 1997, he was notified and I was notified that the extent of the security breach might have been quite extensive. So we had the CIA looking into that, the Energy Department looking into that, and the FBI investigation continued with the cooperation, the full cooperation of the Energy Department.

In early 1998 I propounded a Presidential directive designed to improve security at the labs. And as you know, Secretary Richardson's been talking quite a bit in recent days about what has been done since that directive was signed and what continues to be done today.

Now, I think there are two questions here that are related but ought to be kept separate. One is, was there a breach of security in the

mideighties; if so, did it result in espionage? That has not been fully resolved, at least as of my latest briefing.

The second is—there are really three questions, excuse me. The second is, once the executive branch was notified and the investigations began, was everything done in a timely fashion? I am confident that we in the White House have done what we could to be aggressive about this.

Look, if there was espionage against the United States, I will be very upset about it, as I have been every time there has been. And anybody who committed it ought to be punished, just as we went after Mr. Ames, anybody else who committed espionage against the United States.

In an effort to ensure that there was an independent review of this, in addition to whatever work is being done by the Senate and House committees—who have, as you know, received more than a dozen briefings over the course of this investigation, going back to 1996—I asked Senator Rudman, former Republican Senator from New Hampshire, and the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board to review the chronology, to make an assessment, and to make any recommendations about what further action also might need to be taken. So I believe that's the appropriate thing to do.

Now, the third question is, what, if anything, does this mean about our relationship with China? I don't believe that we can afford to be under any illusions about our relationship with China, or any other country, for that matter, with whom we have both common interests and deep disagreements. I believe the course I have followed with China is the one that's best for America: disagreeing where we have serious disagreements, pursuing our common interests where I thought it was in the interest of the United States.

And again, let me say just one or two examples. I think if we hadn't been working with China, China would not have signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention. They would very likely not have refrained from transferring dangerous technology and weaponry to countries that we don't believe should get it. I doubt if they would have helped us as much as they have to try to contain the North Korean nuclear threat, or that we would have had the level of cooperation we had in trying to limit the Asian financial

crisis, which is a serious economic and security problem for our country.

And I think we should just take the facts as they come and do what is best for the American people. But I can say categorically that it never crossed my mind that I should not disclose some inquiry being undertaken by the United States Government for reasons of commercial or other gain. That is not true.

I just think we should always pursue what is in the interest of the United States. And if we think we've got a security problem, we ought to fix it. Plainly, the security was too lax for years and years and years at the labs. And a lot of important changes have been made, and yesterday the Secretary of Energy announced some others.

I think that if anybody did, in fact, commit espionage, it is a bad thing, and we should take appropriate action. But in our dealings with China, we should do quite simply what is in the interest of the American people, and that's what I intend to do.

Yes. And Larry [Larry McQuillan, Reuters], you're next.

Q. Mr. President, if I could follow up on this issue of alleged Chinese spying, you just said that according to your latest briefing, you've not fully resolved the issue of whether Chinese actually spied on the United States. Are you meaning to suggest that you're not certain at this hour whether there was, in fact, Chinese spying?

You also said that you've had the full cooperation of the Energy Department. How do you explain, sir, then, that in April of 1997, the FBI made specific recommendations to the Department of Energy about the need to tighten security and those recommendations were not followed through on for 17 months?

And, finally, sir, you mentioned the spying in the 1980's, or the alleged spying in the 1980's. Can you assure the American people that under your watch, no valuable nuclear secrets were lost?

The President. Well, you asked several questions there. Let me say, first of all, it's my understanding that the Energy Department has fully cooperated with the FBI in investigating the alleged breach in the mideighties, including the person who was suspected. That is my understanding.

On the question of what recommendations were implemented by whom, when, that's what

I've asked for the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and Senator Rudman to review, to report to me on, as well as to make further recommendations.

I can tell you that I have—what I said about the espionage was that it is my understanding that the investigation has not yet determined for sure that espionage occurred. That does not mean that there was not a faulty security situation at the lab. The security procedures were too weak for years and years and years, for a very long time. And I believe that we are aggressively moving to correct that and a lot of changes have been made. I think Secretary Richardson has been quite vigorous in that regard.

The chronology about who did what when, I think it's more important to have an independent analysis of that, which is why I asked the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board to do that.

Now, you asked me another question, which is can I tell you that there has been no espionage at the labs since I have been President. I can tell you that no one has reported to me that they suspect such a thing has occurred.

Larry.

Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, you met this morning with Members of Congress. And afterward, some of them came out and said that they had trouble imagining how you could justify airstrikes in Kosovo unless the Serbs launched a new offensive first. In fact, Senator Nickles actually suggested that it might take a significant massacre before such a move would get public support.

In your mind, does the mere fact that the Serbs refused to sign a peace treaty justify airstrikes? Or do you think they need to—if they took military action, only then you could act?

The President. Well, first, I believe they have already taken provocative actions. And there was, in the very recent past, the massacre at the village that I mentioned in my opening statement. Plus, there is the long unquestioned record of atrocity in Bosnia.

So what we have tried to do all along—and frankly, the Russians have been with us in this; I don't mean that they support military action, but they've been with us in the peace process—is we could see that the same thing that happened in Bosnia and that had happened to some

extent in Kosovo already, and had already produced tens of thousands of refugees in Kosovo, was going to happen there. And it seems to me that if we know that, and if we have a NATO action order predicated on the implementation of the peace process, and the failure to do it triggering reaction, that we ought to do what we can to prevent further atrocities.

I understand what Senator Nickles was saying. I think he was saying that the American public has not seen the sort of atrocities there they saw in Bosnia, that that is not fresh in people's minds. But with all the troops that have been massed, and what we know about their plans and what they have publicly said about them, I would hate to think that we'd have to see a lot of other little children die before we could do what seems to be, to me, clearly the right thing to do to prevent it.

Q. So you would act first then? I mean—

The President. I don't think it's accurate to say we're acting first. I think they have acted first. They have massed their troops. They have continued to take aggressive action. They have already leveled one village in the recent past and killed a lot of innocent people. I do not believe that we ought to have to have thousands more people slaughtered and buried in open soccer fields before we do something. I think that would be unfortunate if we had said we have to have a lot more victims before we can stop what we know is about to happen.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, Cable News Network].

*Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy/
Personal Relationship*

Q. Mr. President, there has been a lot of people in New York State who have spoken with your wife who seemed to be pretty much convinced she wants to run for the Senate seat next year. A, how do you feel about that; do you think she would be a good Senator? And as part of the broader question involving what has happened over the past year, how are the two of you doing in trying to strengthen your relationship, given everything you and she have been through over this past year?

The President. Well, on the second question, I think we're working hard. We love each other very much, and we're working at it.

On the first question, I don't have any doubt that she would be a magnificent Senator. She told me—oh, I don't know—over a year ago, and long before this ever occurred to anybody,

long before we even knew Senator Moynihan wouldn't run for reelection—that she thought we should move to New York when I left the White House, knowing that I would spend a lot of time at home in my library and with the work there, but that we would also establish a home in New York. I don't have any doubt that she really would be a terrific Senator. She knows so much about public policy; she cares so much about the issues, especially those that have a particular impact on New York, including the education and economic issues that would be very important to the people there.

But I also have to tell you, the people she's talking to must know more than I do because I literally don't have a clue. If you ask me today whether I thought it was more likely or not that she would run or not run, I could not give you an answer. I just don't know.

She's doing what I urged her to do, and what I think her instinct was, which is to talk to a lot of people. I think she was, at first, just immensely flattered that so many people wanted her to do it, but she couldn't really believe it. And I think now she's decided to take a look at it. But I don't have any idea what she's going to do. If she wants to do it, I will strongly support it. But I do not know and really have no idea what decision she will ultimately make.

Q. Mr. President—

The President Sarah [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News Service]. [Laughter]

Treatment of the President

Q. Sir, will you tell us why you think people have been so mean to you? Is it a conspiracy? Is it a plan? They treat you worse than they treated Abe Lincoln.

The President. I don't know. You know, one of my favorite jokes—you know that story about the guy that's walking along the Grand Canyon? And he falls off, and he's falling hundreds of feet to certain death, and he reaches out—he sees a little twig on the side of the canyon, and he grabs it. He takes a deep breath, and then all of a sudden he sees the roots of the twig start to come loose. And he looks up in the sky and he said, "Lord, why me? Why me? I pay my taxes. I go to work every day. Why me?" And this thunderous voice says, "Son, there's just something about you I don't like." [Laughter]

Who knows? Let me say this. Let me give you a serious answer. Whatever happens, I have

been very blessed in my life. Most of us leave this life further ahead than we would be if all we got was justice. Most of us get a fair share of mercy, too. And I wouldn't trade anything for having had the opportunity to be President and do the work I've done. So I feel very good about all that.

Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News].

Juanita Broadrick

Q. Mr. President, when Juanita Broadrick leveled her charges against you of rape, in a nationally televised interview, your attorney David Kendall issued a statement denying them. But shouldn't you speak directly on this matter and reassure the public? And if they are not true, can you tell us what your relationship with Ms. Broadrick was, if any?

The President. Well, 5 weeks ago today—5 weeks ago today—I stood in the Rose Garden, after the Senate voted, and I told you that I thought I owed it to the American people to give them 100 percent of my time and to focus on their business and that I would leave it to others to decide whether they would follow that lead. And that is why I have decided, as soon as that vote was over, that I would allow all future questions to be answered by my attorneys. And I think I made the right decision. I hope you can understand it. I think the American people do understand it and support it, and I think it was the right decision.

Scott [Scott Pelley, CBS News].

Q. Can you not simply deny it, sir?

The President. There's been a statement made by my attorney. He speaks for me, and I think he spoke quite clearly.

Go ahead, Scott.

Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, it seems you're on the verge of committing U.S. forces to combat without a clear definition of your threshold for doing so. In January Serb troops massacred 44 civilians. You called it murder and demanded that the Serb forces withdraw. They did not. Last month you said it would be a mistake to extend the deadline, but the deadline passed. Last week your administration said atrocities would be punished, and then after that a bomb went off in a Kosovo market and killed numerous children. What level of atrocities, sir, is a sufficient trigger? What is your threshold?

The President. Well, you've just made my case. I think that the threshold has been crossed. But when I said that the deadline should not be extended, Mr. Pelley, what I said was that those of us who were trying to shepherd the process should not extend the deadline. When the parties themselves asked for a delay, that's an entirely different kettle of fish. The rest of us can't be so patronizing that we can't say to both sides they had no right to ask for a delay. They asked, themselves, for a delay, and I thought it was the right thing to do. I still believe that it was the right thing to do. And it did lead to one side accepting the agreement.

You have made another point, which I did not make in my remarks, but I would like to make, based on the factual statements you made—everything you said was right, all the factual things you've cited—which is that there are basically two grounds on which, in my judgment, NATO could properly take action. One is the fact that we have already said that if the peace agreement were accepted by the Kosovars, but not by the Serbs, we would take action to try to minimize the ability of the Serbs just to overrun and slaughter the Kosovars. That's the first thing I said.

The second thing, what you said is quite right. While our threat of force last year did result in the drastic reduction of the tension and a lot of the refugees going home, it is absolutely true that there have been actions taken since then and forced movements since then that would trigger the other NATO action order to use force. The reason that has not been done, frankly, is because the peace process was going on and we knew that if we could just get an agreement from both sides, that we could end the violence and we wouldn't have to act under either ground.

So from my point of view, as I made clear to the Congress today, I think the threshold for their conduct has already been crossed.

John [John Harris, Washington Post].

Q. Sir, if I might follow up. With the OSCE monitors leaving tonight, if Serbian forces move into Kosovo, will that trigger NATO strikes?

The President. I've already said, I do not believe that—I think that whatever threshold they need to cross has been crossed. I think that, in view of the present state of things, it would be better if I did not say any more about any particular plans we might have.

John.

Books by Former White House Staff Members

Q. Sir, George Stephanopoulos has written a book that contains some tough and fairly personal criticism of you. Earlier, Dick Morris had written a somewhat similar book. How much pain do these judgments by former aides cause you? And do you consider it a betrayal for people to write books on the history of your administration while you're still in office?

The President. Well, like I said last night, I haven't read it. [Laughter] So I have absorbed no pain, since I haven't read either one of the books, but I—or even any articles about it. I don't think that furthers the commitment I made to the American people to focus on their business and their future.

What I will say is that I very much value the loyalty and service I have received from the overwhelming majority of the people who have worked here in the White House and in the Cabinet and in the administration, often under positions of almost unprecedented pressure. And I think that very often that kind of loyalty goes unrecognized, but it is not unappreciated by me.

I remember once, in the difficult days of early 1995, a scholar of the Presidency came here and said that I was a most fortunate person because I had enjoyed the most loyal Cabinet since Thomas Jefferson's second administration. It took my breath away when he said it, but the more I thought about it and the more I read about what had happened between this time and Mr. Jefferson's, the more I realized he was probably accurate. All I can tell you is I am profoundly grateful for the service and the loyalty that I have received, that our cause has received, and I think the American people have benefited quite richly from it.

Mr. Walsh [Ken Walsh, U.S. News & World Report].

Post-Impeachment Impressions

Q. Mr. President, I understand that you don't want to speculate about what your opponents might do now, after the impeachment struggle is over. But I wonder what your feelings are after some period of reflection on the impeachment process, how you were treated, and if you feel resentment, relief, and how you think people will deal with this and see it 10 or 20 years from now.

The President. I think it's best for me not to focus on that now. I think it's best for me to focus on my job. I have nearly 2 years to go. I have an enormous amount to do. I am trying to convince the Congress to adopt what, if they do adopt it, would be the most ambitious set of legislative proposals yet in my tenure, probably even more ambitious than the economic reforms of '93 or the balanced budget of '97 or any of the other things that were done—to save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century, to pay our debt down, to secure our economy for the long run. And it seems to me that anything I say or do, or any time I spend working on that will detract from my ability to be an effective President. And I owe that to the American people, and so that's what I'm going to focus on.

Yes, go ahead.

Personal Savings Rate/Economic Goals

Q. Mr. President, with the Dow crossing the 10,000 mark, the stock market is trading well above any traditional benchmarks. Meanwhile, the personal savings rate has dropped below zero, largely in part, perhaps, because of rising stock prices. Are you worried that the U.S. and the world economies have become too dependent on a stock market that may be overvalued, and if so, is there anything the administration can do about it?

The President. I think what the administration should do is focus on the economic fundamentals at home and focus on fixing what appears to be, in my judgment, the biggest remaining obstacle to continued growth around the world on which our growth depends. I think that the savings rate, the aggregate savings rate of the country is very important for the long-term economic health of America.

I don't think there's any question that the savings rate dropping to zero or negative in the last quarter of last year is in part due to the fact that people feel that they have more wealth. Now, that is not a bad thing that they have more wealth. One of the things that I'm really pleased about is that through retirement funds and other things, there is a more broad sharing of the wealth in America.

But I would like to just say the two things I think I should be working on, and this is something I ask all of you to watch as we debate the specific proposals on Social Security and the specific proposals on Medicare. Because,

keep in mind, I carefully made the Social Security and Medicare proposals I made so that we could fund them and pay down the debt, because if we pay down the debt we increase savings, aggregate savings, in America. And when we do that, we assure the long-term stability of our economy. Lower interest rates means higher investment, more jobs, more businesses, lower mortgage rates, lower home loan rates—excuse me, lower car loan rates, lower college loan rates, lower credit card rates, the whole 9 yards. I think that is very, very important. At a time when we have such a low personal savings rate, it is very important that we get the Government debt down.

Secondly, it will help us to do what we have to do in the rest of the world. If you look at Asia, they have—their situation in a lot of those Asian countries is more like what we went through in the 1930's; that is, they have a collapse of demand. They need more liquidity. They need more funds. They need more investment. They need more activity. If we are not taking money out of the international system but instead paying down our own debt, then there will be more funds that will be able to flow into that part of the world to get the economy going, into Latin America to keep the economy there from sinking under the weight of the Asian problems. So this is very important.

The second thing I'd like to say is, I'm doing my dead-level-best to build on the work we've been doing for the last 2 or 3 years to try to fix some of the problems in the international financial system. Keep in mind that one of the things that caused such great burden in the Asian financial crisis is, these countries didn't get in trouble the way we were used to countries getting in trouble. We were used to countries getting in trouble where they had great big deficits and enormous inflation and everything got out of control.

What happened in these countries were, there were problems with the financial institutions, problems with the rules and the transparency in making loans and making investments. And we're trying to make some changes that we'll try to ratify this summer when we meet in Germany that I think could go a long way toward ensuring that this sort of thing will not happen again in the future.

Now, the markets will determine what happened to the markets. What I think I have to do is give the American people good, sound

fundamentals, pay this debt down, and try to get the financial architecture of the 21st century straightened out.

Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio].

Independent Counsel Statute

Q. Mr. President, your administration has come out against the extension of the independent counsel statute. And yet, when you signed a reauthorization of it 5 years ago, you called it “a force for Government integrity and public confidence.” Do you think now that you made a mistake when you signed that reauthorization 5 years ago? Do you disavow those comments? And if so, do you feel that way because you were the target of Ken Starr's investigation?

The President. Well, because of that, because I was the target, I think it is better for me to refer you to the conclusions reached by the American Bar Association that had the same change of heart, and by the Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General. I believe that their views should be given more weight since they were not the subject of such investigations. And the bar association and the Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General have spoken clearly and have said anything I could say.

Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

Vice President Gore

Q. Mr. President, your Vice President has recently been ridiculed for claiming he invented the Internet and spent his boyhood plowing steep hillsides in Tennessee. I'm wondering what you think of those claims and what advice you'd give him about how to brag on himself without getting in so much trouble. [Laughter]

The President. Well, you know, he came a lot closer to inventing the Internet than I did. [Laughter] I mean—I will say this about it. First of all, you remember he was talking about the information superhighway 20 years ago, and he did have a lot to do with supporting the development of it and supporting the Government research that led to these developments.

Keep in mind, I think when I became President in 1993, there were still only 50 or 60 sites on the Internet, and now there are millions and millions. So what I would like to say is, I don't know exactly what he said or exactly how it's been characterized, but he has been, for 20 years, one of the major architects of

America's progress in technology, and he deserves a lot of appreciation for that. The Telecommunications Act, which I signed, he was heavily involved in the negotiations of our administration's positions. I talked to an executive the other day who said he was absolutely convinced at least 200,000 new high-tech jobs have already been created in America as a result of that act.

As far as his boyhood home, I think—I know what you're saying. You're saying, well, he went to St. Alban's and his daddy was a Senator. But it's also true that he is from east Tennessee, and he did learn to do all those things he did on the farm. I've been there, in Carthage, Tennessee. I've talked to his mother and his father, when he was alive, and other people who were there. And I think it's important that the American people know more about the Vice President's background. I think it's important that they know that he served in the Congress, that he served in the Senate, that before that he was a member of your profession, he was a journalist and served in the Armed Forces in Vietnam. I think it's important also that they know that he was a principal architect of the major economic and other policies of this administration.

And you know, you all will examine his claims, and presumably the claims of everybody else who would like to succeed me, and make your judgments, and the American people will be as well. But the Vice President is, by nature, a reticent person when it comes to talking about his life and his background. And I hope that he will find—for all of us, that's one of the most difficult things about running for public office. You want to be able to share formative experiences in your life or things you've been involved in that you're particularly proud of, and you want to do it without seeming to toot your own horn too much. And it's a challenge.

But I can tell you this. I'll be happy to toot his horn in terms of the years that we've worked together, because there's no question that he has been integral to all the good things that have happened in this administration.

Yes.

Lessons in Truthfulness

Q. Mr. President, many young Americans learn the importance of telling the truth based on an allegory about our very first President; George Washington reportedly said, "I cannot

tell a lie." What do you think your legacy will be about lying? And how important do you think it is to tell the truth, especially under oath?

The President. I think it's very important. And I think that what young people will learn from my experience is that even Presidents have to do that and that there are consequences when you don't.

But I also think that there will be a box score, and there will be that one negative, and then there will be the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times when the record will show that I did not abuse my authority as President, that I was truthful with the American people. And scores and scores of allegations were made against me and widely publicized without any regard to whether they were true or not. Most of them have already been actually proved false. And it's very hard to disprove every false allegation against you. But we have had more success, frankly, than I was afraid we would when we started.

So I would hope that there would be a higher regard for truth telling by all people in public life and all those who report on it. I think it would be a very good thing.

Yes.

Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, you said on Kosovo that if we don't act, the war will spread. That's very similar to what we said when we went into Bosnia several years ago. Our troops are still there. How can you assure the American people that we're not getting into a quagmire in Bosnia?

The President. Well, first of all, in Bosnia we have brought about 70 percent of our troops home. It has not been a quagmire. I told the American people we might well have some loss of life there, but I was convinced we would lose fewer lives and do more good over the long run if we intervened when we did.

I feel the same way about Kosovo. The argument that I tried to make for our putting troops there, if we could reach a peace agreement, was that we were moving in the right direction; the Europeans had been willing to shoulder a much bigger share of the responsibility; we were only going to be asked to put up about, oh, 15 percent of the troops.

But I don't want to get in the position in Kosovo that I was in in Bosnia, where the Pentagon came to me with a very honest estimate of when they thought we could finish. And we

turned out to be wrong about that. We were not able to stabilize the situation as quickly as we thought we could. And this business in Kosovo is not helping any. Keep in mind, there could be some ramifications in Bosnia, as well as in Macedonia, where we have troops.

So I can just tell you that I think that we have tried to limit our involvement, we have tried to limit our mission, and we will conclude it as quickly as we can. I think that in all these cases, you have to ask yourself, what will be the cost and the duration of involvement and the consequences if we do not move. And I have asked myself that question as well.

Again, I would say to you, I would not be doing this if I did not think, number one, whenever we can stop a humanitarian disaster at an acceptable price, we ought to do it. Two, I'm convinced we'll be dragged into this thing under worse circumstances, at greater cost if we don't act. And three, this is, to me, a critical part of the objective I brought to the Presidency of trying to leave office with an alliance between the United States and a more unified, more prosperous, more peaceful, more stable Europe. And this is one of the big three questions still hanging out there, as I said in my opening remarks, and I'm trying to resolve this.

April [April Ryan, American Urban Radio Network]. And then Mr. King [John King, Cable News Network].

Police Brutality/President's Race Initiative

Q. Mr. President, for many years, civil rights leaders have called for White House help in cases of police brutality and police profiling. Now, civil rights leaders say more needs to be done, like opening old brutality cases. Will you listen to those calls and expand your recent proposals allowing that, and when will you receive your completed draft of the race book?

The President. Let me answer the second question first because it's an easier question to dispose of. I have received and gone over a number of drafts of the race book, and I'm fairly pleased with where it's going. And one of the things we'll attempt to address is this whole issue of civil rights and law enforcement. And I would hope that it will be ready sometime in the next couple of months. I hope we'll have it finished, because we're rushing and we're trying to get it done.

Now, on the question of reopening old cases, I have to be candid with you and tell you that

you're the first person who has ever mentioned that to me. I know that there must have been something in the letters about it. I will have to discuss that with our advisers and see what the appropriate thing to do is. But I would like to make a general statement about it, maybe to try to emphasize some of the points I attempted to make in my radio address on Saturday.

I've been involved in law enforcement for more than 20 years now, since I became attorney general of my State in 1977. Even before that, when I was in law school, and later when I was a law professor, I used to spend a lot of time teaching criminal law, criminal procedure, and constitutional law to law enforcement officers. I think that the police of this country know that I honor them and that I support them and that I think what they're doing is profoundly important.

I am very proud of the crime bill we passed in '94, not only because it was—along with the Brady bill—it banned assault weapons, but because it put 100,000 police on the street. And we're ahead of schedule and under budget on that goal. And my present budget called for putting 50,000 more out there in community policing in the highest crime areas of the country.

But I think that—and I am mindful of the fact that when you put on a gun, no matter how well trained you are, you have to be very careful about being under great stress and fear and making mistakes. But it seems to me that just as this administration has strongly supported law enforcement in every way to try to give us a safer country and a country where the law enforcement was closer connected to the community, we have a responsibility to deal with these issues of brutality when they arise and the whole question of policies of profiling, of presuming that people are more likely to be criminals because of their racial background or some other characteristic.

And I hope that our administration, working with civil rights groups, civil liberties groups, and law enforcement groups, will be able to really get a genuine debate on this and a resolution of it that is satisfactory, because we cannot have the kind of country we want if people are afraid of those folks who are trying to protect them.

Now, but in terms of opening the old cases, I just have to look at that. I don't know enough about the facts to give you an informed opinion.

Mr. King. And then Mr. Cannon [Carl Cannon, National Journal]. Go ahead.

Russia

Q. Mr. President, the Russian Prime Minister will be here next week seeking your support for another very large installment in international economic assistance. Yet, leading officials in your own administration say there has been a retreat, if not a reversal, in the pace of market reforms in Russia. Are you prepared to support the new installment of IMF funding? And are you on the verge of an agreement with Russia regarding its nuclear transfers to Iran?

The President. Well, first, let me say that Mr. Primakov is coming here at an important time. And I have urged all of us in the administration, our economic team and our political team, to be acutely aware of the fact that the first thing he had to do was to try to stabilize his own situation when he took office.

In terms of the economic reforms that he needs to pursue, he needs some help from the Duma. And I would be a poor person to be unsympathetic with a man who is having trouble getting a certain proposal through a Congress. But I think it is important, if we are going to help Russia—and we should; we should do everything we can—that we do things that are actually likely to make a difference, instead of things that will undermine confidence over the long run in Russia and in the ability of others to invest there.

So I'm hoping we can reach an agreement which will permit the IMF program to go forward, because I think that is important. But it will only work if the money doesn't turn around and leave the country as soon as it's put in.

In other words, that's what—what we have to persuade the Russians of is that we're not trying to impose some economic theory on them, we're not trying to impose more—I don't mean just we, the United States; I mean we, the international financial institutions, of which the United States is a part—and that we want to see the back wages paid. We want to see the standard of living of the Russian people rise. We want to see more investment go in there. But there have got to be some changes, some of which require legislative action in the

Duma in order for this to work. Otherwise, even if we put the money in, it will leave.

And so that's what we're working on. And I'm hopeful that we'll also get a resolution of the second issue you mentioned, and I'm optimistic about that.

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Mr. President—

[Laughter]

The President. I said Mr. Cannon could go next. I want to honor my commitment there. Oh yeah, yeah, I forgot Wendell [Wendell Goler, Fox News Channel]—go ahead. Wendell's next.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. We're jumping around a lot, and I apologize, but I'd like to return to China for just a minute. Officials with your administration have said that China's size, that it's so big, it's just difficult to ignore, that you can't just pretend they don't exist. But in terms of human rights, that merely underscores the magnitude of the problem. That's a billion people who don't have freedom of worship, freedom of the press, the right to peaceably assemble, the right to redress their government, the right to form their government. And you often talk about values when you talk about public policy. Does our relationship with China now reflect your values?

The President. I believe our policy toward China does. Our relationship is not perfect, but I think it is the correct course.

First of all, I believe that the principal problem, human rights problem in China is the absence of political rights and the civil rights associated with them. There are some examples of religious—denial of religious freedom. There's also a lot of religious expression there. You remember, I went to church in China, to a church that has regular services every week, whether we're there or not.

And there is the special problem of Tibet, which I engaged President Jiang about in our press conference and on which we continue to work.

So to me, it's very important, and we have to continue to press ahead on that. I think the question is, what is the best way for the United States to maximize the chances that China will become more open in terms of political and civil rights, that any vestiges of religious oppression will be dropped, that Tibet will have a chance as soon as possible to preserve its unique

culture and identity? I think—and all these questions like that.

And it seems to me that the best way to do it is to work with the Chinese where it's in our interest to do so and to frankly and forthrightly state our differences where they exist. If we were to reach a point where we were convinced that no agreement we made ever would be kept, where no progress could ever be made, then I would ask the American people to reassess that. But I believe that the evidence is—and I cited some specific examples earlier in this press conference—the evidence is that the Chinese would like a constructive relationship with us.

Keep in mind, the same sort of debate that's going on in this country, there is a mirror image of that debate going on in China today. And there are people in China that are not at a press conference, but they're saying, "You know, the Americans cannot exist without an enemy; you know they've got to have an enemy; they've got to have somebody to dominate the world against. And what they really want to do is to contain us; they don't want us to flower economically; they don't want us to have influence, even if it's nonaggressive influence. And therefore, we need to build up our military. Therefore, we need to fight them at every turn; we need to oppose them at every turn."

These sorts of debates are going on in their country. And what I have said to President Jiang, to Premier Zhu, to everyone who is involved on the trip—and I look forward to the Premier's trip to the United States—is that we still have to define what kind of future we're going to have, how we're going to share it, what is the proper arena for competition, what is the proper arena for cooperation. And we have to judge China as we would judge anyone else, and as we would expect to be judged, by our actions.

What you have here is a relationship that is profoundly important, very large and inherently frustrating because it has many different elements, some of which we like, some of which we don't. And it requires a constant evaluation to see whether we're on the right track, whether we're doing the right things, whether we're going in the right direction. And because it doesn't fit within neat or calming categories, it can be a source of difficulty.

But I believe that I've done the right thing for America over the long run by trying to estab-

lish a positive but wide-open—I mean eyes wide open, with no illusions—relationship with China where we explicitly put our differences on the table; where we pursue them to a point of resolution if possible; where we don't give up on what we believe if we can't resolve them; and where we do work on the things that we have in common. I believe this is the right thing to do. But it is inherently frustrating at the points of difference.

Wendell, go ahead.

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. This is the last question warning.

Chinese Nuclear Espionage

Q. Thank you, Joe. Mr. President, you said just a short while ago that no one has reported to you they suspect Chinese espionage at U.S. nuclear labs during your administration, sir. But sources tell Fox News, and we are reporting this evening, that China stole the technology for electromagnetic pulse weapons from several nuclear labs during your first term in office, sir, and that the Chinese have successfully tested these weapons in China. And the sources also say that the administration, at least, was aware of this.

Can you tell us, sir, were you not personally aware? Are you concerned about this? And what will be your administration's response to the report?

The President. Well, you didn't say what the source of what they sold was. You say they "stole," is that the word you used?

Q. Yes, sir, the technology for EMP weapons, from 4 of the 11 nuclear labs.

The President. To the best of my knowledge—and, you know, I try to—not only do I spend a great deal of time every day on national security measures, I try to prepare for these things. To the best of my knowledge, no one has said anything to me about any espionage which occurred by the Chinese against the labs during my Presidency.

I will—if you report that, then I'll do my best to find out what the facts are, and I'll tell you what they are. And if I have misstated this in any way because I don't remember something, then I will tell you that. But I don't believe that I have forgotten.

Yes, ma'am. One more.

*Treasury Secretary/Federal Reserve Board
Chairman*

Q. Mr. President, can you put to rest rumors—you were talking earlier about the stability of your Cabinet. Can you put to rest rumors on Wall Street that Treasury Secretary Rubin is going to be leaving soon? Has he had any discussion about a departure with you? And in a related question, have you had any conversations with Fed Chairman Greenspan about his reappointment?

The President. The answer to the second question is, no, I have not. You should draw no conclusion about that one way or the other. It's just not come up.

And I have not discussed Mr. Rubin's plans personally with him in quite a long while, maybe a year—I can't remember; it's been a good long while. He has served well. He has worked hard. I hope he will stay. Goodness knows, he's given his country a great deal, and he's served us very well. But I do not know what his specific plans are. I'm aware of all the rumors, but we've not had a conversation about it.

Yes, ma'am, in the back. You had your hand up for a long time.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, I'm a Bosnian journalist. And my country before war was almost unknown; during the war, for a long time neglected. And now we feel a little bit forgotten, if you don't mind, sir. You're going to go to Slovenia soon, and you're talking about European security and stability as a priority of U.S. foreign policy. I'd like to know, and I believe that Bosnians would appreciate that, if you can say if you have any new initiative to boost a peace process in Bosnia. Bosnian dream of a

united country is dying slowly—country is dying slowly. So if you're going to change some people, as New York Times reported, or the State Department hints, sir, what would be your next step in Bosnia, sir?

The President. The Bosnian peace process has been put under stress recently because the Brcko decision was made and had to be made within the timeframe in which it was made. And I think the most important thing now is that we try to get beyond that and go on with the business of building the common institutions and trying to get more economic opportunity there.

I'm very concerned that the politicians who still want to chip away at the idea of a united Bosnian nation will be able to do it principally because we're not able to show the benefits of peace to ordinary citizens. It seems to me that is the most important thing we can do, once we stabilize the situation in the aftermath of the Brcko decision. And I think we're on the way to doing that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 171st news conference began at 4:01 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); convicted spy Aldrich Ames; former Senator Warren B. Rudman, Chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board; David E. Kendall, the President's personal attorney; Prime Minister Yevgeniy Primakov of Russia; and President Jiang Zemin and Premier Zhu Rongji of China. The President also referred to Presidential Decision Directive 61.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Reception
March 19, 1999

Thank you very much. You know, this is my second public event today. I earlier did a press conference, and I like this a lot better. I want to join all of you in thanking Steve Grossman for a job superlatively well done. Thank you, Steve. Thank you, Barbara. Thank you for being there. He's come a long way since he took over

the leadership of the Democratic Party, thanks to all of you, and I appreciate that.

I want to thank Roy Romer, Mayor Archer, Loretta Sanchez, and all of our other officers who are here. I want to thank Carol Pensky and Len Barrack and those who are going out. I want to thank Joe Andrew, Andy Tobias, Beth

Dozoretz. I want to thank Gloria Molina, Lottie Shackelford, Linda Chavez-Thompson, Joan Menard. I want to thank all of you who are members of the DNC.

I want to thank the people from our administration who are here and those for whom they stand. We have Aida Alvarez, our Small Business Administrator; Janice Lachance, the Director of OPM; John Podesta, my Chief of Staff; and many people from the White House; and Buddy MacKay, the former Lieutenant Governor of Florida and our new Special Envoy to Latin America. Thank you all for what you have done.

And I want to say a special word of thanks to the Vice President for being my partner and being our leader in everything we have done together. This country is a better place in the last 6 years, because we've done the right things, and most of them would not have been possible if it hadn't been for the partnership that I have enjoyed with Al Gore, and I thank him very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, I will be fairly brief tonight. I want to make about three points, as clearly and forcefully as I can. First of all, you know what we can do now when we're united and when we're clear and when we take a message to the American people that resonates with them. You know that no one believed that we could win seats in the House in 1998. It had only been done in a midterm election twice in this century, twice since the Civil War, and not in the second term of a President since 1822.

You know something that never gets written when people mention this: We did it while being outspent by \$100 million. Equally remarkable was the fact that we did not lose seats in the Senate, even though we had more Senate seats up and more people retiring, and just a few months before the election the other side was saying they would pick up between four and six Senate seats and probably end the threat of a filibuster so they could have all their way. You did that. We did that together.

And I want to say two things about that. First, we can do even better next time if—if—we go out and get good candidates. And I want to give exhibit A here for Joe Andrew: the Governor of Indiana, Frank O'Bannon, is here, and he won against all the odds in Indiana because he is a good leader; he is a good candidate. He was doing the right things. He succeeded a man who was doing the right things.

The Democratic Party and the Republican Party don't mean a great deal to a lot of people most of the time. They show up on election day; they want to look at a flesh-and-blood man or woman, and they want to know what does this person stand for—what is going to happen if I give that person my vote? And so I say to you, we have to be about the business of asking more and more people to join our ranks and to put themselves on the line.

If you live in a State where there's a Senate seat up, you shouldn't rest until you believe you have the best people asking for the Democratic nomination. You shouldn't rest until you have the best people asking for the Democratic nomination to run for the House of Representatives, to run for the open Governorships, to run in the legislative races, to run in all these races. You cannot beat somebody with nobody.

We have wonderful people in this country who believe as we do, who have the same dreams for America. We have got to persuade them to put themselves on the line. It's not easy to run for public office. You know, the person that I have shared my home with for over 20 years now said to me the other day, as she was doing all these calls to people in New York—I have to reiterate my statement at the press conference; I have no idea what she's going to do. And I don't. [Laughter] But she laughed at me the other night. We were talking about this, and she said, "You know, this is a lot harder when it's you instead of somebody you're helping." [Laughter] And so I say to all of you, I understand what a sacrifice it is to seek public office. And having run several times, and having been defeated twice, I can tell you that it's not fun to lose. But you can't win if you're afraid to lose.

And so when the Democratic committee leaves here with a new set of leaders—I'm glad we're putting in a slate unopposed, but we won't be so fortunate in the Senate races, the House races, the Governors races, the legislative races. And as I repeatedly tell anyone who ever asks me, the last honest draft of a politician for public office was when the Romans took Cincinnatus out of the field over 2,000 years ago. [Laughter] Ever since then, people more or less have to ask for the job.

So go home inspired by what we have done and what we're fighting for and what we stand for, and make sure that we show up in all these elections. You can do that.

The second point I want to make is this: We won the elections in 1998 because we had a message for the country. It wasn't simply because the American people disapproved of what the other party was doing; it was because we said, "Vote for us, and we will save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century; we will be for a Patients' Bill of Rights; we will be for 21st century schools with more teachers, smaller classes, modernized facilities; and we will do the things necessary to keep our economy growing." And the American people said, "It sounds good to me. That's what I want to be part of."

And so for the next 2 years, we are going to be working as hard as we can and in good faith with the Republicans for principled compromise that reflects our values and our positions to honor the commitments we made in 1998. Make no mistake about it: We have to be caught trying hard to do exactly what we promised to do.

So if anybody asks you, if anybody asks you what the President said when you were in Washington, you tell them he said we're going to save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century. We're going to pay the debt of this Government down to insure the health of the American economy for our children and our grandchildren for 20 or 30 years. We're going to pass a good Patients' Bill of Rights, not another patients' bill of goods, like—one more time—the other party voted out of committee yesterday, that leaves out 100 million people and doesn't guarantee you the specialist or emergency room treatment you deserve and won't protect your rights even if they're written into law.

Tell them we're going to fight for more teachers and smaller classes and modernized schools. Tell them we're going to stick up for the environment, everything from global warming to the livability agenda to make all of our communities more livable in the 21st century, that the Vice President did so much to develop.

And tell them one more thing: the Democratic Party is determined to go into the 21st century taking everybody along. We did it in 1993 when we passed, by the narrowest of margins, the deficit reduction plan that began our efforts to double our investment in education and training; that gave tax cuts to 15 million working families; that did more than any budget bill had in a long time to create empowerment

opportunities for ordinary citizens, including our empowerment zone initiative that Mayor Archer has done so much with in Detroit, and that we see revitalizing urban and rural areas all across America.

And in this budget, we have the next big step. We have, in this budget, something—I want everybody to go home and talk about this. There's not a State in America that doesn't have a community somewhere that has not yet fully participated in this economic growth. And if you want America to keep growing, we have to find new markets, and we ought to find them here at home. There are cities; there are rural areas; there are Native American reservations; there are places from Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta, to south Texas, to East Los Angeles, and all across the northern tier of this country that haven't been a part of that.

Here's what our initiative does: It uses tax credits and loan guarantees and other incentives to give Americans the same incentive to invest in America we give them to invest overseas. It's high time we did it, and I want you to help us pass it.

And finally, let me just say one last point. In the last 2 days, we have had amazing things happening under this tent. Night before last, we celebrated Saint Patrick's Day, and I gave the Medal of Freedom to George Mitchell of Maine for his role in helping us to promote peace in Northern Ireland. Last night the widow of Prime Minister Rabin, his daughter, his granddaughter were here. And they said they were going to dedicate a garden at the Rabin Center in honor of Hillary and me, and they gave us a little award.

The award is not important. The important thing is that the people of Israel were recognizing once again that the people of the United States, and that this administration—not just me but all of us—are irrevocably committed to the proposition that people can live in peace together in the Middle East if they can live in justice and fairness together in the Middle East.

I just had a distinguished group of American women into the White House to see me, to talk about the problems of the oppression of women and girls by the Taliban in Afghanistan—over one million refugees in Pakistan. America cares about those women. America cares about the little girls. America cares about the male sons of the widows who have been

plundered there. That's what your country stands for.

The First Lady's not here tonight because she's in the Vice President's home State, at a dedication of Alex Haley's farm, to remember the roots of 30 million African-Americans.

Why do I say this? Because when you go home, and people ask you why you're a Democrat, I want you to tell them that you're a Democrat because you believe that every responsible person in this country should have opportunity, the chance to develop, the chance to grow, the chance to live out their dreams, and because you believe that every individual can only achieve it if we are committed to doing it for each other together. That we believe in a profound way in the idea of community—not some sappy, purely altruistic idea, but that we ourselves cannot have the lives we want unless we give our brothers and sisters around this country, and like-minded people all around the world, the same opportunity.

I am so grateful that I have had 6 years, and have nearly 2 more, to fight for those opportunities and to fight for that idea of community. That is what distinguishes the Democratic Party. It is what has made America great. In some ways, it is what makes us today not only the party—as I have repeatedly said—of Jefferson and Jackson and Roosevelt and Kennedy and Johnson but also the party, today, of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. We embody the best in America and in America's future.

So go home full of energy. Have a great meeting tomorrow. Have your uncontested election. And then go home and find Democrats

who will contest the elections of 2000. Go home and tell people we mean to do what we said in 1998, and the Democratic Party is in Washington fighting to save Social Security and Medicare, to pay the debt down, to keep the economy going, and to take everybody into the 21st century. And go home and tell them you're proud to be a part of the oldest party in the entire world, because it believes in opportunity for all and a community in which we all help each other to be what God meant us to be.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the following Democratic National Committee officials: Steve Grossman, national chair, and his wife, Barbara; former Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI, general cochair-designate; Representative Loretta Sanchez, general cochair-designate; Carol Pensky, treasurer; Leonard Barrack, national finance chair; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair-designate; Andy Tobias, treasurer-designate; Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair-designate; and Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina, Lottie Shackelford, and Linda Chavez-Thompson, vice chairs. The President also referred to Massachusetts State Democratic Party Chair Joan M. Menard, president, Association of State Democratic Chairs; Senator Evan Bayh, former Governor of Indiana; former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multi-party talks in Northern Ireland; and Leah Rabin, widow of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel, her daughter, Dahlia Rabin-Pelossof, and her granddaughter, Noa Pelossof.

The President's Radio Address

March 20, 1999

Good morning. Today I want to talk with you about the next important steps we can take to rid our streets of gun violence and to make our communities even safer for our families. I'm proud to be joined today in the Oval Office by Attorney General Janet Reno, Treasury Under Secretary Jim Johnson, ATF Director John Magaw, Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore, Police Chief Jerry Oliver of Richmond,

and Chief Robert Olson of Minneapolis, Congressman Anthony Weiner, as well as four of our United States attorneys who are leading this fight across America.

Over the last 6 years we've worked hard to fight crime, putting in place a strategy of more prevention, stricter enforcement, tougher punishment. We funded more than 92,000 police officers for 11,000 communities, taken more

criminals and deadly assault weapons off the street, and with Brady background checks, stopped more than a quarter of a million handguns from falling into the hands of convicted felons and other prohibited persons.

As a result, the crime rate has dropped by more than 20 percent, to the lowest level in a generation. Gun crimes have declined by more than 25 percent. Gun murders have fallen by a third. Slowly but surely, neighborhoods once abandoned at the crack of gunfire and the wail of ambulance sirens are coming alive with the sounds of children playing freely in the streets.

This is indeed encouraging news. But we must do more. In 1997, 14,000 people were murdered by guns. While the numbers are declining, any child caught in the crossfire of a gang shootout, or a police officer struck down by a criminal's bullet, or a store clerk murdered in a robbery is one tragedy too many.

That is why today I'm directing Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and Attorney General Reno to use every available tool to increase the prosecution of gun criminals and shut down illegal gun markets. I'm asking them to work closely with local, State, and Federal law enforcement officials and to report back to me with a plan to reduce gun violence by applying proven local strategies to fight gun crime nationwide.

Look at what Federal prosecutors and the ATF are doing in Richmond, Virginia, in an effort they call Project Exile. Under the leadership of U.S. Attorney Helen Fahey, Project Exile has used the threat of tough Federal statutes—statutes that require stiff sentences and deny bail to offenders—to reduce gun crime and take

serious gun criminals off the street. And gun murders are down in Richmond by a remarkable 41 percent.

My balanced budget will help to hire more Federal prosecutors and ATF agents so we can crack down on even more gun criminals and illegal gun trafficking all across America.

After 6 years of hard work, America is winning the war against crime. But we're a long way from declaring victory. We must keep even more guns from falling into the wrong hands by requiring background checks at gun shows and banning violent juvenile offenders from owning guns for life. And I ask you to support our 21st century policing initiative to give law enforcement the manpower, the high-tech tools, and the prevention strategies they need to keep us safe.

Unfortunately, the Republicans in Congress have proposed a budget that would dramatically cut back our investment in community policing, just when we're trying to increase it. That would be a big mistake. We must move forward in our fight for safer streets and safer families.

Over the years, the proliferation of guns in our streets, of criminals packing pistols instead of switchblades, have made crime deadlier than ever. Guns have magnified the malevolence of crime. That is why disarming criminals has been and must continue to be a top crime-fighting priority. Let none of us rest until every American is safe from gun violence.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Memorandum on Deterring and Reducing Gun Crime

March 20, 1999

*Memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury,
the Attorney General*

Subject: Deterring and Reducing Gun Crime

Since the start of my Administration, we have developed and implemented a number of effective national strategies to reduce crime. We have provided funds to over 11,000 communities to hire and deploy more than 92,000 local law enforcement officers; we have prevented more

than a quarter of a million illegal handgun sales through Brady background checks; and we have developed a coordinated attack on the illegal sources of guns used in crime. Dozens of other smart, tough, crime-fighting strategies have been put in place throughout the country through the leadership and dedicated efforts of State and local police and prosecutors, Mayors, U.S. Attorneys, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), and community leaders.

During this period, the Nation's crime rate has dropped by more than 20 percent, and crime committed with guns has dropped 27 percent. In certain communities, where Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials have worked with other community leaders, violent crime rates have gone down even more dramatically. In Boston, Massachusetts, for example, when law enforcement and community leaders worked together to reduce violence by youth gangs, they reduced the number of homicides among youth by 70 percent in just 2 years. In Minneapolis, Minnesota, effective law enforcement and prevention efforts conducted by public-private partnerships have reduced homicides by 30 percent and summertime homicides by 75 percent. And in Richmond, Virginia, effective and coordinated law enforcement, including stepped up enforcement of gun crimes through the program known as Project Exile, has reduced the homicide rate significantly.

Still, the number of people killed with firearms remains unacceptably high. More than 14,000 people were murdered with guns in the United States in 1997. We must redouble our efforts to deter and further reduce gun crime—and work to make every neighborhood and community free of gun violence.

I therefore direct you to develop an integrated firearms violence reduction strategy that draws on the proven measures and innovative approaches being demonstrated by communities throughout the country. We know that gun violence issues differ in each community, and no single program or strategy will be right for every community. Therefore, in developing the strategy, you should consult closely with U.S. Attorneys and ATF Special Agents in Charge, as well as other Federal, State, and local law enforcement, elected officials, and other leaders. The strategy should consider the special needs of local communities and strike an appropriate balance between Federal and State law enforce-

ment. I ask that the strategy specifically include elements to:

- (1) Increase investigation and prosecution of significant firearms violations, including illegal possession, use, and trafficking of guns, through innovative programs such as Project Exile and Boston's Operation Ceasefire;
- (2) Expand comprehensive "crime gun" tracing, analysis, and mapping; increase use of ballistics identification technology; and coordinate use of crime gun information to identify illegal gun markets, gun "hot spots," and illegal gun traffickers;
- (3) Strengthen the coordination of law enforcement and regulatory enforcement efforts to ensure compliance with all applicable laws by federally licensed gun dealers and prospective gun purchasers;
- (4) Implement targeted deterrence of violent offenders through (a) improved coordination with probation and parole officials supervising such offenders, and (b) swift and certain punishment for those found to have violated the conditions of their parole or probation; and
- (5) Promote problem-solving analysis and innovative strategies to work closely with community members to identify gun criminals, remove weapons in the hands of juveniles, search for and seize crime guns, and increase the public's knowledge of their community's gun-related crime and violence problem.

Finally, I direct you to make recommendations on how best to allocate Federal resources to support the goals of the strategy you develop. I further direct you to provide me with your report on this integrated firearms violence reduction strategy within 90 days of the date of this memorandum.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks on the Situation in Kosovo March 22, 1999

I want to give you a brief update about the situation in Kosovo and make a few comments.

It is clear that Serb forces are now engaged in further attacks on Kosovar civilians. Already more than 40,000 Serb security forces are poised

in and around Kosovo, with additional units on the way. These actions are in clear violation of commitments Serbia made last October when we obtained the cease-fire agreement.

As part of our determined efforts to seek a peaceful solution, I asked Ambassador Holbrooke to see President Milosevic and make clear the choice he faces. That meeting is either going on now or should start in the next few minutes. If President Milosevic continues to choose aggression over peace, NATO's military plans must continue to move forward.

I will be in close consultation with our NATO Allies and with Congress. Over the weekend, I met with my national security team to discuss the military options. I also spoke with other NATO leaders by telephone. There is strong unity among the NATO Allies. We all agree that we cannot allow President Milosevic to continue the aggression with impunity. I have also sent a letter to President Yeltsin about the urgency of the situation.

Our objective in Kosovo remains clear: to stop the killing and achieve a durable peace that restores Kosovars to self-government, the self-government that President Milosevic stripped away from them a decade ago. We and our NATO Allies, and Russia, all agree that this is the right goal. The Kosovar Albanians have accepted this course. Only President Milosevic and Serbia stand in the way of peace. Serbia's mounting aggression must be stopped.

Since the adjournment of the peace talks in Paris less than a week ago, an estimated 30,000 more Kosovars have fled their homes. The number now exceeds more than a quarter of a million people, one out of every eight people in Kosovo. Many of them now are in neighboring Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro, all of which could be quickly drawn into this conflict. So could other nations in the region, including Bosnia where allied determination ended a terrible war, and our allies Greece and Turkey.

Seeking to end this tragedy in Kosovo and finding a peaceful solution is the right thing to do. It is also the smart thing to do, very much in our national interests, if we are to leave a stable, peaceful, and democratic Europe to our children. We have learned a lot of lessons in the last 50 years. One of them surely is that we have a stake in European freedom and security and stability. I hope that can be achieved by peaceful means. If not, we have to be prepared to act.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, upon his return from Camp David, MD. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Special Envoy Richard C. Holbrooke; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia.

Remarks at the Legislative Convention of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

March 23, 1999

The President. I ought to be late more often. [Laughter] Well, let me thank you for the wonderful welcome. And Gerry, Bill, Glenn, Charles, Caryl, ladies and gentlemen, it was—it's hard to believe—it's been 7 years ago when I first began talking to Gerry and Bill and other members of your union. I spent about 5 minutes with Gerry McEntee, and I thought, boy, this is going to be a hard sell. [Laughter] But I also thought to myself, I believe this guy would be for me; he'd stick. And boy does he stick. [Laughter] I tell you.

Even though I was a dues-paying member of AFSCME when I was Governor, I never—therefore, I knew who Gerry McEntee was, you know, and I sort of felt like I was getting my money's worth. [Laughter] There are a lot of things I didn't know—like, I never knew why green was the official color of AFSCME, until I saw the smile on McEntee's face on Saint Patrick's Day. [Laughter] And I realized that was not a democratically arrived-at decision. [Laughter] And being Irish, I liked it that way.

In a way, public employees and the Irish are a lot alike. They're integral to everything that's

really important in our country, and both have had to fight real hard to get the necessary respect in the United States. And so I came here also to say thank you, thank you, thank you. I should be thanking you, not the other way around. All I did was what I told you I would do, but if you hadn't helped me, I wouldn't have been here in the first place. And I thank you.

I would also like to remind you that we have almost 25 percent of the life of this administration still left, and it ought to be the best part for America if we do the right things.

Now, you all know why I'm late today. I've been in a meeting with a very large number of Members of Congress in both Houses and both parties, including the leadership, to talk about the problem in Kosovo. And one of the Members who was there, a man from my part of the country, he said, "You know, Mr. President, I support your policy, but most of my folks couldn't find Kosovo on a map. They don't know where it is, and they never thought about it before it appeared on CNN. And you need to tell people what you're doing there and why—why it's important to us."

So I need to talk about that today. But I also need to talk about the domestic issues that we're working on, about Social Security, about Medicare, about education. And so I would like to begin by going back to 1992 and to try to ask you to do something that most of the time I can't persuade the American people to do, which is to think about our foreign policy and our domestic policy as two sides of the same coin in a world that is growing smaller and smaller and more and more interconnected.

Most Americans think about politics in terms of putting bread on the table, educating their children, owning a home, being able to have health care, looking forward to a secure retirement, dealing maybe with environmental issues that are immediate and real, like clean air and clean water. And we're all that way about everything, even our own jobs. The further something gets away from us, the harder it is for us to imagine that it is directly important to us.

But when I ran for President in 1992, one of the things I said over and over and over again was that in the 21st century the dividing line between foreign and domestic policy would blur. Now, I'd like to just take you back 7 years to what ideas I brought to this job, talk a little bit about this matter in Kosovo, and then move

into the domestic issues that we're so concerned about that are being debated in the Congress now.

I ran for President in 1991 and 1992 because I believed our country lacked a unifying vision and strategy for 21st century America. And I knew what I wanted America to look like and to be like. I wanted an America where the American dream was alive and well for every citizen responsible enough to work for it. With all of our increasing diversity in America, I wanted an America that really reaffirmed the idea of community, of belonging; the idea that none of us can pursue our individual destinies as fully on our own as we can when we want our neighbors to do well, too; and that there is some concrete benefit to the idea of community that goes beyond just feeling good about living in a country where you're not discriminated against because of some condition or predisposition or anything else that has nothing to do with the law and nothing to do with how your neighbors live their lives; and that what we have in common is more important than what divides us.

I still believe that's going to be one of the major questions facing this country in the 21st century, which is why I devoted so much time to that initiative on race, and why I keep fighting for passage of the hate crimes legislation, the employment nondiscrimination legislation—all these things. Because I am telling you, you look all over the world—that's what Kosovo's about—look all over the world. People are still killing each other out of primitive urges because they think what is different about them is more important than what they have in common.

So I wanted a country where opportunity was real for every responsible citizen. I wanted a country where community was real and we were growing closer together, not further apart. And I wanted America to be a leading force in the world for peace and freedom and prosperity in a world that was becoming more of a community, where we were sharing more burdens and responsibilities.

And so I set to work. And at home, I had an economic policy that was partly domestic and partly foreign. The economic policy was: fix the budget, get the deficit down, get interest rates down, get investment up, create jobs, grow the economy, invest in education and technology, so everybody could be a part of it. And, since

we were only 4 percent of the world's population, with 22 percent of its income, we had to sell more around the world if we wanted to keep growing our economy. And we worked hard at that for 6 years now with, I think, nearly everybody would admit, reasonably good results, although we have more to do. And I'll say more about that in a minute.

In foreign policy, what I wanted to do is to say, look, okay, the cold war is over, but we're more interconnected with all parts of the world than ever before. How are we going to create a world that is more peaceful, prosperous, and free?

Now, one of the things that we had to do was to look at Europe. Why? Because the whole 20th century is, in large measure, the story of slaughter that started in Europe. World War I started in the Balkans—in Bosnia, next door to Kosovo. World War II engulfed the Balkans. The cold war saw the Balkans, where Kosovo is, at the edge of the Communist empire and the clash of Slavic civilization with European Muslims and others. Now, if we have learned anything after the cold war, and our memories of World War II, it is that if our country is going to be prosperous and secure, we need a Europe that is safe, secure, free, united, a good partner with us for trading—they're wealthy enough to buy our products—and someone who will share the burdens of taking care of the problems of the world.

We're working hard to have that kind of Europe. I supported the union of the European countries, economically, the union of Germany. I supported very strongly the expansion of NATO. Next month we're going to have all these countries come here; we'll have the largest number of world leaders ever assembled in Washington, DC, next month for the 50th anniversary of the NATO summit. And we're bringing in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

And I supported the idea that the United States, Canada, and our European allies had to take on the new security challenges of Europe of the 21st century, including all these ethnic upheavals on their border. Why? Because if this domestic policy is going to work, we have to be free to pursue it. And if we're going to have a strong economic relationship that includes our ability to sell around the world, Europe has got to be a key. And if we want people to share our burdens of leadership with all the

problems that will inevitably crop up, Europe needs to be our partner.

Now, that's what this Kosovo thing is all about. And so I want to talk to you about Kosovo today, but just remember this: It's about our values. What if someone had listened to Winston Churchill and stood up to Adolph Hitler earlier? How many people's lives might have been saved? And how many American lives might have been saved? What if someone had been working on the powder keg that exploded World War I, which claimed more lives than World War II for most European countries. What would have happened? What if we had not been there in the cold war, when it cost Americans a lot of money to go over there and to say, okay, we're not going to let communism go any further—what do you think would have happened? And wouldn't we have been drawn into another war that would have been a shooting war? And wouldn't more Americans have died? And wouldn't it have cost even more?

What I want you to think about—you may not know a great deal about Kosovo, and I'll try to talk a little about that today—but I want you to see this in terms of the big picture. I want our children to have a Europe—I want this young girl here to grow up in a world that is safer and more secure and more prosperous. To get that done, we need a Europe that is undivided, democratic, and free. I want us to live in a world where we get along with each other, with all of our differences, and where we don't have to worry about seeing scenes every night for the next 40 years of ethnic cleansing in some part of the world.

I have worked against ethnic and religious warfare in Africa, in Asia, in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland. But today its most virulent manifestation is right there in Europe. So that is what I am trying to do here. I don't ask you to agree with every decision I make. I am responsible for it; if I turn out to be wrong, I bear the responsibility for that. But you have to understand what the big picture here is.

There are three big obstacles to an undivided, democratic, free Europe that is totally secure. One is, we've got to build the right kind of partnership with Russia, and we've got to help them come back economically. They have kept their democracy alive. They are suffering terribly, economically. Some of it, of course, is like everybody else's problems. Some of it's their own doing, some of it beyond their control.

We've got a big stake in that. They've got 40,000 scientists that were part of their cold war arsenal. We'd like them to be doing peaceful, good things, not bartering their services to other countries to cause trouble. So it's in our immediate interest, and they could be great partners for us, economically and otherwise.

The second is the problem of Greece and Turkey. Why should that matter to you, unless you're Greek or Turk? Because Turkey has been a moderate Muslim state, a buffer between the West and radical, revolutionary—and I think, perverted—theories of Islam that are bubbling up in the Middle East, which is right next door. And we've got a lot of difficulties working all that out. We've got to keep working until we get it done.

And the third is all this turmoil in the Balkans, where all of it comes together. And I'll try to explain it, so you can understand what we're trying to do. But there is a humanitarian reason why I believe we need to take a stand there; there is a practical reason. If we don't do it now, we'll have to do it later. More people will die, and it will cost more money. And there is a long-term, strategic reason for the United States: Our children need a stable, free Europe.

Okay. So let me just go through the facts. The leader of Serbia, after the cold war ended and Yugoslavia began to break up—keep in mind, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, all these places were part of Yugoslavia. Tito dies; the cold war ends; Yugoslavia begins to break up. There are Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Albanians, Montenegrins, and Hungarians, all kinds of different ethnic groups in what was the former Yugoslavia. They also—the Croats are basically Roman Catholic, predominantly. The Serbs are basically Orthodox Christian; they're part of the Greek and Russian and other Eastern Orthodox Churches. The Bosnians have all three ethnic groups, but there are a lot of Muslims in Bosnia; and the Kosovar Albanians are predominantly Muslim. And so there was a religious and ethnic difference there.

Now, the source of the problem has been that the leader of Serbia has tried to dominate the former Yugoslavia by starting wars in Croatia and Bosnia in the last decade and stripping from Kosovo, which is legally a part of Serbia but constitutionally autonomous—it means they're entitled to self-government and to preserve their culture, their religion, their institutions. He sought to reassert his authority by starting wars

in Croatia, wars with Bosnia, and repressing the autonomy of the Kosovars.

Now, you know we had a lot of problems there over the last year, and there were all these refugees building up in Kosovo, just like you saw in Bosnia a few years ago—ethnic cleansing, people being driven out of their villages and their homes. You've been seeing it on television, if you've been watching, the houses being burned and all that.

We negotiated a cease-fire last year—late last year—that saved thousands of people from starvation and freezing because they'd left their homes and they'd gone up into the mountains and the winter was coming. And we did it because we were not just the United States; it was we and our NATO Allies, and Russia supported us. And we said, "Look, here's the deal." And NATO said, "We'll use force if you don't do this." So they withdrew some of their security forces, and the thing calmed down, and we got some folks back in their homes. And we thought we were on the way to getting this solved.

Then the tensions flared again recently—another 30,000 refugees, people being driven from their homes and villages. So we had this peace conference in Rambouillet, in France, just a few days ago, in March, that had the potential to end the fighting for good. But we had to get both sides to sign it. And like any fight, you know, nobody is totally pure and everybody has got their own axe to grind. But the Kosovar Albanians signed the agreement last week. They signed the agreement last week. Even though it doesn't give them everything they want—they wanted a referendum on their own independence, as opposed to autonomy, I think largely because even though they are afraid they may be too small and economically weak to be an independent country, they're afraid that the Serbs will never honor their autonomy. But they didn't get that. Even though their people are still being savaged, in violation of the agreement that Mr. Milosevic made, they still said a just peace is better than a long and unwinnable war.

Milosevic, on the other hand, President Milosevic refused even to discuss key elements of the agreement. The Kosovars said yes to peace; Serbia put 40,000 troops and 300 tanks in and around Kosovo. Now, if you've been watching on the television, you know they've

now started rolling from village to village, predominantly in north central Kosovo, shelling civilians, torching their homes so they can't come back. In a number of villages, Serbian police have dragged the male members of Kosovar families from their homes, lined up fathers with sons, and shot them in cold blood.

This is not a traditional war. It is a conflict between artillery and heavy weapons, on the one hand, against essentially a guerrilla war for independence. And when the guerrillas disappear, the Kosovar guerrillas, what the Serbian police and military do is come in and just take it out on defenseless people, whose representatives have already agreed to a peace. And let me say this: If we don't do something, they have 40,000 troops there, and a bigger offensive could start any moment.

This is not the first time, let me remind you, this is not the first time we've faced this kind of choice. When President Milosevic started the war in Bosnia 7 years ago, the world did not act quickly enough to stop him. Let's don't forget what happened: Innocent people were herded into concentration camps. Children were gunned down by snipers on their way to school. Soccer fields and parks were turned into cemeteries. A quarter of a million people—in a country with only 6 million population—were killed, and a couple of million refugees were created—not because of anything they had done but because of who they were and because of the thirst of Mr. Milosevic and his allies to dominate, indeed, to crush people who were of different ethnic and religious affiliations.

Now, this was a genocide in the heart of Europe. It did not happen in 1945; it was going on in 1995.

Now, at the time, a lot of people said, "Well, there's nothing you can do about it, Mr. President. That's the way those people are. They've been fighting for hundreds of years." So I heard all that, and I actually started reading up on the history of that area. And I found out that in fact they had been fighting on and off for hundreds of years, but there was more off than on. And it was an insult to them to say that somehow they were intrinsically made to murder one another. That was the excuse used by countries and leaders for too long—"Well, they're just that way."

Gerry and I, that's what they said about us, about the Irish in Northern Ireland. They said, "Oh, they've been arguing over things for 600

years." And they have, but they're not arguing all the time.

You just think about that. Every one of you who ever raised a child that misbehaved, think about if you just said, well, that's—they're just that way. Right? *[Laughter]* They're just that way. Well, if every parent said that, the jails would be 5 times as big as they are.

Audience member. They already are. *[Laughter]*

The President. They're too big because some people think they're just that way. That's not true. I just don't believe that.

So you've got to decide what you believe. I don't believe that. And I know what happened in Bosnia. The United States and our allies, along with courageous people in Bosnia and in Croatia who refused to be subdued and fought back, found the unity and the will to stand up against the aggression, and we helped to end the war. And later, to make sure the peace would last, we agreed to send troops in, with our allies—including the Russians, Ukrainians, others. We've got people from all over Europe and the United States and Canada in Bosnia.

And everybody said, oh, it was going to be just like Vietnam. It was going to be a bloody quagmire, even though there was a peace agreement. And now we've withdrawn 70 percent of our troops. And there are still difficulties, but we've preserved the peace, and the slaughter hasn't come back. And I think it was a good investment. And I hope the American people are proud of what they did to end the war in Bosnia. They should be.

So what do we learn from Bosnia? We learned that if you don't stand up to brutality and the killing of innocent people, you invite the people who do it to do more of it. We learned that firmness can save lives and stop armies.

Now, we have a chance to take the lessons we learned in Bosnia and put them to work in Kosovo before it's too late. But make no mistake about it, this is a country that already has a quarter of a million refugees. This is a country that's had 30,000 refugees since they stopped the peace talks just a few weeks ago. One in eight of the people who lives in this little country have already been run out of their homes.

Now, I think if the American people don't know anything else about me, they know that

I don't like to use military force, and I do everything I can to avoid it. But if we have to do it, then that's part of the job, and I will do it.

We have done everything we could do to solve this issue peacefully. Sunday, Secretary Albright dispatched Ambassador Dick Holbrooke to Belgrade to talk to President Milosevic one last time. I believe Mr. Holbrooke is on his way back, because I can tell you as of last night, as of this morning, as of an hour ago, we got nowhere. He is still denying his responsibility for the crisis, defying the international community, and destroying the lives of more people. Not just the United States but all our NATO Allies have warned him that he will have to honor the commitments he has made one more time. All this stuff he's doing is in violation of commitments he made to withdraw his forces. And we said if he didn't do it, we would have to take action. NATO is now united and prepared to carry out its warning. If President Milosevic is not willing to make peace, we are willing to limit his ability to make war on the Kosovars.

What we are trying to do is to limit his ability to win a military victory and engage in ethnic cleansing and slaughter innocent people and to do everything we can to induce him to take this peace agreement, which is the only way in the wide world over the long run he's going to be able to keep Kosovo as an independent part of this country—or an autonomous part of this country.

Now, I want to level with you. You've been very good. You've listened to me very closely. You've let me make my argument to you about why this is a humanitarian issue and why it is an issue that is in the personal interest of the United States.

Now, let me tell you that this is like any other military action. There are risks in it, if we have to take this action. There are risks every time our young people get up and fly jet airplanes at very high speeds. Most of us could not begin to do that. Most of us don't even have the reflexes or the eyesight or the hearing, never mind the skills to do it. We lose a substantial number of our men and women in uniform every single year in training operations. It is inherently dangerous work. Plus, the Serbs have an air defense system, and it has a considerable capacity. There are risks to

our pilots, and there are risks to people on the ground who themselves are innocent bystanders.

But the dangers of acting must be weighed against the dangers of inaction. If we don't do anything after all the to-and-fro that's been said here, it will be interpreted by Mr. Milosevic as a license to continue to kill. There will be more massacres, more refugees, more victims, more people crying out for revenge. And they'll be spreading out to these nearby countries, where they have their own ethnic tensions. So instead of just this problem in Kosovo, you'll have the same sort of instability and tensions and the financial burden of refugees in the places around it.

The firmness of our allies and ourselves now, I believe, is the only hope the people of Kosovo have to be able to live in their own country without having fear for their own lives. We asked them to accept peace on terms that were less than perfect, and they said yes. We said if they would do it, we would stick by them—not we the United States, we 19 countries in NATO. We cannot run away from that commitment now.

And we ought to consider what would happen if we and our allies were to stand aside and let innocent people be massacred at NATO's doorstep. That would discredit NATO because we didn't keep our word. But that's not important, except insofar as what it means to you. You've got to decide, my fellow Americans, if you agree with me that in the 21st century, that America, as the world's superpower, ought to be standing up against ethnic cleansing if we have the means to do it and we have allies who will help us do it in their neighborhood. And you have to decide whether you agree with me that we have a clear interest, after what we saw in World War I, World War II, in the cold war and all the people who died, in a Europe that is united, not divided; democratic, not dictatorial; and secure and at peace, not racked by ethnic cleansing—and if you believe that's good for us economically and politically, over and above the humanitarian issue.

I do. I believe the case is clear. Especially when you remember—let me say one more time—if you go home and look at a map tonight, you ought to get down and look at it. This is a conflict with no natural boundaries. If it continues, it could spread to neighboring Albania, just to the south. Most of the Kosovars are Albanians. What if they flood Albania with

refugees? Albania has a Greek minority. What are they going to do? Are we going to recreate this all over again?

Then it could put massive numbers of refugees in Macedonia, where you have both a Slavic majority and a Muslim minority; a country now with a President and a Prime Minister that have worked with us and taken our NATO troops in and worked with us, putting enormous pressure on them. Believe me, it could draw in even Greece and Turkey.

So, apart from the humanitarian issue and apart from our interest in Kosovo, this thing has no natural boundaries. The whole Balkans area have all these people of different ethnic and religious groups, and if we just say, "Well, that's just the way they are," then that's they way they'll be. And there's a good chance when this young woman is an adult, voting citizen of this country, that she will have to be worried still about whether the politicians are going to deal with innocent people getting killed in that part of the world. I would like to lift that burden from their generation because I think it is morally right and in the vital interest of the United States. And I hope you will support me.

Now, I will say again, this is not a slam dunk. This is a difficult issue. This is a difficult decision. I believe that the position I have taken is the best of a lot of bad alternatives. But you didn't just hire me to make the easy decisions. And so I just would say to you—I ask you to talk to your friends and neighbors about this. I ask you literally to go get down an atlas and look at the map, pay a little closer attention to the news reports, think about the arguments that I've made. Think about whether you really agree with me. And say a prayer for the young men and women in uniform who are going to be there to do what I, as their Commander in Chief, order them to do.

Now, let me go back to the point I started with, and I'll get to the domestic issues. We're living in a global society where there is no easy dividing line between what is foreign and what is domestic. I'll give you another issue, Social Security. You think, what in the world could be more of a domestic issue than Social Security? But the truth is, every wealthy country in the world is suffering the challenge of an aging crisis. Japan is facing it even more than we are, because their life expectancy is higher and their birthrate is lower and their immigration rate is much lower. A lot of the European

countries are facing it, because their life expectancy is more or less the same and their birthrate is lower.

So we're not the only country in the world facing this Social Security issue. And I would argue to you, my fellow Americans, that this is a high-class problem. I hear people wringing their hands about Social Security; I say, hal-lujah, give me more of those problems! Why do we have this problem? Because we're living longer. The older I get, the better that looks. *[Laughter]*

This is a high-class problem. But by 2030, we'll only have two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. And so, we've either got to put more money in the system, cut benefits, increase the rate of return on the investment we're making in Social Security, or do a combination of all three if we want to maintain a system that, today, keeps one-half of the people in this country over 65 out of poverty.

And I would argue that we ought to start, since we have reduced the deficit, and we now have a surplus, and we are projected to have surpluses for the indefinite future—of course, it will go up or down with the condition of the economy, but the structural deficit has been eliminated. What I have said to the American people is that we ought to set aside the majority of this surplus, 62 percent of it, for the next 15 years to stabilize Social Security. We can extend the life of the Trust Fund to about 2050 if you do that.

If we invested just a small percentage of it in the stock market or other private sector options—just a small percent—through a completely independent body, insulated from politics, you could put another 5 years on it. And I'll guarantee you, every State, county, and local worker represented by AFSCME that has a retirement plan, that that pension fund is doing some investing in the private sector. They don't have it all in Government securities, and they've probably invested a whole lot more than I suggest in the private sector. And that's probably why your retirement funds are all in good shape, because the stock market has been doing well.

Now, the stock market doesn't always do well historically throughout the country, but over any 30-year period, it always outperforms just 100 percent guaranteed Government investments. So what I've tried to do is get a little bit of the best of both worlds.

Now, what we've tried to do with Social Security, historically, is to have 75 years of life on the Trust Fund, which is what I would like to do. I would also like to lift the earnings limitation because as people live longer, more and more people will want to work. If they pay in, they ought to be able to draw out, I think. And eventually that will bring money into Social Security. And I think we have got to provide greater benefits to elderly single women, who still have a poverty rate of over 18 percent, almost twice the overall poverty rate of the senior population. That's very, very important.

So we need to get together in a decent, open, honest bipartisan fashion and figure out what other steps we need to take to close that gap. But believe me, you can't get there unless you first set aside 62 percent of the surplus to save Social Security.

The second thing I want to do is set aside 15 percent of the surplus for the next 15 years for Medicare. And again, there are a lot of those who don't want to do that. But keep in mind, you may not agree with everything I do, but at least I ought to have some credibility on this. We did have a \$290 billion deficit when I took office, and we do have a \$70 billion surplus now. You've got a big stake in this. A lot of the people that are members of your union deal with people who depend upon Medicare to survive. A lot of you have parents who depend upon Medicare to survive.

Now, again, Medicare is falling victim to the aging of America, because the older you get the more you need some kind of health care, right? I mean, I have to stretch for 20 minutes or more just to get up and get around anymore. [Laughter] I mean, it's a big deal. The older you get—you do. We know that. And also modern medicine and technology—we're living longer. And if we really do finish this genome project by 2000, 2001, unlock all the secrets of the human gene, you're going to see life expectancy go up exponentially.

But anybody in this room today that's over 60 years old, is still in good health, and if you know that—if you don't know of any health problem you have, you have a life expectancy right now of over 80 years. The life expectancy in America today is over 76 years, and that includes everybody that gets killed by accidents, violence, early childhood disease, everything else. So again, this is a high-class problem, folks. This is not the end of the world. It's good news.

We're living longer, and there are medical advances.

But we cannot sustain Medicare; it's going to run out of money in 2010 or a couple years after that, 2 or 3 years after that. We've done our best to manage it. We've added years to it. But we need to take it out for another decade or so. And we need also to make some provision for seniors on Medicare to get some help to buy prescription drugs.

Now, again, that will be a costly program, although, you know, we have to ask people who can afford to pay to pay what they can afford to pay. But think about it over the long run. Over the long run, you can buy a lot of drugs in a year for what a week in a hospital costs you.

So if we get the right kind of system in place and we don't encourage over-utilization, and we ask people to pay what they can afford to pay, but we help them, you'll get out of these horror stories where you've got seniors in America still making a choice between the food they eat and the drugs they need, without bankrupting the system.

Now, there have been a lot of proposed reforms to Medicare. There was that Commission, you know, and they had different approaches and they didn't—issued a report—Senator Breaux's Commission. They had some pretty good ideas about making the system more competitive and all that. But my issue there is, I want a defined set of benefits, first of all. I want to make as much provision as we can for prescription drugs.

And secondly, I don't want to do something that will, in effect, break down the system, because there is no set of reforms that will meet the financial needs of Medicare without putting some more money in it. I've not seen any; I have not seen any independent expert who says that. And since I don't think we should raise taxes when we have a surplus, we ought to dedicate 15 percent of the surplus to Medicare and make some reforms which would enable us to lengthen the life of Medicare and begin to deal with this prescription drug issue. And so I ask you to work with me on that.

Now, there are some people who believe that these programs ought to be more privatized, who won't support the money for that reason. But there are some people—most of them in our party—who believe that since we've got this money, we don't have to make any changes in

the program. Both sides are wrong. So we're going to have to work together—and you all need to listen to me—we're going to have to work closely together.

For example, I'm against raising the retirement age for Medicare to 67 because—let me tell you why—because the fastest-growing group of people without health insurance are people between 55 and 65. And so I can't imagine why we would want to have more elderly people without health insurance.

Now, I've offered Congress a proposal to help plug that gap a little bit, and I hope they'll take it this year. But that does not mean we can be against all reform. We have to be prepared to eat a few lemons, too. But we ought to do it with our goals in mind: preserving the integrity of Medicare, the guaranteed set of benefits; doing something on the prescription drugs that will really make a difference; and making sure that we have held together a program that has been a lifesaver for this country for 30 years.

So that's what we've got to do. Now, let me just say one third thing about this. Again—and there's another—this is why I tell you all this foreign business and the domestic business are all related. If we put aside 62 percent for Social Security and 15 percent for Medicare, we can do it in a way that enables us to pay down the national debt for 15 years.

If we pay down the national debt, here's what will happen: Interest rates will be lower; more investment will come; there will be more jobs created; incomes will stay up; it will protect us from bad things that happen overseas and it will make it more likely that good things will happen overseas—because if we don't have to borrow this money for our own debt, then other people around the world will be able to get money at lower rates. They will grow more; they'll buy more of our products. And you'll be better off because in all your States and cities, people will be earning more money, paying more taxes, more money for AFSCME employees who work for the public—all this stuff is connected.

All this is connected. You have to see the connection between what we do and what it impacts on us and how it impacts around the world. So I ask you to support that.

Finally, I believe we should have a tax cut, but I think it ought to be targeted to middle income families and lower income working families. In my balanced budget, we've got tax cuts

for child care, very important, substantial; for long-term care, to help people pay for long-term care expenses for their families, very important; for training costs and any number of other things. And then, in this balanced budget, I propose to set aside about 11 percent of the surplus to help people set up their own savings accounts so they can save for their retirement, and have the Government take this money and give it back to people, so over and above their Social Security and their retirement plans and their pensions, they can save more money for their future. Now, I think this is a good idea.

Now, let me say we have some agreement and a lot of disagreement with the Republican majority on this. They have agreed we should invest more money in education, which I think is good, but we differ about how to spend it. They have agreed that they should set aside some money for Social Security, but they haven't agreed to do it in a way that will pay down the debt yet. They have not agreed to devote any of this surplus to Medicare, which I think is a terrible mistake.

Now, they say I'm going to use the surplus so we don't have to make any of the hard choices on Medicare. I will say again, that is not true. You heard me tell you, we're going to have to get together and make some changes in the Medicare program. But we could make every change they propose and the thing would still not last very long unless we put some more investment in it. And every expert knows that.

So, the third thing I want to say is, as usual, for the last, now more than 16 years, the bulk of their plan is a large tax plan that disproportionately benefits people like me who don't need it, and that will explode, in the out-years—the very years that I want us to be paying that debt down, keeping interest rates down.

You talk to any person who's made a lot of money in America in the last 6 years, and they'll tell you that they'd a lot rather have a growing stock market and low interest rates than a tax cut, because we already—not because everybody wouldn't like to have a tax cut. The people we ought to be focusing on cutting taxes for are the people that cannot pay their kid's way to college and take care of their parents who are sick and make ends meet. That's what we ought to be doing.

So I say again, I'm somewhat encouraged by where we are with the Congress now, because there is a general feeling we're going to do

something about Social Security. But we ought to do it in a way that brings the debt down. We've got to do something about Medicare. We ought to have the right kind of tax cut, and it shouldn't be so big it keeps us from making the economy strong.

I want to work with you on this. You've been good to me. You helped me get elected. We've done a lot of things together. And believe me, the 25 percent of our time we've got left together, if we save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century, if we agree to pay down the national debt, if we make a historic commitment to the education of our children, if we do something about long-term care, if we do something about child care, the best is yet to come.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. in the Presidential Suite of the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gerald W. McEntee, international president, William Lucy, international secretary-treasurer, Glenard S. Middleton, Sr., international vice president, Charles M. Loveless, legislative department director, and Caryl Yontz, legislative affairs specialist, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); U.S. Special Envoy Richard C. Holbrooke; and President Kiro Gligorov and Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

March 23, 1999

Thank you so much. Walker, if I had any sense, I'd just quit while I'm ahead. That was a wonderful introduction. Thank you for your years of support and for being there for us when we couldn't have had such a successful dinner.

I thank my longtime friend Governor Roy Romer, who like me put in a dozen years as the Governor of a State. And on the bad days I still think it was the best job I ever had. [Laughter] But there aren't many of them.

I thank my longtime friend Mayor Archer, whom I met when he was an august judge working with my wife with the American Bar Association, for his service; and in her absence, Congresswoman Sanchez. And I know Congressman Matsui and Congressman Menendez meant to be here tonight, but they're still voting. And we're glad Congressman Menendez's daughter joined us. She'll be more affected by the decisions we make this year than most of the rest of us will. I'm glad all the young people who are here tonight are here.

I would like to thank our new officers, Joe Andrew, Andy Tobias, Beth Dozoretz. I thank Janice Griffin, who is the vice chair of our Women's Leadership Forum. And I was glad that Roy acknowledged the presence of former Congressman Dave McCurdy here and also our former DNC chairman Chuck Manatt who, if

every thing works all right, will be an Ambassador pretty soon. And you ought to talk to him tonight. I'm sure once he gets the title he'll be insufferable, but anyway—[laughter].

Let me say, when Walker was up here talking and Roy mentioned Dave McCurdy, I thought about the years when some of you in this room worked with Dave and me and others on the Democratic Leadership Council. One of our goals was to try to prove that the Democrat Party could be a genuinely progressive party and be good for American business. But I want to make a larger point here and try to just talk for a few moments tonight.

When I ran for President in 1991 and '92, I did so because I thought that the natural rhetoric of Washington, DC, had become increasingly polarized and divorced from the real experiences of ordinary Americans, and that there was—and I felt a lot of sympathy because I had spent enough time here as a Governor to know that Members of Congress, even the President—Congressman Menendez, welcome; I didn't know you were back. We're glad to see you. Thank you. But anyway, I spent enough time up here and then going back home to Arkansas to know that it was so hard on a daily

basis for people in public life to get their message out, that you knew maybe you would get your 10 seconds on the evening news.

And it led to the sort of natural impulse to sharpen the rhetoric and to stay within the comfortable contours of conflict that had defined the two parties for so long, that it maybe worked for individual people in public life, but it wasn't working very well for America. And it didn't really match up to the world we were living in, and certainly not to the world that these young people will dominate when they come of age.

And yet I saw people like Roy Romer in Colorado, a predominantly Republican State, mayors like Dennis Archer, finding ways to pursue progressive politics that try to include everybody and give everybody a stake and take care of people that needed to be taken care of and give people opportunity who didn't have it and still make the trains run on time, pay the bills, get the economy to work, deal with the difficult issues that keep our system going strong and growing and changing.

And so what I tried to do in 1992 was to tell the American people there were enough hard choices in life to make that we shouldn't be going around making a lot of false choices. We shouldn't be defeating ourselves before we started by saying, for example, if you want to have a compassionate social policy, you have to run a big deficit. Why? Because sooner or later you don't have any money left to spend anyway, even with a deficit.

And meanwhile, the very people you say you're trying to help, you're hurting, because every year the Congress has to spend more and more money they could spend on education or housing or health care, paying interest on the national debt—it was up over 14 cents on the dollar when I got here—keeping interest rates high, keeping economic growth low, depriving people of the best social program of all, a decent job.

And the same thing was true about business and labor. It seemed to me that in a global economy, with also a phenomenal increase in productivity being driven by technology, with more and more benefits to labor being added by higher levels of education, and a lot of external challenges—not only competition but these environmental challenges that I'll say more about in a minute, just to mention a few—that the best course was to find out what was

good for business and labor, and that the best companies in America had figured that out decades ago.

And I could give you just example after example after example where I thought, yes, there were hard enough choices to make, but if we kept ourselves within these categories we were doomed to defeat. And so my idea was that, if I could ask America to join with me in a common vision, then we could ask ourselves, what will work to achieve that? And forget about the fights we've been having. Let's have some new fights.

I once—the late Edmund Muskie, who was a distinguished Senator from Maine, nominee for Vice President, Secretary of State, once spoke to a Governors' Conference in Maine in 1983, and I'll never forget what he said. He said, "In all my years in public life, I defined my success by whether I left my successor a new set of problems." You think about that. He said, "You know, life is full of problems. There will never be an end to human challenges as long as people are around on this Earth. But if we had to keep retreading the same old ground, we'd never get anywhere."

So we said, "We'll have an economic policy that will reduce the deficit and increase investment in education and technology and the other things that are important. We will have a trade policy that will expand trade, but value environment and humane labor conditions. We'll have an environmental policy that will clean up the environment, but will emphasize, insofar as humanly possible, market mechanisms and incentives and technology and creativity to clean the environment up, so that we don't overly burden the economic machine when we're doing it."

And to be fair, a lot of these things are possible today, and they might not have been possible in former years. For example, it is now literally possible, as a lot of our most innovative utilities have proven, to generate more energy capacity through conservation, through alternative sources of energy, through partnering with your customers, than ever before. It is also now possible to grow an economy without increasing the use of fuel that burn greenhouse gases. But most people don't believe it still, even in America, and certainly not in a lot of developing countries.

And what I'd like to ask you to think about tonight just briefly is: Okay, I'm grateful, we've had a good economic policy. And Walker did

a better job of bragging on it than I should. And we did have something to do with that; so did all of you and millions of other people in this country.

And we've got crime at a 30-year low. Why? Because we said that this is a false choice between whether you're going to try to rehabilitate people or keep them out of trouble in the first place or punish people who do wrong. The vast majority of serious crimes are committed by a very small number of people. They ought to be identified. They ought to be punished. Then we ought to kill ourselves trying to keep our kids out of trouble in the first place. And we ought to try to prevent as much crime as possible. That's why we put these 100,000 police out there on the street and sponsored after-school programs and other kinds of preventive programs.

I'm glad that welfare is at a 30-year low. Almost half—it's been cut almost in half—partly by the growing economy and partly by a new welfare strategy that says: Now, we should keep the guarantee poor families have for health care and nutrition for the kids, but if a person is able-bodied, the person ought to go to work if there's a job.

You know that one of the things that got lost in a lot of the rhetoric—the two welfare bills I vetoed would have taken away the guarantee of food and medicine and medical care for children. But I told the Congress if they would put those things back in, I would give the States the power to create their own designs, to figure out the most innovative ways of putting people to work.

And these kinds of things actually do work. And for progressives, I would like to say we have the lowest poverty rate we've had in quite a long time. We have much lower poverty rates among minorities than we've recorded in 30 years. We're finally beginning to see in wages an increase in equality, with wages growing more rapidly for people in the lower income rungs. We've got 90 percent of our children immunized for the first time. The budget in '93 really worked to relieve the tax burden on the hardest pressed working families. The Family and Medical Leave Act has done the same thing. So it is possible to have a good economic policy, to be tough where you ought to be tough, and to have a more humane society.

And what I have been trying to do is to get—not to say that I'm right about every issue but

to get people to think in those terms. What kind of America do we want to leave our children in the 21st century? I think we want a country where every responsible person has an opportunity to live out his or her dream. I think we want a country that is genuinely committed to the idea of community.

And I want to tell you what I mean by that. I mean a sense of belonging, a sense of being responsible to other people, not only because it's morally right but because we believe we do better individually when our friends and neighbors are doing better and because we believe that our differences, whether they're racial, ethnic, religious, or whatever, are quite exciting and interesting, but they're not nearly as important as the humanity we share.

And that is a profoundly important issue as we become more and more diverse in a world that is being consumed, as you see in the Balkans, in the Middle East, in Africa, and elsewhere, by ethnic and regional—ethnic and racial and other kinds of divisions.

And I think it is very, very important that America recognize that another false choice is trying to say, "Well, I'm going to concentrate on domestic policy but not foreign policy." I said this all during the '92 campaign, and I don't think anyone ever heard this, but there is no longer an easy dividing line between our policy at home and our policy around the world—that the world is becoming a smaller place.

And that's why we tried to establish new partnerships with Africa, with Latin America, a whole new, broader relationship with a lot of Asian countries we weren't involved with before, and a lot of other things that I've tried to do, to work with the Europeans to help them deal with these horrible problems in the Balkans and become united and free—because I know that if we want good trading partners, we've got to be good citizens of the world.

And America, still—we've got 4 percent of the world's population and 22 percent of the income. If we want to keep it, the only way we can keep it is to sell some of what we provide to people beyond our borders. And for them to buy it, they need to be doing well, and they need to be safe and free and secure. And so, very often what is the right thing to do is also economically the right thing to do.

Now, having said that, I'd just like to say that that is the perspective—that's the world

I've tried to leave for our children. And what I hope that all of you will be able to do as members of our Business Council is to keep us moving down that path, keep us making the tough decisions, but not with false categories, not with presuppositions about what has to be done, not with the idea that we can't reconcile a lot of these internal difficulties that are there.

If you look ahead at the big challenges facing us in the 21st century—and I'd just like to mention a few of them, not all of them but a few of them, and what I'm trying to get this Congress to help me do. I think they are as follows, in no particular order: Number one, how to keep the economy going at home and how to build a better economy in the world; how to keep the difficulties in Asia from biting us here and taking America's economic engine down and, instead, how to grow together. And I would just say I think there are three things we have to do.

One, abroad, I think we need to continue to expand trade. I think we have got to find a new consensus in America on trade. The Democratic Party should not be afraid of trade. It has generated more jobs than it has cost, and the jobs it has generated have higher wages. The Republican Party should not be afraid of the notion that we need new international understandings, just like we have national understandings, that lift environmental standards and lift labor standards, even as we expand trade so we have a race to a higher level of life, a higher quality of life, not a race to the bottom. And we've got to find a new consensus on it. But we can't run away from it.

The second thing we need to do is to deal with the world financial problems. And I won't bore you with the long exegesis on that, but the G-7 countries, the big economies, are going to meet in Germany this summer, and I'm hoping that we will have the next big step to take there to try to stabilize the world financial system so we don't have the kind of rampant crash we had in Asia in the last few years.

And let me just tell you what the basic problem is—and some of you who are involved in trading understand this. But if we're going to have a global economy where we have global trade and global investment, you have to move money around. And money is like anything else; if you move around enough of it, there will be a market for money. And farmers have

known this for years with their crops, where they have to hedge against their crops.

But today \$1.5 trillion—trillion—is exchanged around the globe every day in currency exchanges. That's many, many times more than the aggregate value of total trade in goods and services every day. And when the people that set up this system 50 years ago—and those of us who have been working in it for many years never focused clearly enough on that until the last couple of years. But that's going to be very important, because you're not going to be able to keep support for free markets and maybe even for freely elected governments in some of these countries if they think in a month they could lose what they worked for 10 years for, and all these people in the middle class all of a sudden are plunged into poverty.

The third thing we have to do is to recognize that a lot of people in America have not yet been touched by our recovery, as sweeping as it has been, and that they offer us a market to continue to grow our economy in a non-inflationary way, whatever is happening overseas. That's the new markets initiative I talked about in the State of the Union. Essentially, what I have asked the Congress to do is to pass a series of tax credits and loan guarantees to get private capital into poor inner-city and rural areas that are underinvested in, where the unemployment rate is too high.

The unemployment rate in this country is 4.4 percent. But there are neighborhoods in New York where it's 12 or 15 percent—and in most big cities in this country and in an awful lot of rural counties in this country, which are capable of getting investment and putting people to work.

And let me just tell you how it works. For example, suppose—I'll just take—suppose Newark, New Jersey, wanted to build some big facility in an area of high unemployment, and it cost \$100 million. If my proposal were adopted by Congress, the investors—if they put it in a high unemployment area and guaranteed a certain percentage of the jobs; people would be trained for them, and then the permanent jobs would be given to people who could compete in that area—would get a 25 percent tax credit and would get then two-thirds of the remaining investment with a guarantee. The investment would be guaranteed.

That's just what we do with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Export-Import

Bank, other things. It seems to me that it's the least we can do in America is to give the same incentives to people who invest in under-invested areas in America we do to get them to invest in underinvested areas around the world. And I think that we ought to be for that.

The second thing I think we ought to do is to continue our work in education. We've got the best system of higher education in the world. One of the proudest achievements of this administration is that we virtually opened the doors of college to all with the tax credits and loans and scholarships and the AmeriCorps program and all that. But nobody thinks that every American child has the best access to elementary and secondary education. So we need to have higher standards.

And I recommended five things in the State of the Union Address, including ending social promotion, but giving children—all children—the right to go to summer school and after-school and mentoring programs if they're not learning, in return for the continued investment of Federal money. But I also want to continue putting more teachers in the classroom, to have smaller classes, and modernizing schools, hooking them all up to the Internet.

I think we have to deal with the—[applause]. Thank you. I think—but see? That's the false—are you going to be for spending more money on education or higher standards? Why should we make that choice? Why shouldn't we be for spending more money and having higher standards? You know, a lot of people say it's not a money problem, but it's been my experience in life that anytime somebody tells you it's not a money problem, they're usually talking about someone else's problem, not theirs. So why should we make that choice?

And I'll just give you one last issue, which goes back to economics, and that's dealing with the aging of America. There's been a lot of handwringing in our country for years about Social Security and increasingly about Medicare. But I hope you will forgive me when I tell you that these are very high-class problems. First of all, they're problems that we share with every other wealthy country in the world, because life expectancy is going up just at the time the baby boomers are aging. And medical science is providing people the opportunity to extend their lives and to extend the quality of their lives. But as you get older, you consume

more health care, and if you access technology, it costs more.

So we have to make some fundamental changes in both the Medicare program and the Social Security program. But first we have to recognize that we have to put some more funds in them, because by 2030, there will be twice as many people over 65, only two people working for every one person drawing Social Security.

And what I've recommended is that we, in effect, use the surplus—77 percent of it—over the next 15 years to pay the debt down in a way that, in effect, gives claim on that money in the ensuing years when it will be needed for Medicare and Social Security. Now, if you do that, we can take the amount of money we're spending on debt service in the budget—it will make it a lot more fun to be in Congress—you can take the amount of money you're spending on debt service from about, now, down to 13 cents, down to 2 cents in 15 years. We'll have the lowest debt as a percentage of our income we've had since World War I. And whatever happens to the global economy, interest rates in America will be lower; investment will be higher; incomes will be higher; and jobs will be more plentiful.

So I think this is a very important thing. Now, it will sound a lot better when somebody else who comes along and the other party says, "No, let's give half of it away in a tax cut." But we can give tax cuts to people who need it to keep body and soul together or who need it for specific purposes, like to deal with the climate change challenge or to deal with the challenge of long-term care in their families or to deal with the child care challenge and their families or to help more people save for their own retirement, and still save this money, save the bulk of this surplus.

Look, we were in debt for 30 years; we had a structural deficit for 12 years, and during that 12 years we quadrupled the national debt. If we were to pay it down two good things would happen to us economically. First, what I just said—we'd pay down the debt and have lower interest rates and higher investment. Secondly, we'd make it a lot cheaper for our trading partners to borrow the money in the world. And these poorer countries would get more money, get more investment. They would grow faster, and they'd buy more of our goods.

We've got someone here from Boeing tonight. You just talk to them about what the global financial crisis has done to them. Talk to the farmers in this country about what the global financial crisis has done for them. If our trading partners aren't doing well, they don't have the money to buy our output.

So these are the kinds of things that I want to do, deal with these big challenges—the aging of America, the education issues, keeping the economy growing, the challenge of climate change—these huge, big challenges in a way that benefits all people, because we do recognize we're in a community.

Now, I may not be right about all of this. But on the Social Security and Medicare and budget deficit, which will be the big questions we have to face this year, I think this administration is at least entitled to the benefit of the doubt based on the consequences of the policies of the last 6 years.

On the other issues that are very important—the trade issues, particularly—I asked the members of the Democratic Business Council to work with our friends in labor, work with our friends in the Democratic Party, and remind everybody that one of the reasons we got where we are in the last 6 years is we became the greatest trading nation in the world again. And that's one of the reasons we're here.

But that doesn't mean that you shouldn't do something for El Paso, Texas, if they lose 6,000 jobs. It's not a choice. You don't have to say, "Oh, goodness, too bad about them. We're doing great." You should say, "We should do what's best for the country as a whole and help them—because they're smart, too; they're hard-working, too; they're entitled to have their chance in the Sun, as well." So these are the kinds of thing we're trying to do.

And one last thing. I gave a long speech about Kosovo today, and I don't want to talk about that in any detail tonight, but I will say this: It is interesting that at the end of the cold war with this incredible explosion of technology and opportunity to create wealth, that the world is convulsed by people obsessed with making their lives on holding other people down because they're different. That's why I think it's important that we continue the President's Initiative on Race, which we're doing; why I think it's important that we pass the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" and the hate crimes law that I put before the Congress; why I think

it's important we stand up against ethnic cleansing and keep fighting for peace in the Middle East.

And the darkest nightmare—I told you my happy dream for the future—the darkest nightmares of the future are the marriage of modern technology and primitive hatred, because terrorists can figure out how to get on the Internet and make bombs. You can get on the Internet and figure out how to make that bomb that blew up the building in Oklahoma City. You can have a little biological lab in a garage somewhere if you know enough.

And what we don't want to do is to leave our children with a world in which we've done a whiz-bang job with all the mechanical and economic things, but we haven't done anything to purge the collective spirit of our country and, insofar as we are able, the world of the foolish notion that our lives only can count when we've got our heel on someone else's neck, and we can say we're better than they are. This is a profound thing.

This is—this goes back to prehistory, folks. When people first aggregated themselves in tribes, they had to be suspicious of the other. And we have different skin pigmentations today and different facial features and all that for reasons that go back thousands, even tens of thousands of years.

And it falls now to America not to be a wild-eyed idealist but just to remind the people that we are trying to set a model for the world. And we're not perfect, but we're trying to say that any responsible citizen can be part of our community. And if we're going to have the world we want, that has to be true everywhere. America has to try to be good at home and to be a force for good abroad.

And all the work we do on economics and technology and trade and everything else will, in the end, also have some very twisted manifestations, which will bedevil our children unless we also stand up for old-fashioned ideals. We believe in equality and freedom and our common humanity.

That's what I want the Democratic Party to be in the 21st century, and I want you to be a big part of it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:21 p.m. in the East Room at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Roy Romer

of Colorado, general chair, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Andy Tobias, treasurer, Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Charles T. Manatt, former chairman, and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI, general cochair, Demo-

cratic National Committee; Alicia Menendez, daughter of Representative Robert Menendez; and Walker Nolan, founding member, Democratic Business Council, who introduced the President.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner March 23, 1999

The President. Thank you so much. I want to thank, first of all, Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz and all the people with the Democratic Party for their work. But especially I want to thank Tom and Chris for having us here tonight. When I drove up in the backyard and I was walking up through the kitchen, which is bigger than my first house—[laughter]—Tom and I have been friends a long time, and I saw Tom, I said, “Tom, I have one question.” I said “You really want to do something great for the Democrats?” He said, “Sure.” I said, “Don’t let any incumbent Member of Congress come to your house. They’ll all quit.” [Laughter] He wouldn’t give me that commitment. [Laughter]

It’s a beautiful home. It’s a warm atmosphere, and I know that we all thank Tom and Chris for having us here. I’d also like to thank the people who prepared and served our food, and the wonderful musicians who entertained us before. Their songs were better than mine will be. But they’re out there. Thank you very much for the music. You were great. Thank you. [Applause]

I want to thank you for your contributions, for your support for our party tonight. I would like to begin with a brief retrospective. In 1992 I ran for President because I wanted to change the direction of national politics, because I felt that there was a lot of rhetoric and not very much action being generated in Washington. And I thought the two parties were like locked gears, locked into sort of a rhetorical argument that just kept repeating itself over and over and over again, without allowing us ever to actually deal with something like the debts that are—deal with what national policy on education ought to be or deal with what national environmental policy ought to be or deal with what national health care policy ought to be.

And the people were kind enough to elect me President in ’92. And then in ’94, when we got beat in the congressional races, I thought they were saying they really didn’t mean it, after all. [Laughter] Part of the reason we took such a licking is that we tried to break the mold. We tried to pass a deficit reduction plan which raised taxes on 1½ percent of the people that had the highest incomes—cut taxes, as Tom said, through the earned-income tax credit on the 15 percent of the people with the lowest incomes who were working for a living, so we could say nobody who works 40 hours a week and has a child in the house would be in poverty. And we cut a lot of spending.

And the economy had not turned around enough. And the Republicans offered their Contract With America. By 1996, thanks to the recovery of the economy, the passage of the crime bill, the family leave law, the Brady bill, a lot of the other things that were done, and a lot of the other initiatives in the administration, the efforts we made for peace from the Middle East to Bosnia to Northern Ireland, the country felt pretty good about itself, and we were given another term.

In 1998, under circumstances which appeared on the surface to be exceedingly difficult, in an election in which our party was outspent by more than \$100 million, our party’s candidates for the House of Representatives picked up seats in the sixth year of a President’s term for the first time since 1822. And we had no losses in the Senate when, just 3 weeks before, most experts thought we would lose between four and six seats.

Now, what I would like to say is—about that is, I believe that election in 1998 came out the way it did and the one in ’96 came out the way it did and the one in ’92 came out the way it did because we ran on Democratic

values and new ideas, because we ran on our willingness to be held accountable for results, and because we tried to build new coalitions and asked people to think about the future and not the past.

And what I want to say to you tonight is, I—first of all, I am profoundly grateful for your generosity and your support. But I also ask you to bring to the Vice President and me and our administration, to Joe Andrew and Roy Romer and Beth, and all the members of the Democratic Party the benefit of whatever you know that you think would help us do a better job serving America, because we'll win more elections if people think we're standing for the right things and they think we deliver.

I told any number of people that I was convinced that the real reason we won in '98 was not so much a reaction against the Republicans; it was that there was a reaction, coupled with the fact that we said, "Hey, vote for us; our policies are working; and if you vote for us, we will keep the economy going, save Social Security and Medicare before we squander the surplus, pass a Patients' Bill of Rights, and modernize our schools and give you smaller classes." We had an agenda. People could remember what we stood for, and it resonated out there. And it was not the same things that people had been saying year-in and year-out.

Therefore, I say to you tonight, the reason I ask for your help and your ideas is I think it is quite important that we make every effort to produce. I try—the closer I get to the end of my term, the less time I try to spend talking about what we have done and the more time I try to spend talking about what we ought to do. We still have about 25 percent of the time that this administration has been given by the American people, almost half of a full Presidential term. And I think it is absolutely imperative that we take advantage of this enormous prosperity that we have been blessed with, with the first surplus we've had in 30 years now 2 years in a row and say, "Hey, we're a year from a new century and a new millennium, and we're living and working and relating to each other in a very different way now. We need to deal with the great unmet challenges that are before us."

And there are many. And I won't—I don't want to give you a policy speech tonight, but I just would say this. I think we owe it to the American people to make the reforms nec-

essary to save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century. I think we also owe it to the American people to set aside a significant portion of the surplus, about three-quarters of it, to fund those programs along with the reforms and to pay down the debt at the same time.

Now, a lot of you have followed this Social Security and Medicare debate. Let me just say this: There is not a single expert I have talked to who seriously believes that we can reform Medicare and keep it going without putting more money in it, because we're living longer and older people use more medicine. The only way to fix Social Security when there are only two people working for every one person drawing, you either have to cut benefits, put more money in the program, or raise the rate of return on the money you've got in the program.

To do everything we want to do, we might have to have an amalgam of that. But first and foremost, before we raise the payroll tax, which is already too high, I think we ought to take some of this surplus, pay down the debt, and do it in a way that obligates that money as it repeats itself to go into—to pay for Social Security obligations in the out-years. We still have to make some changes. It's important.

Let me also say to you, if we use the money—if we set it aside for Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt, we can, in 15 years, have the lowest debt we've had since World War I, since the beginning of World War I. Now, a lot of you are in international business. I'm doing my best to fix the international financial system. I'm going to do my best to do whatever I can to bring the Asian countries back, to help Russia restart its economy, to keep Latin America from being totally afflicted by what happened in Asia. I'm going to do my best.

But whatever happens, we need to make America as strong as possible. If we were to pay down the debt over the next 15 years, if we would go from spending 13 cents of every tax dollar you spend on debt service down to 2 cents, we would have lower interest rates, higher investment, more jobs, lower car payments, lower college loan payments, lower home mortgage payments, lower credit card payments, higher incomes. Simultaneously, we would be freeing up that money to be borrowed by others in other parts of the world, at lower interest

rates. And they need the money. And their incomes would rise in a way that would permit them to buy more of what we have to sell.

And I cannot tell you how important I think it is for the Democratic Party that gave the people of this country Social Security, that gave the people of this country Medicare, and now has brought this country back to fiscal sanity, to say, "Hey, we can fix Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century and do it in a way that dramatically increases the prosperity of the American people for the next 20 years." And we have no excuse for not doing it, unless our friends in the other party stop us. We should be focused on getting these big things done. And I want you to help us.

I also believe we have a very ambitious education agenda, that I think also goes beyond another choice. People—I used to hear this debate all the time. Every time I'd come to Washington, my friends in the Democratic Party back in the eighties would always want to help me with more Federal aid to education. And then the Republicans that I knew would always say they would want to be for higher standards, back then; they've abandoned that now, unfortunately. I hate that, but they have, if you look at the debates.

But anyway, they were for higher standards back then. But they would say it's not a money problem. And as I've said many times, one of Clinton's laws of politics is whenever you hear somebody stand up and tell you it's not a money problem, they're talking about somebody else's problem. [Laughter] That's a lecture we like to give to other people; we never look in the mirror and say it's not a money problem.

And our approach is to increase our investment in education. We nearly doubled the investment of the Federal Government in education in the 5 years that we were balancing the budget. We were cutting other things enough to dramatically increase it. So we should have smaller classes. We ought to hire 100,000 teachers. We ought to have modernized school buildings. We ought to have Internet access for every classroom in the country. But we also ought to stop giving money away without saying, "Look, here are basic standards that we know work every place they've been tried. End social promotion, but don't brand the children failures—

[At this point, a cell phone rang in the audience.]

The President. —and don't give every kid a cell phone." [Laughter] Don't be—I'm just glad it didn't happen to me. [Laughter] This is—I was just really trying to see if you all were paying attention. [Laughter]

This is a big deal. The United States Government has never been for both approaches. We have never done both at the same time. We've had periods where we really thought we were coming out for education reform. Then we've had periods where we knew we had real needs, and we provided funds. We've never been serious about saying, "We're going to raise the standards. We're going to judge results. We expect children to learn. We're tired of patronizing poor kids and saying they can't learn, but we're not going to brand them failures. We're going to have more after-school programs. We're going to have more mentoring programs. We're going to have more summer school programs. We're going to give them the chances they need."

This is a huge deal. No serious person believes that America has an adequate system of elementary and secondary education for every child in this country. And as we get more and more diverse, it will become more and more important that we do that. Every one of you know about the additions to economic value that all people have when they have a better education.

So this is a big issue. We've got the best system of higher education in the world. It's open. We've now made it pretty much affordable for everybody, with the tax credits, the HOPE scholarships, the student loans, the work-study programs, the AmeriCorps program. Now we've got to spend 2 years really doing some things. And I'm telling you, it won't be popular. There are people who are going to scream to high heaven when I—we've got to reauthorize the \$15 billion we're spending on schools. And they'll say, "Okay, we'll give it to you again next year, but we would like you to show some results to keep getting it or at least get caught trying." And I don't mean to denigrate—most people do a good job. But the people that do a good job don't need it one way or the other. What we want to do is to make sure we take what works and replicate it throughout the country.

Any person who's ever spent any serious time working on education reform will tell you two things. One is that every challenge in American education has been met superbly by somebody somewhere. Two is, we are not very good at replicating what works. Most of you who have been in entrepreneurial, competitive environments would quickly go broke if somebody did what you were doing better and you didn't figure out how to at least meet the competition. We do not do that. And we have to find a way to do it. And I think I've given some good ideas here.

Let me just mention one last issue. I think that we have convinced the American people that we can bring the benefits of free enterprise to people who have not previously enjoyed it. You have poverty rates going down. You have the lowest unemployment rates among minorities ever recorded in this country. We finally have wages going up.

But we should be under no illusion that everybody in America has participated in this recovery. It is simply not true. In almost every big city in the country, there are huge census tracts—big blocks of areas where there has been no new investment. There are rural areas where the unemployment rates are still quite high. And because of the financial crisis overseas and a few other factors, our farmers are facing the worst financial crisis they've had in 20 years, at a time when we've got this record low unemployment.

And I have asked the Congress to pass a series of tax credits and loan guarantees which would give incentives to people like a lot of you in this room, like take Mr. Titelman here from Philadelphia, to go to the—let's say there's a big section of Philadelphia that hasn't had any new investment in a long time and if it can qualify—kind of like the empowerment zone program that the Vice President is already doing such a good job of running the last several years. But let's suppose you could get a \$300 million investment in a place like that. If this bill passes there would be a 25 percent tax credit on the first \$100 million for the investment. And the next two-thirds of the investment would be subject to getting a loan guarantee, just like American investment in designated foreign countries is today. It just seems to me that it is elemental good sense to set up the same sort of financial incentive structure for people to invest in underdeveloped markets and people in the United

States that we give our American investors to invest overseas.

And I hope this has great appeal to the Republicans, because it gives us a real chance. You just think about it. Think about how many places in this country you could say, "If we raise \$300 million and we invest it in place X in a viable-going concern that meets all the criteria for getting credit, we only have \$75 million at risk." That's not a bad deal. That's not a bad deal.

If we can't take a few chances to develop the rest of America now, when will we ever get around to it? The unemployment rate in New York City is still too high—the unemployment rate in a lot of rural communities, not just out in the South and the Mississippi Delta or in Appalachia but in the Mid-Atlantic States, in New England, other places. We need to do these kinds of things, face the big challenges, get them right.

The last point I want to make is this—I don't want to talk about Kosovo tonight, for obvious reasons—I made the best argument I could today when I spoke to the AFSCME group, and they, I understand, showed extensive coverage of it on the media. But I will say this. I want to make two points only.

One is, I talked until I was blue in the face when I ran for President in 1992 about the fact that we can no longer make a clear distinction between domestic and foreign policy. We live in not just a global economy, a global society. We are being drawn closer together in ways that are good, in ways that are uncomfortable or potentially dangerous. And we have got to stop as a people putting this little box over here and calling it "foreign policy" and having a big box over here and calling it "domestic policy" and every now and then say, "Oh, I've got to go pick up this other box." We have to see it together.

What does that mean for the Democrats? It means, number one, I've got a responsibility to do everything I can to modernize the financial architecture of the world so we don't have another crisis like the one we had in Asia. It means, number two, we have got to find a consensus on trade, because a big part of our growth has come from selling more things overseas. We've got 4 percent of the population and 22 percent of the wealth. It's not rocket science to figure out, if that's where you are, you've got to sell something to somebody else.

But on the other hand, we have been caught in the vice where some Members of Congress, representing a lot of people in America, are worried about the dislocations of trade, and other Members, many in the other party, see the benefits of trade but don't worry about the dislocation. So we wind up, well, are you going to get the benefits and say too bad about these people, or are you going to protect these people but slow down the economic prospects of the country? This is a dumb thing to do. It is very wrong to make either one of these decisions.

We need to build an American consensus in which we say "We're going to reach out. We're going to lead the world. We're going to open up our borders." We've got a lower unemployment rate than any other advanced country, for the first time in decades, even lower than Japan. But we ought to say, we also—"We're the party that believes in preserving the environment. We're the party that believes in the dignity of labor and elemental labor standards, and we're going to create a global economy where we lift people up instead of hold them down." And we just ought to do it and quit wringing our hands about it. It's very important.

And the last thing that I would say about that is, I think it is terribly important that we recognize that economics cannot exist in a global context in the absence of security and peace and freedom. So that if you really believe that our future depends on that and that Europe is a big trade and investment partner of ours, we have to ask ourselves, don't we have a responsibility when our friends in Europe ask us, through a group that we all belong to, NATO, to help end the kind of chaos we see that we had first in Bosnia and now that we have a chance to prevent the most severe manifestations of in Kosovo—isn't that more than just a foreign policy issue? Even though I think there's a huge moral component there, it will have direct personal benefits to Americans if we have a stable, free, united Europe.

The last point I want to make is this—and then I'll stop. Both at home and abroad, there are two great dynamics going on in the world today. One are the forces of integration that you see most positively in the growth of the Internet and the World Wide Web and everybody sharing information and everybody knowing—you know, pulling us together. Secondly, there are great forces of decentralization, when they're positive, and disintegration when they're

negative. And you see that in the decentralization of all kinds of operations.

When I ran for President in 1992, 3 million people were making a living primarily out of their own home. When I ran for reelection in 1996, 12 million people were. In 1998, by the mid-term elections, 20 million people were. Rising exponential—decentralization, that's all the flexible work rules, and all the stuff you know about. And all ethnic groups, you know, recovering their heritage in a happy way, having festivals. And you know, Hillary's from Chicago. I love to go to Chicago every year, when they have the ethnic festival, because I can eat for 3 miles—[laughter]—and never have the same thing twice. [Laughter]

You know, decentralization—you have all these little companies coming up, fitting certain niches in the market, all these specialty magazines, everything—and you see it all over the world. That's the good news. The bad news is, decentralization when you see the ethnic fights in the Balkans, or people unable to get along. They want to be apart.

The American idea, modernized for the 21st century, is that out of many, one. *E pluribus unum*. Believe me, the Founding Fathers never had a clue what they were talking about. They could never have—I don't mean that in a pejorative way. They weren't thinking about the Fairfax County school system in Virginia, right across the river from me, that has children from 180 different racial and ethnic groups, speaking 100 different native languages. They never—they didn't have a clue about that. That's not what they were thinking about. You had to be a white male property-owner to vote when they started. But they had the right idea. And we've been struggling for over 200 years, now, to cram the new facts and our new perceptions and our true values, into that idea.

And so that's the last thing I want to say to you. I think that—if somebody asked me why I was a Democrat now, in 1999, I would say, because I really believe everybody who's responsible enough to work for it ought to have the opportunity to live out his or her dreams, and because I really believe in the idea of community, of belonging, of mutual responsibility. I do not believe that my life or my child's life will be as good as it would otherwise be, unless everybody else has a chance to fulfill themselves.

I believe we can do more together than we can apart. I like the fact that we all look different from each other, but I think what we have in common is more important than even all the interesting things that we have that are different about us.

And believe me, the big threat the world faces today is the marriage of modern integrating technologies with the negative disintegrating forces of people with primitive notions that their lives only matter when they've got somebody they can look down on, somebody they can put their foot down on their neck on, somebody they can—lift themselves up by pushing somebody else down, whether it's in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, Bosnia, the tribal wars in Africa, or you name it.

You plug all that negative stuff into access to how to make missiles, how to make chemical weapons, how to make biological weapons, how to jam records, computer records in banks or powerplants, or all these sort of—you know, what may seem like fictional scenarios. That is

the threat our children will face, the combination of primitive disintegration with modern integrating technology.

And we, America, we have to say, "Hey, the people that started us were right." We have—out of many, we must be one. And we've got to be willing to carry our load in the world. And today, I can tell you that the Democratic Party, by far, is more likely to bring that kind of approach to the world, and home to every American community. And in the end it counts more than everything else.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, and former Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Tom and Chris Downey, dinner hosts; and William A.K. Titelman, executive vice president, managed care and government affairs, Rite Aid Corp.

Remarks at the Unveiling of a Portrait of Former Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown

March 24, 1999

Thank you very much. Let me, first of all, say I thought Secretary Daley did a remarkable job today, and he was the funniest I have ever heard him—[laughter]—which means either that the Commerce Department has been very good for him, or he has found an extraordinary speechwriter. [Laughter] If it is the former, I thank you. If it is the latter, I would like that person dispatched to the White House this afternoon. [Laughter]

I want to thank Congressman Ford and Mr. Mayor and all of our Cabinet for being here. And Mickey, Heidi, thank you for being here; members of the Brown family. This is both a happy and a bittersweet day. We are now in the springtime, even though Washington is not quite behaving like it yet. Soon the dogwood that we planted on the back of the White House lawn will be blooming for Ron again. And now this portrait will be here forever, to remind us all of his service and his spirit. Mr. Polson, I

think you did a terrific job, and I congratulate you. We love it.

If Ron Brown were here, I know exactly what he'd say. He'd say, "Well, you did well. I'm dressed well"—[laughter]—"and I look very strong. But you could have made me a little thinner." [Laughter]

And I'd just like to just take a minute to remind all of you about the spirit. Secretary Daley was kind enough to say that I had tried to elevate the Commerce Department. I think that is true, but I would like to just say a word about it as it relates to Ron Brown.

After the election of 1992, when we were putting together our economic team and I had been listening rather carefully to what others had said and what I had seen about previous administrations and how they ran their economic policy, it seemed to me that, by and large, previous administrations had lodged the making of economic policy too much either in Treasury or the White House, or both, and had sort of

overlooked the integral role of Commerce and our Trade Ambassador, on a daily basis, to the development of our long-term economic well-being.

Same thing could be said of other departments, the Agriculture Department, the Energy Department—how they were needed to make a joint economic policy. And so we put together this National Economic Council to integrate all the Departments. And then we decided to elevate the economic role particularly of the Commerce Department, and to try to bring the Trade Ambassador into the daily work of the economic life of the administration, not just when there was some big trade negotiation going on.

And I think the evidence is, it worked pretty well. But it worked pretty well in no small measure because Ron Brown was here and Mickey Kantor was our Trade Ambassador and because Ron Brown believed me when I told him that I thought the Commerce Department had been grossly underutilized, at least in recent history, in terms of building the economic potential of America, within our country and beyond our borders. So he bought the big idea, and then he sold the big idea.

But the second point I want to make is that he did it, in no small measure, because of the spirit you see reflected in the set of the jaw and the glance of the eyes in this fine portrait. He basically believed there was no mountain that couldn't be climbed. He believed that American businesses had a responsibility to act in their enlightened self-interest to help themselves and others, here at home and around the world.

He also believed that people driven by ancient hatreds could find a way to put them aside. I will never forget how excited he was in the last conversation we had right before he left for Bosnia, how proud he was that he could lead a delegation of American business people to the Balkans to try to make peace.

Well, the peace process is working in Bosnia. As all of you know, it's under siege again in the Balkans because of what is going on in Kosovo. I don't want to talk about that here today except to say that there are basically two kinds of people that are dominating the public

discourse around the world today: There are people that are determined to divide and drive wedges between and depress people because they're of different ethnic and racial and religious groups; and then there are people like Ron Brown who believe that everybody ought to be lifted up and brought together and don't understand why anyone would waste lives and take other people's lives to gain a false sense of power in a smaller and smaller life based on oppression.

And when you look at this picture today, when you go out, first of all, I want all the members of the Commerce Department to be proud of what you are doing, proud of what he did, and proud of what you are doing under Secretary Daley, who has also, in my judgment, done a magnificent job. And I want you to think about the troubles of the world today, and I want you to see your life as an instrument of bringing out the spirit that Ron Brown brought to his life and his work in this Department every day and think about it for what it is, the principal opposing force to all this destructive racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural destruction we see all over the world today.

Every country has to make that choice, and in a way, every business has to make that choice, and every person has to make that choice.

We're all blessed that we knew Ron Brown. We're glad that his family is here today. We're glad we've got Alma right where we want her; she can't talk back. I could have given her a whole lecture today. *[Laughter]* But I know Ron Brown would want me to say, to use this moment to say, "Look at this picture. Look at this life. Look at the troubles of the world." The choice is clear: America needs to stay on the path that he blazed.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:49 a.m. in the Herbert Hoover Building Auditorium at the Department of Commerce. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; former U.S. Trade Representative Michael (Mickey) Kantor and his wife, Heidi; artist Steven Polson, who painted the official portrait; and Alma Brown, widow of Ron Brown.

Remarks Announcing Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

March 24, 1999

Good afternoon. United States forces, acting with our NATO Allies, have commenced airstrikes against Serbian military targets in the former Yugoslavia. I will address the Nation more fully tonight on why this action is necessary, but I wanted to say a few words now.

We and our NATO Allies have taken this action only after extensive and repeated efforts to obtain a peaceful solution to the crisis in Kosovo. But President Milosevic, who over the past decade started the terrible wars against Croatia and Bosnia, has again chosen aggression over peace. He has violated the commitments he, himself, made last fall to stop the brutal repression in Kosovo. He has rejected the balanced and fair peace accords that our allies and partners, including Russia, proposed last month, a peace agreement that Kosovo's ethnic Albanians courageously accepted.

Instead, his forces have intensified their attacks, burning down Kosovar Albanian villages and murdering civilians. As I speak, more Serb forces are moving into Kosovo, and more people are fleeing their homes—60,000 in just the last 5 weeks, a quarter of a million altogether. Many have headed toward neighboring countries.

Kosovo's crisis now is full-blown, and if we do not act, clearly, it will get even worse. Only firmness now can prevent greater catastrophe later.

Our strikes have three objectives: First, to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's opposition to aggression and its support for peace; second, to deter President Milosevic from continuing and escalating his attacks on helpless civilians by imposing a price for those attacks; and third, if necessary, to damage Serbia's capacity to wage war against Kosovo in the future by seriously diminishing its military capabilities.

As I have repeatedly said to the American people, this action is not risk-free. It carries

risks. And I ask for the prayers of all Americans for our men and women in uniform in the area. However, I have concluded that the dangers of acting now are clearly outweighed by the risks of failing to act, the risks that many more innocent people will die or be driven from their homes by the tens of thousands, the risks that the conflict will involve and destabilize neighboring nations. It will clearly be much more costly and dangerous to stop later than this effort to prevent it from going further now.

At the end of the 20th century, after two World Wars and a cold war, we and our allies have a chance to leave our children a Europe that is free, peaceful, and stable. But we must—we must—act now to do that, because if the Balkans once again become a place of brutal killing and massive refugee flights, it will be impossible to achieve.

With our allies, we used diplomacy and force to end the war in Bosnia. Now trouble next door in Kosovo puts the region's people at risk again. Our NATO Allies unanimously support this action. The United States must stand with them and stand against ethnic violence and atrocity.

Our alliance is united. And I am particularly grateful for the support we have received from Members of Congress from both parties. As we go forward, I will remain in close contact with Congress—I have spoken with all the leaders today—and in contact with our friends and allies around the world. And I will have more to say about all of this tonight.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Mar. 24 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement on the Tenth Anniversary of the *Exxon Valdez* Oilspill March 24, 1999

Ten years after the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground in Prince William Sound, the lingering effects of the worst oilspill in U.S. history are a compelling reminder that we must be ever vigilant in the protection of America's natural treasures.

The spill caused grievous damage to an extraordinary web of nature and to the communities and livelihoods it sustains. A decade later, the healing is well under way, and tough new rules ensure that our entire coast is better protected against the threat of oilspills. With the State of Alaska, we have converted the large

penalty paid by Exxon into lasting protection for salmon streams, fragile coastline, and old-growth forest around Prince William Sound.

Still, more time must pass before the communities and wildlife of Prince William Sound can fully recover. And some of the damage may never be undone. This awful disaster was a wake-up call. And we must work to ensure that its true legacy is a renewed commitment to protect our environment for generations yet to come.

Statement on the Murder of Vice President Luis Maria Argana of Paraguay March 24, 1999

I want to express the profound sadness of the United States for the death earlier yesterday of the Vice President of Paraguay, Luis Maria Argana, and offer our condolences to the people of Paraguay and especially to the family of Vice President Argana. Vice President Argana was shot and killed yesterday by unknown assailants while on his way to the office. We strongly

condemn this brutal murder, which occurred against the backdrop of continued political turmoil in Paraguay. I join the President of Paraguay, Cubas Grau, in urging all Paraguayans to put aside politics and draw together in the interest of all Paraguayans to support the democratic process.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Strengthen Medicare March 24, 1999

Today the Senate Democrats introduced important amendments to address the major defect of the Republican budget: its complete failure to address Medicare. The majority's budget fails to set aside even one penny of the surplus to strengthen Medicare and does not extend its solvency by a single day. Yet, Medicare faces the same demographic challenges as Social Security and is projected to become insolvent even sooner. Instead of putting Medicare first, the

Republican budget puts top priority on a tax cut that explodes in cost just at the time that baby boomers retire.

I applaud Senate Democratic efforts to fix the Republican budget by putting a higher priority on strengthening Medicare and by making sure that any lockbox includes Medicare. I urge Congress not to miss this historic opportunity to strengthen Medicare.

Address to the Nation on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

March 24, 1999

My fellow Americans, today our Armed Forces joined our NATO Allies in airstrikes against Serbian forces responsible for the brutality in Kosovo. We have acted with resolve for several reasons.

We act to protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive. We act to prevent a wider war, to defuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results. And we act to stand united with our allies for peace. By acting now, we are upholding our values, protecting our interests, and advancing the cause of peace.

Tonight I want to speak to you about the tragedy in Kosovo and why it matters to America that we work with our allies to end it. First, let me explain what it is we are responding to. Kosovo is a province of Serbia, in the middle of southeastern Europe, about 160 miles east of Italy. That's less than the distance between Washington and New York and only about 70 miles north of Greece. Its people are mostly ethnic Albanian and mostly Muslim.

In 1989 Serbia's leader, Slobodan Milosevic, the same leader who started the wars in Bosnia and Croatia and moved against Slovenia in the last decade, stripped Kosovo of the constitutional autonomy its people enjoyed, thus denying them their right to speak their language, run their schools, shape their daily lives. For years, Kosovars struggled peacefully to get their rights back. When President Milosevic sent his troops and police to crush them, the struggle grew violent.

Last fall our diplomacy, backed by the threat of force from our NATO Alliance, stopped the fighting for a while and rescued tens of thousands of people from freezing and starvation in the hills where they had fled to save their lives. And last month, with our allies and Russia, we proposed a peace agreement to end the fighting for good. The Kosovar leaders signed that agreement last week. Even though it does not give them all they want, even though their people were still being savaged, they saw that a just peace is better than a long and unwinnable war.

The Serbian leaders, on the other hand, refused even to discuss key elements of the peace agreement. As the Kosovars were saying yes to peace, Serbia stationed 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo in preparation for a major offensive—and in clear violation of the commitments they had made.

Now they've started moving from village to village, shelling civilians and torching their houses. We've seen innocent people taken from their homes, forced to kneel in the dirt, and sprayed with bullets; Kosovar men dragged from their families, fathers and sons together, lined up and shot in cold blood. This is not war in the traditional sense. It is an attack by tanks and artillery on a largely defenseless people whose leaders already have agreed to peace.

Ending this tragedy is a moral imperative. It is also important to America's national interest. Take a look at this map. Kosovo is a small place, but it sits on a major fault line between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, at the meeting place of Islam and both the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity. To the south are our allies Greece and Turkey; to the north, our new democratic allies in central Europe. And all around Kosovo, there are other small countries struggling with their own economic and political challenges, countries that could be overwhelmed by a large, new wave of refugees from Kosovo. All the ingredients for a major war are there: ancient grievances; struggling democracies; and in the center of it all, a dictator in Serbia who has done nothing since the cold war ended but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division.

Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region. In both wars, Europe was slow to recognize the dangers, and the United States waited even longer to enter the conflicts. Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough, how many lives could have been saved, how many Americans would not have had to die.

We learned some of the same lessons in Bosnia just a few years ago. The world did not act early enough to stop that war, either. And

let's not forget what happened: innocent people herded into concentration camps, children gunned down by snipers on their way to school, soccer fields and parks turned into cemeteries, a quarter of a million people killed, not because of anything they have done but because of who they were. Two million Bosnians became refugees. This was genocide in the heart of Europe, not in 1945 but in 1995; not in some grainy newsreel from our parents' and grandparents' time but in our own time, testing our humanity and our resolve.

At the time, many people believed nothing could be done to end the bloodshed in Bosnia. They said, "Well, that's just the way those people in the Balkans are." But when we and our allies joined with courageous Bosnians to stand up to the aggressors, we helped to end the war. We learned that in the Balkans, inaction in the face of brutality simply invites more brutality, but firmness can stop armies and save lives. We must apply that lesson in Kosovo before what happened in Bosnia happens there, too.

Over the last few months we have done everything we possibly could to solve this problem peacefully. Secretary Albright has worked tirelessly for a negotiated agreement. Mr. Milosevic has refused. On Sunday I sent Ambassador Dick Holbrooke to Serbia to make clear to him again, on behalf of the United States and our NATO Allies, that he must honor his own commitments and stop his repression, or face military action. Again, he refused.

Today we and our 18 NATO Allies agreed to do what we said we would do, what we must do to restore the peace. Our mission is clear: to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course; to deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo; and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. In short, if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war.

Now, I want to be clear with you, there are risks in this military action, risks to our pilots and the people on the ground. Serbia's air defenses are strong. It could decide to intensify its assault on Kosovo or to seek to harm us or our allies elsewhere. If it does, we will deliver a forceful response.

Hopefully, Mr. Milosevic will realize his present course is self-destructive and unsustainable. If he decides to accept the peace agreement and demilitarize Kosovo, NATO has agreed to help to implement it with a peace-keeping force. If NATO is invited to do so, our troops should take part in that mission to keep the peace. But I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.

Do our interests in Kosovo justify the dangers to our Armed Forces? I've thought long and hard about that question. I am convinced that the dangers of acting are far outweighed by the dangers of not acting—dangers to defenseless people and to our national interests. If we and our allies were to allow this war to continue with no response, President Milosevic would read our hesitation as a license to kill. There would be many more massacres, tens of thousands more refugees, more victims crying out for revenge.

Right now our firmness is the only hope the people of Kosovo have to be able to live in their own country without having to fear for their own lives. Remember, we asked them to accept peace, and they did. We asked them to promise to lay down their arms, and they agreed. We pledged that we, the United States and the other 18 nations of NATO, would stick by them if they did the right thing. We cannot let them down now.

Imagine what would happen if we and our allies instead decided just to look the other way, as these people were massacred on NATO's doorstep. That would discredit NATO, the cornerstone on which our security has rested for 50 years now.

We must also remember that this is a conflict with no natural national boundaries. Let me ask you to look again at a map. The red dots are towns the Serbs have attacked. The arrows show the movement of refugees north, east, and south. Already, this movement is threatening the young democracy in Macedonia, which has its own Albanian minority and a Turkish minority. Already, Serbian forces have made forays into Albania from which Kosovars have drawn support. Albania has a Greek minority. Let a fire burn here in this area, and the flames will spread. Eventually, key U.S. allies could be drawn into a wider conflict, a war we would be forced to confront later, only at far greater risk and greater cost.

I have a responsibility as President to deal with problems such as this before they do permanent harm to our national interests. America has a responsibility to stand with our allies when they are trying to save innocent lives and preserve peace, freedom, and stability in Europe. That is what we are doing in Kosovo.

If we've learned anything from the century drawing to a close, it is that if America is going to be prosperous and secure, we need a Europe that is prosperous, secure, undivided, and free. We need a Europe that is coming together, not falling apart, a Europe that shares our values and shares the burdens of leadership. That is the foundation on which the security of our children will depend.

That is why I have supported the political and economic unification of Europe. That is why we brought Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO, and redefined its missions, and reached out to Russia and Ukraine for new partnerships.

Now, what are the challenges to that vision of a peaceful, secure, united, stable Europe? The challenge of strengthening a partnership with a democratic Russia that, despite our disagreements, is a constructive partner in the work of building peace; the challenge of resolving the

tension between Greece and Turkey and building bridges with the Islamic world; and finally, the challenge of ending instability in the Balkans so that these bitter ethnic problems in Europe are resolved by the force of argument, not the force of arms, so that future generations of Americans do not have to cross the Atlantic to fight another terrible war.

It is this challenge that we and our allies are facing in Kosovo. That is why we have acted now: because we care about saving innocent lives; because we have an interest in avoiding an even crueler and costlier war; and because our children need and deserve a peaceful, stable, free Europe.

Our thoughts and prayers tonight must be with the men and women of our Armed Forces who are undertaking this mission for the sake of our values and our children's future.

May God bless them, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and U.S. Special Envoy Richard C. Holbrooke.

Remarks on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets and an Exchange With Reporters

March 25, 1999

The President. I'm about to receive a briefing from the national security team, as you can see. I'm very grateful that our crews returned home safely after their work last night. And I'm very grateful that the United States Congress has expressed its support for them.

I want to say again that our purpose here is to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe or a wider war. Our objective is to make it clear that Serbia must either choose peace or we will limit its ability to make war. And we're going to get a briefing and lay further plans today.

Q. Mr. President, yesterday you listed in the briefing room three objectives of the airstrikes, but among them was not a demand that Milosevic return to the negotiating table if he signed a peace agreement. Yet, others in the

administration are saying this morning that is a precondition for ending the strike. What are the facts?

The President. Well, he has to choose peace, or we have to try to limit his ability to make war. That's what we're trying to do. And I think that's been very clear. If you look at what happened at the Rambouillet talks, the arrangement was basically supported by all of Europe, the United States, the Kosovars. The Russians agreed that it was a fair agreement. They did not agree to the military involvement of NATO, but they agreed that it was a fair agreement. Only Mr. Milosevic and the Serbs declined to deal with the evident responsibility they have to choose the path of peace instead of the path of aggression and war.

So I think that it is clear—I don't know how to make it any clearer—that we either have to have a choice for peace by Serbia, not just stopping the killing for an hour or two but a choice for peace, or we will do our best to limit their ability to make war on those people.

Q. What is the exit strategy?

The President. The exit strategy is what it always is in a military operation. It's when the mission is completed.

Q. Do you believe the Kosovars can be safe without the intervention of ground troops from NATO? Can your goals be achieved just through airstrikes?

The President. I do. I believe we can create a situation in which we have limited their ability to make war and thereby increase the prospects that they can protect themselves better. I do believe that.

Q. What about Russians threatening to arm Belgrade?

The President. Well, you know, they have quite a lot of arms on their own; they made a lot of arms in the former Yugoslavia. I told the American people they had a very impressive air defense system, and they had lots of other arms and weapons. I have no intention of supporting any lifting of the arms embargo on Serbia. I think that would be a terrible mistake. We would be far better off if they didn't have

as many arms as they do; then they would be out there making peace and accommodating these ethnic differences and figuring out ways they can live together.

Q. Are you concerned that the American people aren't more strongly behind you on this?

The President. No. I believe that many Americans really had not thought a lot about this until the last 2 days. I hope that a lot of them heard my presentation last night. I did my very best to explain what we were doing and why, and I believe that a majority of them will support what we're trying to do here. I also believe very strongly that it is my responsibility to make this judgment based on what I think is in the long-term interests of the American people.

Q. [*Inaudible*—achieve peace or you will limit his ability to make war, but need he come back to the conference table?

The President. I think he knows what needs to be done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House, prior to a meeting with the national security team. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Videotaped Address to the Serbian People March 25, 1999

As you know, the United States and its NATO Allies have begun a military campaign to reduce President Milosevic's ability to make war on the people of Kosovo. I want to speak candidly to all Serbian people, to explain our reasons for this action and how there could be a quick resolution of the crisis.

First, I cannot emphasize too strongly that the United States and our European allies have no quarrel with the Serbian people. We respect your proud history and culture. We joined together on many occasions, including our victory over nazism in World War II. Our own history has been honored by the contributions of Serb families who came to America to start a new life.

But our common future has been put in jeopardy by a war that threatens the peace of Europe and the lives of thousands of innocent people in Kosovo. After exhausting every other option, all 19 members of NATO—from France to Poland, from Italy to Greece, from across Europe to Canada and the United States in North America—all of us agree that only swift action can save peace in the Balkans.

Let us turn from Serbia's history to the facts of the last 10 years. There has been too much propaganda and too little plain truth. President Milosevic has spoken often of Serbia's standing in the world, but by his every action he has diminished your country's standing, exposed you to violence and instability and isolated you from

the rest of Europe. He waged senseless wars in Bosnia and Croatia, which only ended after enormous bloodshed on all sides. And he launched a cruel campaign against the Albanian people of Kosovo. It was not simply a war against armed Kosovar forces but also a campaign of violence in which tanks and artillery were unleashed against unarmed civilians.

Now, one out of eight people in Kosovo have been driven from their homes; entire villages have been burned and cleared of their people. Thousands of Serbs also have suffered and been forced from their homes. As a result, the bitterness in Kosovo is deeper than ever, and the prospect that Kosovars and Serbs will be able to live together in the same country has been harmed. No one has benefited from all this, certainly not Serbia.

We understand the region has more than its share of painful history, and we know that all peoples of the former Yugoslavia have their legitimate grievances. The NATO Allies support the desire of the Serbian people to maintain Kosovo as part of your country. With our Russian partners, we insisted on that in the peace talks in France. The result was a fair and balanced agreement that would guarantee the rights of all people in Kosovo, ethnic Serbs and Albanians alike, within Serbia.

The Kosovar leaders accepted that. They agreed to demilitarize their forces and to end the paramilitary attacks on Serbs that also have contributed to the crisis. At the invitation of Serbs and Kosovars, NATO troops, under the agreement, would be deployed in Kosovo as keepers of the peace, not as some occupying force.

Now, I know the Serb Government and many Serbian people may not see NATO that way. And it is true that it was the Kosovar Albanians who insisted on NATO peacekeeping forces, but largely because of President Milosevic's violations of his own commitments regarding the use of police and military units.

Nevertheless, I want you to understand that NATO only agreed to be peacekeepers on the understanding that its troops would ensure that both sides kept their commitments and that terrorism on both sides would be brought to an end. They only agreed to serve with the understanding that they would protect Serbs as well as ethnic Albanians and that they would leave when peace took hold.

Now, only President Milosevic rejected this agreement. He could have kept Kosovo and Serbia and given you peace. But instead, he has jeopardized Kosovo's future and brought you more war. Right now he's forcing your sons to keep fighting a senseless conflict that you did not ask for and that he could have prevented. Every time he has summoned Serbia's history as a justification for such action, he has imperiled your future. Hopefully, he will realize that his present course is unsustainable; ultimately, it is self-destructive.

The sooner we find a peaceful resolution of this dispute, preserving Kosovo within Serbia while guaranteeing the rights of its people under your law, the sooner Serbia can join the rest of Europe and build a nation that gives all its citizens a voice and a chance at prosperity.

The NATO nations have tried to avert this conflict through every means we knew to be available. Each of us has ties to Serbia. Each respects the dignity and the courage of the Serb people. In the end, we decided that the dangers of acting are outweighed by the dangers of allowing this conflict to continue, to worsen, to claim the lives of more innocent civilians, including children, to result in tens of thousands of more homeless refugees.

Now all of us—Americans, Europeans, Serbs, Kosovars—must join together to stop driving wedges between people simply because they belong to different ethnic groups and to start accepting that our differences are less important than our common humanity and our common aspirations.

I call on all Serbs and all people of good will to join with us in seeking an end to this needless and avoidable conflict. Instead, let us work together to restore Serbia to its rightful place as a great nation of Europe; included, not isolated, by the world community; respected by all nations for having the strength to build peace.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 7:30 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Statement on Congressional Action on the Republican Budget Proposal *March 25, 1999*

The budget that congressional Republicans passed today is a series of missed opportunities. It fails to lock in debt reduction, fails to extend the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, and fails to protect key investments for the American people—from Head Start to clean water and law enforcement. While this budget marks a reversal from last year's failed effort by Republicans to drain the entire surplus for a tax cut, it still does not do enough to pay

down the debt and strengthen Social Security and Medicare.

This year we have a unique opportunity to build on our success by passing a fiscally disciplined budget that pays down the debt, strengthens Social Security, shores up Medicare, and protects key investments in our children, the environment, and law enforcement. I am committed to accomplishing these goals to give the American people a budget that prepares for the future.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on the Strategic Concept of NATO *March 25, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with Condition (1)(D) of the resolution of advice and consent to the ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, adopted by the United States Senate on April 30, 1998, I transmit here-

with the attached unclassified report to the Congress on the Strategic Concept of NATO.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Forces to Macedonia *March 25, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

This is a report under section 8115 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-262), to inform you of my decision to send certain U.S. forces to Macedonia to enhance force protection for U.S. and other NATO forces in that nation, to support U.S. and NATO military activities in the region, to deter attacks on U.S. and NATO forces already in Macedonia, and to assist in preparing for a possible NATO peace implementation force in Kosovo. Over the past several weeks, non-U.S. NATO countries began a consensual

deployment of national forces to Macedonia to prepare to implement a peace agreement in Kosovo, should one be signed. Approximately 10,000 non-U.S. NATO forces are now deployed to Macedonia and have been placed under NATO's operational control.

As you know, the mandate for the U.N. Preventive Deployment (UNPREDEP) expired on February 28, 1999. Approximately 400 U.S. personnel are currently stationed in Macedonia in Task Force Able Sentry (TFAS). We expect that some elements of these forces will redeploy out of the area and that others, together with certain

of the enabling forces described below, will continue to maintain the current TFAS infrastructure and will begin to prepare Camp Able Sentry as a potential staging area in Macedonia for a U.S. contribution to a NATO-led implementation force in Kosovo, if it is decided to provide one. Operational control of these forces for force protection purposes only has been transferred to NATO, as has been the case for the forces of certain other nations whose forces are participating in UNPREDEP.

NATO, during the past month, decided to deploy elements of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps Headquarters (ARRC HQ) Rear Command Post to provide a command element in Macedonia and to ensure that there will be unity of command and a single NATO commander on the ground who will be in a position to allocate infrastructure, coordinate training facilities, and provide a single point of contact for liaison with the Macedonian authorities. In addition, the ARRC commander has been designated as the NATO commander responsible for protection of forces and reaction to possible threats in Macedonia. The ARRC HQ's Rear Command Post element includes approximately 30 U.S. personnel who occupy key positions on the staff, but who have not yet deployed to Macedonia to assume their roles there. Having those officers serving in their regular positions will enhance the safety of U.S. and other friendly military personnel and increase the effectiveness of the NATO presence.

Sound military planning may also call for sending a limited number of additional U.S. military personnel to Macedonia in support of ongoing operations including Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), intelligence support, surveillance and reconnaissance, command and control, and logistical support, and selected forces and equipment to deter Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) attacks on NATO personnel in Macedonia. In addition, it may be become advisable to send U.S. military personnel to Macedonia as part of an enabling force in anticipation of the possible signing of a peace agreement, which remains our ultimate objective. These forces could include (besides those U.S. forces attached to the ARRC HQ), logistical support and survey elements and liaison officers, CSAR, intelligence support, surveillance and reconnaissance, command and control, as well as U.S. forces conducting rotational training at facilities in Macedonia. Their presence would not

commit the United States to participating in a possible NATO-led peace implementation force; but prudent and limited preparatory activities in Macedonia would enhance the effectiveness of such a force, should we decide to participate, as well as enhance the effectiveness of NATO's air campaign and protection of the U.S. forces in TFAS that are already there. In regard to the elements of section 8115(a)(1)–(8), I am providing the following information:

1 & 2. *National Security Interests.* I hereby certify that the deployment of additional personnel to Macedonia as described above is necessary in the national security interests of the United States. These actions will preserve and protect critical infrastructure and Camp Able Sentry facilities, and will enhance the effectiveness of NATO's air campaign by ensuring U.S. forces are fully integrated into the ARRC HQ command and control structure; improving CSAR, reconnaissance and surveillance, and other capabilities to support the air operations by enhancing force protection from U.S. and other NATO personnel in Macedonia by helping deter attacks on Macedonia and NATO forces there, and by strengthening U.S. leadership in NATO.

3. *Numbers.* The number of U.S. personnel who will assume their functions in the ARRC HQ is approximately 30. At this point, no decisions have been made on numbers of personnel who would be deployed for other functions. I will ensure that the Congress is informed in a timely manner about such additional deployments described in this report if these prove necessary. If U.S. personnel were sent as part of an enabling force, the number would likely not exceed 2,000.

4. *Mission/Objectives.* The overall objective of our efforts with our allies is to maintain stability in the region and prevent a humanitarian disaster resulting from the ongoing FRY offensive against the people of Kosovo. The specific military mission of the forces to be deployed would be to enhance force protection both for NATO (including U.S. former UNPREDEP) military personnel in Macedonia and for allied fliers participating in the air operations, to contribute to the effectiveness of those operations, and to help deter FRY attacks on Macedonia and on NATO (including U.S.) forces in Macedonia. In addition, these forces will likely assist in preparations necessary for a NATO-led implementation force to be effective, if a decision were

made to deploy one, after an agreement was reached.

5. *Schedule.* At this point, it is not possible to determine how long NATO air operations will need to continue, and therefore how long the support and deterrence functions will need to be maintained. However, it is important to be clear that it is the U.S. position, shared by our allies, that NATO will continue air operations as long as necessary to meet the military objectives to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course; to deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo; and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo.

6. *Exit Strategy.* The duration of the requirement for U.S. military presence in Macedonia will depend on the course of events, and in particular, on Belgrade's reaction to the air operations. So long as air operations continue, force protection, support for those operations, and deterrence from possible FRY acts of violence will continue to be required.

7. *Costs.* The costs of the deployments covered by this notice like other costs of the air operations will be paid initially from FY99 Defense O&M appropriations. An estimate of likely costs for these limited deployments is being prepared, and I will ensure that it is provided to the Congress as soon as it is available.

8. *Effect on Morale, Retention and Readiness.* In the first instance, these deployments will have a positive effect on morale, retention and readiness because they will demonstrate the commitment of the necessary resources to maximize force protection for our personnel engaged in the air operations. United States forces participating in Task Force Able Sentry, as well as U.S. forces deployed to other locations in the region, are dedicated professionals serving with

great pride and enthusiasm. Given the importance of the mission in Macedonia, we anticipate that U.S. forces would maintain the highest morale and effectiveness, just as they have in respect to other missions in the Balkans. Indeed, it has been our experience that personnel serving in these important and demanding positions experience higher retention rates than in other, less challenging assignments. However, we recognize that even deployments for the best of reasons increase the periods of separation from family and add other burdens to military service. The Department of Defense has underway extensive and effective programs to do what is necessary to manage personnel and other resources so as to reduce these problems. As with any operational deployment, the effects on readiness for other operations are mixed. On the one hand, the personnel involved gain invaluable real world experience. On the other hand, normal training programs are interrupted. The numbers of personnel covered by this report are sufficiently limited, however, that any effect on the overall readiness of our U.S. Armed Services to meet other requirements, including major theater war contingencies, will be marginal. Finally, in accordance with sections 8115(b)(2) and (c), I have determined that it is necessary to order a Marine FAST team to Skopje, Macedonia, to protect our Embassy and U.S. persons at the Embassy. This team will remain deployed for as long as is necessary to protect our Embassy and U.S. persons.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 26.

Radio Remarks on Emergency Farm Measures March 26, 1999

Today I have directed Secretary Glickman to take immediate measures to provide urgently needed resources to our Nation's farmers as they enter the spring planting season. I asked

Congress to pass emergency funding of \$150 million to provide more than \$1 billion in loans for farmers and ranchers. Unfortunately, Congress did not complete action before leaving for

a 2-week recess, in spite of the fact that many of our Government's critical emergency farm loan programs are set to run out of funds in the next several weeks.

Therefore, I am taking this immediate stop-gap measure so that our farmers, who face continuing low crop prices and difficulty in securing private loans, will be able to finance spring planting. This action will make more than \$300 million in loans available to farmers and ranch-

ers. I urge Congress when it returns from its recess to move immediately on our emergency request for funds for farm loans.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 12:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

March 26, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

At approximately 1:30 p.m. eastern standard time, on March 24, 1999, U.S. military forces, at my direction and in coalition with our NATO allies, began a series of air strikes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in response to the FRY government's continued campaign of violence and repression against the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo. The mission of the air strikes is to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course; to deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo; and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. In short, if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war.

As you are aware, the Government of the FRY has been engaged in a brutal conflict in Kosovo. In this conflict, thousands of innocent Kosovar civilians have been killed or injured by FRY government security forces. The continued repression of Kosovars by the FRY military and security police forces constitutes a threat to regional security, particularly to Albania and Macedonia and, potentially, to Greece and to Turkey. Tens of thousands of others have been displaced from their homes, and many of them have fled to the neighboring countries of Bosnia, Albania, and Macedonia. These actions are the result of policies pursued by President Milosevic, who started the wars in Bosnia and Croatia, and moved against Slovenia in the last decade.

The United States, working closely with our European allies and Russia, have pursued a diplomatic solution to this crisis since last fall. The Kosovar leaders agreed to the interim settlement negotiated at Rambouillet, but the FRY government refused even to discuss key elements of the peace agreement. Instead, the Government of the FRY continues its attacks on the Kosovar population and has deployed 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo in preparation for a major offensive and in clear violation of the commitments it had made.

The FRY government has failed to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions, and its actions are in violation of its obligations under the U.N. Charter and its other international commitments. The FRY government's actions in Kosovo are not simply an internal matter. The Security Council has condemned FRY actions as a threat to regional peace and security. The FRY government's violence creates a conflict with no natural boundaries, pushing refugees across borders and potentially drawing in neighboring countries. The Kosovo region is a tinderbox that could ignite a wider European war with dangerous consequences to the United States.

United States and NATO forces have targeted the FRY government's integrated air defense system, military and security police command and control elements, and military and security police facilities and infrastructure. United States naval ships and aircraft and U.S. Air Force aircraft are participating in these operations. Many of our NATO allies are also contributing aircraft and other forces.

In addition, since this air operation began, the U.S. Embassy in Skopje, Macedonia, has been subjected to increasingly hostile demonstrations by a large number of Serbian sympathizers. In response, I have authorized a unit consisting of about 100 combat-equipped Marines from USS NASSAU (LHA 4), which is supporting the air operations in Kosovo, to deploy to Skopje to enhance security at our embassy. These Marines will remain deployed so long as is necessary to protect our embassy and U.S. persons.

We cannot predict with certainty how long these operations will need to continue. Milosevic must stop his offensive, stop the repression, and agree to a peace accord based on the framework from Rambouillet. If he does not comply with the demands of the international community, NATO operations will seriously damage Serbia's military capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. NATO forces will also use such force as is nec-

essary to defend themselves in the accomplishment of their mission.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. In doing so, I have taken into account the views and support expressed by the Congress in S. Con. Res. 21 and H. Con. Res. 42.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

The President's Radio Address

March 27, 1999

Good morning. Three days ago I decided the United States should join our NATO Allies in military airstrikes to bring peace to Kosovo. In my address to the Nation last Wednesday, I explained why we have taken this step: to save the lives of innocent civilians in Kosovo from a brutal military offensive; to defuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results; to prevent a wider war we would have to confront later, only at far greater risk and cost; to stand with our NATO Allies for peace.

Our military operation has been underway for several nights now. In this time, Serb troops have continued attacks on unarmed men, women, and children. That is all the more reason for us to stay the course. We must and we will continue until Serbia's leader, Slobodan Milosevic, accepts peace or we have seriously damaged his capacity to make war.

As always, America's military men and women are performing with courage and skill. Their strength comes from rigorous training, state-of-the-art weaponry, and hard-won experience in this part of the world. This is the same brave

and tested force that brought stability to Bosnia after 4 years of vicious war. I am confident they will once again rise to the task.

Some of them are fighter pilots, some are bombers, some are mechanics, technicians, air traffic controllers, and base personnel. Every time I visit our troops around the world, I am struck by their professionalism, their quiet, unassuming determination. They always say, "This is the job I was trained to do." They don't see themselves as heroes, but we surely do.

I've also been deeply impressed by the solidarity of NATO's purpose. All 19 NATO nations are providing support, from Norway to Turkey, from England to Italy, from Germany and France to our neighbors in Canada, including our 3 allies from central Europe, the new NATO members: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic.

And we should remember the courage of the Kosovar people today, still exposed to violence and brutality. Many Americans now have heard the story of a young Kosovar girl trying to stay in touch with a friend in America by E-mail as a Serb attack began in her own village. Just

a few days ago she wrote, "At the moment, just from my balcony, I can see people running with suitcases, and I can hear some gunshots. A village just a few hundred meters from my house is all surrounded. As long as I have electricity, I will continue writing to you. I'm trying to keep myself as calm as possible. My younger brother, who is 9, is sleeping now. I wish I will not have to stop his dreams."

We asked these people of Kosovo to accept peace, and they did. We promised them we would stick by them if they did the right thing, and they did. We cannot let them down now.

Americans have learned the hard way that our home is not that far from Europe. Through two World Wars and a long cold war we saw that it was a short step from a small brushfire to an inferno, especially in the tinderbox of the Balkans. The time to put out a fire is before it spreads and burns down the neighborhood. By acting now, we're taking a strong step toward a goal that has always been in our national inter-

est: a peaceful, united, democratic Europe. For America there is no greater calling than being a peacemaker. But sometimes you have to fight in order to end the fighting.

Let me end now by repeating how proud all Americans are of the men and women in uniform risking their lives to protect peace in the Balkans. Our prayers are with them. And our prayers are with all the people of the Balkans searching for the strength to put centuries of divisions to rest and to join Europe and North America in building a better future together.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:44 p.m. on March 26 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Rescue of a United States Pilot in Serbia *March 27, 1999*

I am pleased with the news that our pilot has been rescued successfully. I am tremendously proud of the skill and bravery of the pilot and of the courageous individuals who participated in the recovery.

As I have said from the outset, this military operation entails real risk. However, the continued brutality and repression of the Serb forces

further underscores the necessity for NATO forces to persevere.

Our NATO operations will go forward as planned. I strongly support the decision of Secretary General Solana to move to a new phase of the air campaign, which will include a wider range of targets, including forces in the field.

Statement on the Death of Michael Aris *March 27, 1999*

The First Lady and I were saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Michael Aris, a scholar of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies at Oxford University. We offer our sincere condolences to his wife, Aung San Suu Kyi, his sons, Alexander and Kim, and other family members.

Dr. Aris' perseverance and dedication to his wife and family and to the cause of human rights and democracy in Burma earned him the

respect and admiration of citizens around the world. At this difficult time, I want to reaffirm to Michael's family and to all the people of Burma that the United States will keep working for the day when all who have been separated and sent into exile by the denial of human rights in Burma are reunited with their families and when Burma is reunited with the family of freedom.

Remarks on the NATO Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets and an Exchange With Reporters

March 28, 1999

The President. Good afternoon. All Americans can be very proud of the skill and bravery of the American servicemen involved in the rescue operation yesterday in Kosovo. Indeed, we can be proud of all of our men and women in uniform who are involved in the NATO mission.

From the outset, I have said to the American people that this military operation entails real risks. But the continued brutality and repression of the Serb forces further underscores the need for NATO to persevere. I strongly support Secretary General Solana's decision yesterday to move to a new phase in our planned air campaign, with a broader range of targets including air defenses, military and security targets, and forces in the field.

In the last 24 hours, I have been in close contact with key NATO Allies, including Prime Minister Blair, President Chirac, Chancellor Schroeder, and Prime Minister D'Alema. All of

them share our determination to respond strongly to Mr. Milosevic's continuing campaign of inhumane and violence against the Kosovar Albanian people. That is what we intend to do.

Thank you very much.

Q. Has the bombing made things worse, sir?

Q. Sir, is the allied bombing driving the atrocities, sir?

The President. Absolutely not.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Camp David, MD. In his remarks, the President referred to NATO Secretary General Javier Solana; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jacques Chirac of France; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks on the Unveiling of a Portrait of Former Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher

March 30, 1999

Thank you very much, Secretary Albright, Chris, Marie, other members of the Cabinet who are here, Secretary Rubin, Secretary Shalala. We thank very much Tunky Riley and Hattie Babbitt for being here. And we're glad that Tom and Oya are here, and past and present officials of the State Department, other distinguished guests.

I would like to begin by saying that it is ironic but perhaps appropriate that we are unveiling the portrait of this truly wonderful, distinguished American, who did so much to bring peace to Bosnia, at a time when we are engaged in a struggle for peace in Kosovo. I hope you'll just let me say a word about that.

The NATO military operation is continuing today against an expanded range of targets, including Serbian forces on the ground in Kosovo. The allies are united in our outrage over President Milosevic's atrocities against innocent peo-

ple. We are determined to stay with our policy. As President Chirac said yesterday, what is happening today must strengthen our resolution.

Countries from throughout the Balkans, from Greece to Turkey to Romania to Bulgaria, are helping us to meet the mounting humanitarian crisis. We are all dealing today with the same horrible pattern of conduct we saw in Bosnia. We saw that conduct resume in 1998 in Kosovo, when a quarter of a million innocent people were driven from their homes. We saw it escalate in January and February of this year, as Serbian forces, in violation of the agreement the President had made last October, moved from village to village and atrocity to atrocity while their leaders pretended to negotiate for peace in France.

Now it is clear that as the Kosovar leaders were saying yes to peace, Mr. Milosevic was

planning a new campaign of expulsions and executions in Kosovo. He started carrying out that plan as the talks ended, increasing our sense of urgency that the airstrikes NATO had threatened for some time must begin.

Now, lamentably, we have credible reports that his troops are singling out for murder the moderate Kosovar leaders who supported a peaceful solution. Refugees are streaming out, clearly shaken by what they have seen. Altogether, since the conflict started last year, more than half a million people have been forced from their homes.

If there was ever any doubt about what is at stake in Kosovo, Mr. Milosevic is certainly erasing it by his actions. They are the culmination of more than a decade of using ethnic and religious hatred as a justification for uprooting and murdering completely innocent, peaceful civilians to pave Mr. Milosevic's path to absolute power.

The NATO air campaign is designed to raise the price of that policy. Today, he faces the mounting cost of his continued aggression. For a sustained period, he will see that his military will be seriously diminished, key military infrastructure destroyed, the prospect of international support for Serbia's claim to Kosovo increasingly jeopardized.

We must remain steady and determined, with the will to see this through.

I can't think of anyone whose life and career and personality those words—"steady," "determined," "the will to see this through"—I can't think of anyone those words apply better to than Warren Christopher. No one worked harder than he did to bring an end to the bloody war in Bosnia. No one worked harder than he did to galvanize the unity in our NATO Alliance that has allowed us to act with resolve today and gave us the vision to take on new members and new missions in the aftermath of the cold war.

It took time to forge a just peace in Bosnia, because Chris and his team were persistent and prevailed. We must be as persistent today as we were then in pursuit of peace.

He was our first post-cold-war Secretary of State, our first chief diplomat in over 50 years who faced, as Madeleine recently said, the challenge of defining our foreign policy in a world without a single, overriding threat to our security. But he saw that, as did I, as a great opportunity. He was determined to make sure that

we maintained our leadership in the world, consistent with our values, our interests, and our tradition, and that we remained alive to the new possibilities for peace and prosperity and security that this new world brings.

From the first days of 1993, he was a whirlwind of activity. I like to say—I used to kid him that he really weighed 250 pounds when he became Secretary of State, and he just worked it off. But that's not true. He got up every morning and went running to wake up and get his exercise, and he never stopped running.

He advanced the peace process in the Middle East, from the unforgettable signing on the South Lawn in 1993 to the peace between Israel and Jordan in the Wadi Araba, to the countless days and nights of hard work to keep the process alive through hope and despair after the death of our friend Prime Minister Rabin.

He led our efforts to secure the agreed framework with North Korea to achieve a secure peace on the Korean Peninsula, to make the Dayton agreement first a reality. He shepherded our alliances in Europe and Asia into a new historical era.

He tried to bring new unity to our diplomacy, between our diplomatic, our military, and our economic strategies, aggressively supporting NAFTA and GATT. He helped us to reach out to the rest of the world in new and innovative ways through the Asian Pacific Economic Leaders meeting, the Summit of the Americas, the first White House Conference on Africa.

He understood how important it was for us to maintain and intensify our partnership with Russia, and we did a lot of good things together in those 4 years. More than any other previous Secretary of State, he understood that protecting the environment would become an increasingly important area of international security, requiring greater international cooperation. He put the environment where it belongs in the 21st century—in the mainstream of our diplomacy.

Like his successor, Chris also fought tenaciously for the resources the State Department needs to do the job you do so well.

Now, Chris had about the lowest ratio of ego to accomplishment of any public servant I've ever worked with. And we can all say these noble things about him. It's true. He never thought you had to hit below the belt to get above the fold in the morning newspaper. He was always willing to go the extra mile for peace,

and is now the most traveled Secretary of State in our history—though Madeleine seems determined to overtake him. [Laughter]

All that is true. But just remember one thing: People ask me all the time, “How did you ever decide to make Warren Christopher your first Secretary of State?” And I said, “You know, I don’t know; it just sort of came to me in the transition process”—which Warren Christopher ran. [Laughter] It is a great mistake to underestimate this man. [Laughter]

Near the end of his book, “In the Stream of History,” Chris reveals that he is not fond of emotional goodbyes. I have tried with some difficulty to honor his preference. But I’d like to just mention a couple of things from the book because they particularly touched me. He confesses his admiration in the book for George Marshall and Dean Acheson, two World War II generation public servants who defeated formidable foes but had the foresight to commit America to continued leadership in a new world. In his farewell address to the State Department, he summoned their memory. I suspect that his admiration stems from the fact that they were Americans who put the needs of their country above their own, who were modest when they could be but forceful when they had to be,

who possessed the stamina and the steel to accomplish things that were truly extraordinary. He has all those qualities.

And I can tell you, every day I remain grateful that somehow, somehow, a few years ago our paths crossed. We became friends and allies. I don’t think I’ve ever known anyone with quite the degree of selfless devotion to public service and aggressive pursuit of the Nation’s interest put into one compact, brilliant person that I have seen in Warren Christopher.

I am honored by his service and by his friendship. And I thank you all for being here today to unveil his portrait.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the Benjamin Franklin Room at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary Christopher’s wife, Marie, son, Tom, and daughter-in-law, Oya; Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley’s wife, Ann (Tunk); President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and President Jacques Chirac of France. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former Secretary Christopher.

Remarks on Receiving the Report of the Social Security and Medicare Trustees and an Exchange With Reporters

March 30, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. I welcome all of our guests here, as well as the members of the administration. And I thank those who have joined me here on the platform for this important announcement.

Twice in the last 6 years we have strengthened our Nation’s future in the 21st century by addressing serious, great fiscal challenges to America. In 1993 we met the threat of mounting deficits and a stagnant economy with an economic plan of fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and investment in our people. Thanks to that action, the red ink of the Federal budget has turned to black, and we are enjoying the longest peacetime expansion in our Nation’s history. In 1997 we reaffirmed our commitment to fiscal

discipline with the bipartisan balanced budget agreement. It took important steps to improve Medicare, saving tens of billions of dollars in costs while expanding benefits for recipients and choices.

Today we have new evidence that those determined actions were the right ones. I have just been briefed by our four Social Security and Medicare trustees for the administration—Secretaries Rubin, Shalala, Herman, Social Security Commissioner Apfel—who are here with me today. The trustees have issued their annual report on the future financial health of these vital programs. The trustees’ report shows that the strength of our economy has led to modest but real improvements in the outlook for Social Security. They project that economic growth today

will extend the solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund to 2034, 2 years longer than was projected in last year's report.

After that date, however, the Trust Fund will be exhausted, and Social Security will not be able to pay the full benefits older Americans have been promised. Therefore, still I say we must move forward with my plan to set aside 62 percent of the surplus for Social Security, investing a small portion in the private sector for better return, just as any private or State government pension would do.

As I said in my State of the Union Address, we then must go further with difficult but achievable reforms that put Social Security on a sound footing for 75 years, that lift the earnings limitations on what seniors can earn, and that do something about the incredible problem of poverty among elderly women living alone.

The trustees have also told us that today the future for Medicare has improved even more. The trustees project that the life of the Medicare Trust Fund has been extended until 2015. That's 7 years longer than was projected in last year's report. These improvements are only partially due to the stronger economy. According to the trustees, they are also the result of the difficult but necessary decisions made in 1997 and to our successful efforts to fight waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare program.

Now, this trustee report is very good news. We should be pleased. Americans can be proud. But we should not be lulled into thinking that nothing more needs to be done, because the improvements we see today, themselves, did not happen by accident but instead came as a result of determined action to make sure that the problems were not allowed to get out of hand.

When I became President 6 years ago, Medicare was actually projected to go bankrupt this year. We worked hard in 1993 and 1997 to make sure that didn't happen. Some of the actions we took at the time were not particularly popular, but we knew they had to be done. They helped to strengthen Medicare, and they laid the foundations from the difficult challenges we still must face.

Social Security and Medicare face long-term challenges, as all of you know, with the baby boom aging, with medical science extending the lives of millions, with the number of elderly Americans set to double by 2030. Even with today's good news, Social Security will run out

of money in 35 years, Medicare in 16 years. We cannot—we will not—allow that to happen.

For three decades, Medicare has protected seniors and the disabled while expressing the values of care and mutual obligations that bind families and the generations of Americans together. Since my State of the Union Address, I have called for devoting 15 percent of our surplus to strengthening Medicare, while modernizing the program with real reforms and helping seniors with prescription drugs.

When the Medicare Commission completed its work 2 weeks ago, I said we must build on their recommendations by adopting the best practices from the private sector while also maintaining high quality services, continuing to provide every citizen with a guaranteed set of benefits, and making prescription drugs more accessible and affordable to Medicare beneficiaries.

Now we must build on the good news we have received today. We must extend the life of Medicare even further, modernize the program even more, and make prescription drugs even more accessible and affordable. Medicare cannot remain static in the face of the sweeping changes in our Nation's health care system, a system today that relies increasingly on prescription drugs.

Today, 13 million seniors each spend more than \$1,000 a year, out of pocket, for prescriptions. Let me say that again—13 million seniors today spend more than \$1,000 a year, out of pocket, for prescription medication. At the same time, seniors who have no drug coverage do not benefit from the lower prices that insurance firms often can negotiate from pharmaceutical companies. The higher prices these seniors pay are in effect a hidden tax. We must find a way through Medicare to inject more competition into the health care system and to provide a prescription drug benefit.

Now, I know that some might say this good news means that we can simply delay reform. Nothing could be further from the truth. Strengthening and modernizing Medicare requires tough but achievable changes. And now is the time to make those changes—now when our economy is strong, now when our people have renewed confidence, and now when we have time on our side so that modest changes today can have major impacts in the years ahead.

Nothing in this report lessens the need to devote 15 percent of the surplus to strengthening Medicare. But nothing in this report lessens the need to make tough but achievable reforms either. And nothing in this report lessens the need to help seniors with a prescription drug benefit. If we wait, we will be condemning ourselves to future changes that will be much more costly and wrenching and much less satisfying in the end.

Today, we face a choice that is a test of our wisdom as a self-governing people and a test of our vision of 21st century America. Will we seize this moment of prosperity? Will we devote these surpluses to strengthening Medicare, to strengthening our future? Or will we rush and do the most appealing prospect of the moment, a tax cut that will explode in later years and avoid our generation's responsibility and put the future of Medicare at risk?

The trustees' report is welcome news, but it also contains a clear lesson: Tough, disciplined action is good economics. It's good for Social Security; it's good for Medicare; it's good for America. It's very good for our children's future and for the future of our families across the generations.

We can extend the life of Social Security and Medicare and have an appropriate, affordable amount of tax relief specially targeted to the neediest working families and middle class families. But we have to apply the lessons we have learned in the last 6 years to the first years of the 21st century. I am determined to see that we do so this year. And the trustees' report should make it easier for us to fulfill our responsibilities.

Thank you very much.

Serbian Proposal To Settle Situation in Kosovo

Q. Sir, what do you think of Milosevic's offer to withdraw some troops if NATO stops bombing?

The President. I agree with Chancellor Schroeder.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany. A reporter referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The exchange portion of this item could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on a Serbian Proposal To Settle the Situation in Kosovo

March 30, 1999

I share the view of Chancellor Schroeder that President Milosevic's proposal is unacceptable. President Milosevic began this brutal campaign. It is his responsibility to bring it to an imme-

diately end and embrace a just peace. There is a strong consensus in NATO that we must press forward with our military action.

Statement on the Death of Joe Williams

March 30, 1999

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of jazz and blues great Joe Williams. He was a national treasure. For the better part of this century, America was blessed with Joe Williams' smooth baritone voice and peerless interpretations of our favorite ballads. Hearing Joe Williams sing at the White House in 1993 remains one of my favorite memories. Hillary

and I are grateful for the opportunity to have welcomed him back for the Kennedy Center Honors every year since. We send our prayers and deepest sympathies to his family and friends.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Extend Bankruptcy Relief for Family Farmers

March 30, 1999

Today I have signed into law H.R. 808, which extends the provisions of chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code until October 1, 1999.

Chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code was enacted in 1986 to provide bankruptcy relief to our Nation's family farmers, who at the time were suffering through a severe agricultural crisis. The provisions of chapter 12 enabled family farmers to meet this financial crisis by allowing them to reorganize their debts and avoid the loss of their farms and way of life.

Despite the general widespread economic prosperity of recent years, many of our Nation's family farmers and ranchers are having difficulties and face losing their property and their livelihoods. Chapter 12 is an effective tool to mitigate the effects of the current agricultural crisis on family farmers and ranchers and on communities that depend upon them. By making it

easier for family farmers to work out their debts, chapter 12 also benefits creditors, who would be unlikely to obtain repayment if these farmers and ranchers went out of business.

Although I have signed this temporary extension, I urge the Congress to protect those family farmers and ranchers in financial distress by making the provisions of chapter 12 permanent. I also urge the Congress to expedite passage of my request for emergency funding of \$150 million to provide more than \$1 billion in loans for farmers and ranchers.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 30, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 808, approved March 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106-5.

Message on the Observance of Passover, 1999

March 30, 1999

Warm greetings to all those observing Passover.

This sacred holiday commemorates God's liberation of the Israelites from slavery and the beginning of the Jewish people's exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land. Their journey through the desert was long and difficult, but they were guided by the light of their faith and sustained by their dream of liberty. When at last they arrived in the Promised Land, they rejoiced in their freedom to worship God, to rebuild their communities, and to raise their children in the traditions and beliefs of the Jewish religion.

As a people who have always cherished the values of faith and freedom, all Americans can draw inspiration from the story of Passover. It

reminds us of our ongoing journey to build our own Promised Land, where all people are free to worship according to their conscience and where our children can grow up safe from the shadows of intolerance and oppression.

As families across the nation and around the world gather to remember the liberation of the Israelites and to teach a new generation the ancient tradition of the Passover Seder and the reading of the Haggadah, let us all give thanks for God's sustaining love and for the Jewish heritage that has so strengthened and enriched our national life.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a joyous Passover celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense

March 30, 1999

Dear _____:

Attached is a report to the Congress on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense, submitted pursuant to Condition 11(F) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the United States Senate on April 24, 1997.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives;

Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

March 30, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 1998, to January 31, 1999.

In an important step toward easing tensions on Cyprus, the Government of Cyprus announced on December 29 that the S-300 anti-aircraft missiles that it had ordered from Russia would not be delivered to the island. This positive and welcome decision gave important new impetus to efforts to reduce tensions and promote a just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus dispute.

The United Nations remained active during the reporting period in the effort to resolve the Cyprus dispute. In addition to renewing the mandate for the U.N. Forces in Cyprus

(UNFICYP), the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1218 that endorsed the Secretary General's September 30 initiative to reduce tensions and promote a just and lasting peace on Cyprus. In a December 23 statement, I wholeheartedly endorsed Resolution 1218 and directed that the United States take all necessary steps to support a sustained effort to implement it. As I said then and wish to emphasize now, the United States remains deeply committed to finding a viable solution to the Cyprus problem.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks at the Electronic Industries Alliance Dinner March 30, 1999

Thank you. First of all, I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to come tonight. I thank my longtime friend Dave McCurdy for his introduction and for his leadership of EIA. You made a good decision when you named him your president. And I know what you're laughing about out there. [Laughter] Two or 3 years from now, you'll think it's an even better decision. [Laughter]

I want to also pay my respects to your vice president, John Kelly, who went to Georgetown with me, although he's a much younger man. [Laughter] John—when I was a senior, John was actually president of the freshman class. And I've been trying to think out of respect for the will of the people—the only people we knew back then—whether I should still address him as “Mr. President.” [Laughter] But then that would confuse the EIA, so I didn't do it.

Mr. Major, thank you for your invitation. Mr. McGinn, thank you for your remarks. That was very impressive. I couldn't even keep up with all the new things you announced tonight.

I'm glad that our FCC Chairman, Bill Kennard, is here, and I think Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera is also here. And General Jones, I thought you gave a terrific invocation. Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

You know, I was trying to think tonight whether there was any way I could say what I originally wanted to come here and say, which is to talk about some of the technology policies that we're trying to pursue that I hope will help you, but in the process will strengthen our democracy and the sweep of opportunity and freedom around the world, and at the same time say a few words, as I feel I must, about our important mission in Kosovo.

And before I came over here tonight, I had a long meeting, and I went and had what has now become almost my daily phone call with Prime Minister Blair. And I sat down and I thought about it. I thought about how grateful I am to the members of this organization for the phenomenal successes you have enjoyed in these last few years and the major contributions you have made to the economy of the United States, the opportunities you have given our people. And I thought about this terrible bru-

ality that is going on in Kosovo, replaying what happened not so long ago in Bosnia and in a way replaying what we see around the world, the modern world, that seems to be troubled with ancient hatreds rooted in racial and ethnic and religious differences.

If you think about the major forces alive in the world today, the move toward globalization and the explosion in technology, especially in information and communications, they really not only, as all of you know better than I, are dramatically changing the way we work and live and relate to each other and to the rest of the world. They represent both a pull toward integration and a dramatic force toward decentralization. And I would argue to you that both forces have within them the potential for enormous good and enormous trouble for the world of the 21st century.

If you think about the forces toward integration of the global economy, for example, that's a wonderful thing. But it can be very destabilizing if we leave whole countries and vast populations within countries behind.

If you think about the explosion in technology and how wonderful it is in empowering individuals and small firms and communities, in enabling communities, little schools I've seen in poor African and Latin American villages to hook up to the Internet and have access to learning that would have taken them a whole generation, at least, to achieve through traditional economic development processes in their countries, it is breathtaking.

But looked at another way, it also provides access to technology for every terrorist in the world to have their own website and for independent operators to figure out how to make bombs and set up chemical and biological labs. And when married together with the most primitive hatreds, like those we see manifest in Kosovo today, the advent of technology and decentralized decisionmaking and access to information can be a very potent but destructive force.

When I ran for President in 1992, what I was seeking to do was to articulate a vision to the American people of the way I wanted America to look in the 21st century, in a world

I hope we would be living in then, and what I thought the President and the Government of the United States should do: to take advantage of the benefits of globalization and the explosion of technology and to provide those policies and bulwarks necessary to guard against the deepest problems of the modern world. There are so many things bringing us together and so many things breaking apart. We have to decide a lot of new questions.

And if I could just say a word about what we tried to do—and Dave McCurdy and I have been working on this through the Democratic Leadership Council for more than 15 years—I believe that if we could create a country in which there was genuine opportunity for every responsible citizen, and in which we had a real sense of community, of belonging, of mutual responsibility, one to another, so we all felt we would be better off if everybody had a chance as well; and that if we could maintain America's sense of responsibility for leading the rest of the world toward peace and prosperity and harmony, both with the environment and with others across all the lines that divide us, that the best days for our country and the best days for humanity were still ahead. I still believe that.

Every story you can tell about every company represented in this room reflects that. But we cannot forget that there will never be a time when life is free of difficulties and where the organized forces of destruction did not seek to move into the breaches of human conduct for their own advance.

And that is what we see in Kosovo. It is a sad commentary, indeed, that on the edge of a new millennium there are still people who feel they must define their own self-worth and merit in terms of who they are not; and who believe that their lives only really count not when they are lifting themselves up but when they are holding someone else down; and sometimes who believe that it is literally legitimate not only to uproot totally innocent civilians from their homes and their villages but to kill them in large numbers.

This is, of course, not confined to the Balkans. It is still at the root of the troubles in the Middle East. It is still at the root of the problems we are oh so close to getting finally resolved in Northern Ireland. It was at the root of an ancient tribal difference that led to the deaths of somewhere between 500,000 and

800,000 people in 100 days in Rwanda just a few years ago.

We see it everywhere, the fear of the other. It led a couple of demented people in a little Texas town to dismember and drag an African-American to death and a couple of other people in Wyoming to kill a young man at the dawn of his life, apparently because he was gay.

We have to find a way to use all this technology in a way that celebrates our differences instead of uses them for destructive ends. And the only way to do that, I am convinced, is to somehow reaffirm that amidst all our differences, what it is we have in common as human beings is more important.

And ultimately, that is the liberating logic of the telecommunications revolution so much of you have powered, the idea that if we just gave everybody a chance, ordinary people would do extraordinary things, and so they have.

And so I ask all of you tonight to support what the United States and our 18 other NATO Allies are trying to do in the Balkans—first, because of all the little people who may never even see most of the things you invent and sell and market, but who could if they could live in peace. Second, because the problems could spread, and you see them beginning to spread with the outflow of refugees. And third, because the United States and our allies will always have to provide for some order in a world where you want to maximize freedom and individual initiative. There have to be some limits beyond which we collectively do not wish to see our country go, our world go.

I know you had Congressman Davis and Governor Gilmore here today. The White House, as all of you know, is quite close to the Potomac River. Right across the river in Virginia—I used to run down there every day and look at this and just be amazed—in the Fairfax County School District, there are children from 180 different racial, ethnic, and national groups. They speak about 100 different languages as their first language. It is the most diverse of all American school districts; but what they represent is happening everywhere.

I went home a couple of weeks ago to the little town in Arkansas where I was born. There are about 9,700 people there now. It's a lot bigger than it was when I was born there. And there is a little grade school in this little town in southwest Arkansas named for me—which I appreciate; usually you have to die before they

do that. [Laughter] And anyway, in this little grade school in my little hometown there are 27 immigrant children, first generation immigrant children whose parents, by and large, were migrant farmworkers who settled there.

This is an incredible asset for America. But we have to say to people, whatever your national background, whatever your racial background, whatever your religious convictions, you can have a home here in this country and you ought to be safe in the world if you are willing to abide by the norms of civilized conduct everywhere. We must not allow, if we have the ability to stop it, ethnic cleansing or genocide anywhere we can stop it, particularly at the edge of Europe.

So I ask you to support our men and women in uniform, but to support the proposition that the 21st century world will be a case of—yes, there will be a lot more decentralization, there will be a lot more individual empowerment, but it will not be a time of chaos and madness. We will not let it descend into the vision of the darkest of the science fiction writers, because we believe our common humanity is better than that. Thank you. [Applause] Thank you; thank you.

Now I want to say what I came to say. [Laughter] But it relates to what I just said. I believe in the information age the role of Government is to empower people with the tools to make the most of their own lives, to tear down the barriers to that objective, and to create the conditions within which we can go forward together.

Now, the answers to all the questions will not always be easy. But at least I want you to know that's how I think about this. I see myself trying to help create the conditions of dynamic balance so we can get the maximum benefit from market economics without giving up the idea of community and without leaving anyone behind who's willing to try to do the right thing.

And I see our environmental policy in the same way. I think we have to take on the challenge of climate change because I'm convinced the science is real; but I believe we can do it in a way that grows the economy, not undermines it. And all the big questions we're facing this year as a country require that sort of decisionmaking. You don't have to agree with the decision I make, but you ought to ask yourself what is the basis of your decision.

We're dealing with the challenge, for example, of the aging of America. And the older I get, the better I like that challenge. [Laughter] I've never understood all this handwringing about Social Security and Medicare. This is a high-class problem. [Laughter] Some of you have helped to bring it about. [Laughter] We're living longer, and that's good, isn't it? And there's more medicine, and that's good, isn't it? But as a consequence, you know, the average age in America is 76.7 years.

Anybody in this room over 60 who still doesn't have any life-threatening conditions has probably got a life expectancy well in excess of 80 years already. Any child born in America that's under the age of 15 that's healthy and stays healthy has probably got a life expectancy of about 84. And with the baby boomers retiring, this is an issue we have to deal with.

Now, I'll tell you how I think about this. I believe we should make maximum use of technology, maximum use of modern business organizations and competition. I think that we have to be willing to reform the Medicare system. But I don't believe we should turn the Medicare system into, in effect, a defined-contribution as opposed to a defined-benefit plan, because health care is not like retirement, and it's a lifesaver for people.

And I'm willing to work with Congress to save it. And we'll have some philosophical differences, but I'm trying to achieve the dynamic balance of maximizing the change while maximizing the sense of community and the fact that it's a lifesaver for so many people.

Social Security—we're going to have an interesting debate. By 2030 we'll only have two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. Now, by 2034, 35 years from now, the Social Security system is projected to run out of money, the Trust Fund, which means you only have three choices: You can raise revenues, reduce benefits, or increase the rate of return on what we're investing.

And there are a lot of people who believe that we should, in effect, take this surplus and give it back to the American people as mandatory individual retirement accounts; let them invest it in the stock market, because the stock market always outperforms the Government bonds over any long period of time. And if you happen to be one of those unfortunate people who retire in a period like we had between—in the 1960's and early seventies, where the

value of the stock market is going down, then the Government would make up the difference between what you would have gotten under the old Social Security program and what you in fact get.

The other way to do it is to do what Canada does, which is set up an independent board, like the Federal Reserve, and let the whole Trust Fund earn money. And then you'll know you'll always be able to have uniform, but higher, returns for people.

None of us want—no Republican or Democrat I've talked to believes we should raise payroll taxes, because the tax is regressive. More than half the working people in the country already pay more in payroll taxes than they do in income taxes; and small businesses just getting started have to pay that, whether they make money or not, unlike the income tax. So we don't believe that's an acceptable thing.

So when you hear this debate, think of the dynamic balance; think of how you can maximize the market forces that are good and still preserve a sense of community so—and maybe even improve it. For example, I want to lift the earnings limitations because people are living longer, and I think once you earn Social Security, you ought to be able to work. I want to do something about single women, because the poverty rate among elderly single women, if they're living alone, is about twice the poverty rate for other seniors in our country. That's the framework in which I hope this debate will play itself out and get resolved this year.

The last issue I'll tell you is that I firmly believe we ought to deal with Social Security and Medicare in a way that maximizes the amount of the surplus we use over the next 15 years to buy down the public debt.

Now, that is much less popular than the alternative proposal by the congressional majority, which is to give most of the surplus away right now in a tax cut. It's your money anyway, they say. And of course, it is. It is your money anyway. But keep in mind, our country quadrupled the national debt between 1981 and 1993. And in an uncertain economic climate in the rest of the world, with all the financial troubles you've seen in Asia, it seems to me to be given a chance to pay down our debt to the lowest level we've had since before World War I is better for most of you than a short-term impact of a tax cut.

Why? Because it will give us lower interest rates, lower inflation; it will lower interest rates for countries that have to borrow money that you want to sell your products to; it will maximize growth; it will, therefore, maximize income and job-generating potential in America. And to me, the benefits of having an America that could be out of debt in 17 years, that's quite staggering. Because we might have to borrow money ourselves someday again, and we don't ever want to do—ever get back to the way we were when we were having to borrow money just to pay the bills.

Most of your companies have borrowed a lot of money, but presumably you didn't do it very often just to make payroll. And that is what we—that's the decision we've been given the opportunity to deal with. So it seems to me that's the right decision to do.

And I think that—when I look at our technology policy, I think about that. I think about how can we have the dynamic balance, how can we maximize this. This is almost 100 percent positive good. And if there is something that has to be done to limit it in any way, shape, or form, how can we minimize the damage to the economy and to the rapid spread of opportunity.

Now, that's what we've tried to do for 6 years, and it's worked pretty well. So we've cut the deficit and balanced the budget, but almost doubled investment in education and training.

I believe very strongly that we have to continue to expand trade. That's another issue. Most of you support that position. Most of you believe the President should be given fast-track authority. And most of you believe if we can get an agreement with China that is good for the American economy, we should extend the opportunity to them to join the World Trade Organization. I believe that.

But I ask you to think about how are we going to get this passed in a Congress where there are some people who are afraid of trade and some people who are basically—they're afraid trade hurts more of the people they represent than it helps. And others just are afraid trade gives power to countries that they feel will be adversaries of the United States over the long run. Some people feel that about China now, that they're inevitably our adversary.

I say there has to be a dynamic balance here. We should be trading more. We should be

opening our markets more. We should be getting more open markets. But we should make sure we're investing what is necessary here to help people who are dislocated by trade through no fault of their own, and we should support the same thing in other countries. When we elevate trade, if we increase national income it should lift the incomes of all working people. It should be a race to the top, not a race to the bottom.

And when we deal with China, we should recognize that we're advantaged when we open China more, economically, informationally, culturally. But if we have honest differences with them over political and human rights, we ought to say it. And we ought to encourage them to air their differences with us, but not in a way that isolates us one from another.

Keep in mind what I said to you about these ethnic wars. There are people who cannot bear to live without somebody to be afraid of or look down on. And there are—sometimes I have the feeling that we're looking for a new enemy in America. I'm not looking for a new enemy. I didn't pick Mr. Milosevic, for example. His conduct made him the adversary of the United States and people who believe in the inherent dignity of every religious and ethnic group in the world. I did not look for a new enemy.

So I say to you, if you want us to go forward with China, then remind everybody the same debates we're having about China today are being held about the United States in China. I promise you there are people inside the high councils of government who say, "Those Americans don't want us to amount to a hill of beans. Those Americans want us to be their enemy so they will have a way to increase the defense budget. Those Americans will do everything they can to promote discord in our country; that's why they're all for political and human rights. They want us to just pure disintegrate, just like we did once before." And by the time—you know, you just keep on talking like that, and there is enough mutual misunderstanding until finally you get the political equivalent of a divorce.

So I say we should be careful. We should evaluate our partners, our friends, our potential adversaries based on the facts at hand. But we should always be working for the best future, even as we prepare for something we might not like. And that's where I think you are.

So I ask you to work with us to help to fashion a fast-track bill, for example, that will reflect a new consensus on trade, that will be able to say: We want more trade, but we want to lift people up and we don't want to tear the environment up, and there is a way to do that. And yes, we would like to have a good relationship with China that includes a frank, sometimes even uncomfortable airing of our differences, but we recognize that the Chinese people will be better off and we'll be less likely to have conflict in the 21st century if there is more constructive relationships, not just commerce but also culture, education, all kinds of information. And so let's try to build that sort of relationship.

And that again I say, it seems to me you folks are in a unique position to make these arguments because if you take—well, Rich was giving his speech tonight, and I was thinking about what his company does in Newark, New Jersey. Now, most of the people they're helping in Newark, New Jersey, will never work for Lucent. But it will be a more successful company if everybody is at least literate enough to make a decent living, have a good job, and buy those products. And life will be a lot better if every inner city in this country has a set of thriving businesses beyond the drug trade, and where the children feel safe walking on the street, and where the schools are functioning at a high level and people aren't dropping out of school. And so they invest in that, not because it immediately shows up on the bottom line but because they have a sense that life is of a whole texture and you have to understand what these relationships are. That's what we have to do as Americans. And that's how we have to look at this.

So let me just mention two or three specific things that I think we should do in your area, and I ask you for your help. First, we have to work to keep America's lead in science and technology, which means you have to do your part, but we have to do ours. Basic Government investment in research and development is important and fulfills a role fundamentally different from that done by most companies.

Tonight I ask you to help us to increase our investment for the seventh straight year in research and development. Our budget provides those kinds of investments that will spur the next generation of information technology, meet the challenge of climate change, find new cures

for medical difficulties, explore space, protect our infrastructure against terrorist attacks.

The budget resolution passed by the congressional majority would inevitably lead to big reductions in many of these investments. It is not necessary for us to do this. We can find a way to be fiscally responsible without cutting our R&D investments, and I ask for your help in that regard.

Second, I ask you to work with me to maintain the right conditions for entrepreneurship in electronics. Just a few years ago, E-commerce did not exist. In 4 years, retail trade on the Internet could reach \$100 billion, business-to-business trade above a trillion. Two years ago the Vice President and I released a framework for seizing the potential of global electronic commerce. We said the Internet should be a free-trade zone, with incentives for competition, protection for consumers and children, supervised not by Government but by the people who use the Internet every day. Most of you thought that was a pretty good idea.

Now, in the coming months we've got to fill in the blanks of that nice-sounding general statement. I want to work with you to find ways to give consumers the same protection in the virtual mall they now have at the shopping mall, to enhance the security and privacy of financial transactions on the Internet, an increasingly deep concern of citizens everywhere, and to bring advanced, high-speed connections into homes and small businesses. I may not know as much about cable modems or T1 lines as the Vice President—[laughter]—“may” is a misleading word there. [Laughter] But I know what this can do for our children's future.

The third thing I'd like to ask you to do relates to something Dave McCurdy talked about. I want you to help us continue to work to bridge the digital divide. We have to have shared prosperity and leave no one behind. Today, affluent schools still are more likely than disadvantaged ones to have Internet access in the classrooms. And white households are more than twice as likely to own a computer as black or Hispanic ones. The digital divide has begun to narrow, but it won't disappear on its own. We'll have to work at it.

Dave talked about the first NetDay in 1996. Listen to that—before that day, only 8 percent of our classrooms were wired to the Internet. Today, well over half of them are, and we are

well on our way to connecting every classroom to the Internet by the end of next year.

I'd like to ask you to do one other thing, as well. A lot of you have had a hard time finding sufficiently trained workers in the United States to do the work you need done. Last year I agreed to increase the number of H-1B visas as an emergency measure. But over the long run, the answer to this problem of the lack of skilled workers cannot simply be to look beyond our borders. Surely, a part of it has to be to better train people within our borders to do this work.

For many years, your foundation has made this a top priority, and many individual firms have, as well. Cisco Systems is now working to establish a networking academy, for example, in every empowerment zone high school that wants one. These academies will provide students with the skills they need to get certified for jobs in information technology. It's like giving a student a first-class ticket to a high-skill, high-wage future. We have to do more of that.

Because you have done so well, I would argue that you have larger responsibilities as citizens than those who have not. And many of you are fulfilling them remarkably.

The last thing I'd like to say is this: You were very kind when I spoke about Kosovo earlier—kind to stand, maybe just hoping I was through with my speech. [Laughter] I believe there is a hunger for substantive information on the part of our citizens greater than I have ever seen before. And the more you give them ways to get information, the more hungry they feel. But keep in mind, you can sit in front of your television and channel-surf all night long. You can have 50 channels, or 70 or 80 or 90. You may pick up a lot of facts, and you may go to bed bleary-eyed at 3 in the morning, and the next day your understanding of what it is you have seen or heard might not be any greater.

And so the last thing I would like to say is, with your employees, with those in the community with whom you work, help people to understand that the forces of globalization can be good, but they present challenges that must be met. Help people understand that the forces of decentralization, of the breaking up of old blocs can be a magnificent story of individual empowerment and democratization, but they, too, present challenges that must be met.

I have done everything I could to fashion a Government that could do its part to meet those challenges. It's the smallest Government we've had since President Kennedy was here. It has given more power to States and localities. It works more with community groups and churches and social programs. It does a lot of things that need to be done badly, and I'm sure we can do better.

But in the end, there will be these gaps, and someone must be standing in the gap to reaffirm our basic devotion to freedom and democracy, to peace and prosperity, and to the principle that we must be a community, that out of many we are one, and that we are still about the

business of our Founding Fathers, forming a more perfect Union.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the J.W. Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to John E. Major, chairman, Electronic Industries Alliance; Richard A. McGinn, chairman and chief executive officer, Lucent Technologies; Brig. Gen. Hiram (Doc) Jones, USAF, Deputy Chief of Chaplains, who gave the invocation; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Statement on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty

March 31, 1999

I am very pleased that yesterday negotiators from the 30 countries that are party to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) reached an agreement setting the stage for a final adapted treaty. All countries agreed to deeper limits on their conventional forces and stronger measures to ensure compliance. The decision preserves NATO's ability to fulfill its post-cold-war missions, to ensure its new members are full military partners, and to deepen its engagement with Partnership For Peace states. It also takes into account the interests of non-NATO states and helps fulfill the com-

mitment President Yeltsin and I made last September to conclude a final adapted treaty by the OSCE summit this year.

At a time when we are trying to end a pattern of escalating insecurity, brutality, and armed conflict in the Balkans, I am gratified that these 30 countries, comprising the vast majority of European nations, are moving in a different direction. Together, we are building a Europe in which armies prepare to stand beside their neighbors, not against them, and security depends on cooperation, not competition.

Interview With Dan Rather of CBS News

March 31, 1999

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, thank you for doing this.

The President. Glad to do it, Dan.

Mr. Rather. I appreciate you doing it.

NATO Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets

Mr. Rather. As Commander in Chief, you've sent some of our best to fly every day, every night, through the valley of the shadow of death in a place far away. Why? For what?

The President. For several reasons. First and most important, because there are defenseless people there who are being uprooted from their homes by the hundreds of thousands and who are being killed by the thousands; because it is not an isolated incident but, in fact, a repeat of a pattern we have seen from Mr. Milosevic in Bosnia and Croatia. So there is a compelling humanitarian reason.

Secondly, we haven't been asked to do this alone. All of our NATO Allies are doing it with us. They all feel very strongly about it, and we are moving together. Thirdly, we do not want to see the whole region destabilized by the kind of ethnic aggression that Mr. Milosevic has practiced repeatedly over the last 10 years, but he's been limited. This is, in some ways, the most destabilizing area he could be doing it in. And fourthly, we believe we can make a difference.

And so for all those reasons, I believe we should be doing this.

Mr. Rather. Why now, and why this place? The Russians, in a somewhat similar situation in Chechnya, had maybe 100,000 casualties. We've had Rwanda, Sudan—you didn't go into those places. As a matter of fact, the Serbians argue the Croats did the same thing with the Serbians in part of Croatia. So why this place? Why right now?

The President. Well, first of all, if you go back to Yugoslavia, we never supported any kind of ethnic cleansing by anybody. And the circumstances under which we went into Bosnia and ended the Bosnian war were designed to guarantee safety and security for all the ethnic groups, not just the Muslims but also the Croats and the Serbs. And the peace agreement that the Kosovar Albanians agreed to would have brought in an international peacekeeping force under NATO that would have guaranteed security to the Serbs as well as to the Albanians.

So the United States and NATO believe that there should be no ethnic cleansing and no people killed or uprooted because of their ethnic background.

Secondly, we're doing it now because now it's obvious that Mr. Milosevic has no interest in an honorable peace that guarantees security and autonomy for the Kosovar Albanians, and instead he is practicing aggression. We might have had to do it last fall, but we were able to head it off. Remember, he created a quarter of a million refugees last year. And NATO threatened to take action, and we worked out an agreement, which was observed for a while, which headed this off.

When we agreed to take action was when he rejected the peace agreement and he had already amassed 40,000 soldiers on the border and in Kosovo, with about 300 tanks. So that's why we're doing it now.

And you asked about other places. In the Rwanda case, let's remember what happened. In Rwanda, without many modern military weapons, somewhere between 500,000 and 800,000—we may never know—people were killed in the space of only 100 days. I think the rest of the world was caught flat-footed and did not have the mechanisms to deal with it. We did do some good and, I think, limited some killing there. But I wish we'd been able to do more there. And I would hope that that sort of thing will not ever happen again in Africa. And that's one of the reasons we worked hard to build up a cooperative relationship with African militaries through the Africa Crisis Response Initiative.

So I believe there are lots of reasons. But if you look at Kosovo, we have a history there in Europe. We know what happens if you have ethnic slaughter there. We know how it can spread. And the main thing is, there is this horrible humanitarian crisis. And because of NATO, because of our allied agreement and because we have the capacity, we believe we can do something about it there. And I think we have to try.

Mr. Rather. You still believe you can do something about it there? The last few days have indicated—well, seem from at least several points of view, Milosevic is winning, and we're losing.

The President. Well, we knew that that would happen in the first few days. He had planned this a long time. Keep in mind, before the first NATO plane got in the air, he already had the 40,000 troops there. Think how we would feel if this were going on and we were doing nothing. There's no question that in—we've run this air campaign for less than a week. We've been hampered by bad weather. We had to be cautious on the early nights to try to at least protect our planes as much as we possibly can against the air defenses, which are quite good.

So it takes a while to get up and going. And against that, he had 40,000 troops and 300 tanks. It shouldn't surprise anybody that he's able to do a lot of what he intended to, even though we've had some success in hitting his military targets in the last couple of days.

But I would urge the American people and, indeed, the people of all the NATO nations to have a little resolve here, to stay with your leaders, to give us a chance to really see this thing through. We cannot view this as something

that will be instantaneously successful. This is something that will require some time.

Keep in mind, when we took NATO air action in Bosnia, when we tried to alleviate the siege of Sarajevo, which was a very important precursor to the ultimate peace that was signed there, the air campaign went on for 20 days—with pauses—I think there were 12 days, at least, of bombing. So that's quite a bit more than has been done now—2,300 sorties there.

So the American people and the people of the NATO nations should not be surprised that what has happened on the ground has happened. It was always obvious it was going to happen if there were no opposition to Milosevic. And this thing hasn't had enough time to work. So I would ask for the American people to be patient and to be resolved and be firm and to give our plan a chance to take hold here.

Call for Easter Suspension of Airstrikes

Mr. Rather. Let me follow up some, Mr. President. First of all, the Pope has asked for an Easter suspension of the bombing. Are you prepared to do that?

The President. I don't see how we can do that, with what is going on on the ground there now. Mr. Milosevic is running those people to the Albanian border, to the other borders by the thousands a day; he's killing people. No one would like more than I to properly observe Easter, which for Christians is the most important holiday of all—even more important than Christmas, really, because of what it symbolizes to the living. But we can't observe Easter and honor the resurrection of Christ by allowing him another free day to kill more innocent civilians.

Mr. Rather. And to those people who say, Mr. President, that this is the most important week in the whole Judeo-Christian calendar in many ways because you have Passover, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter—that it is “obscene” to be carrying on this kind of war during this period—you say what?

The President. That we are acting in defense of the defenseless. We are not carrying on an aggressive war. We are acting at a time when he is going through the country killing people—according to the reports, including moderate politicians—tried to destroy records of what their land holdings are, tried to eradicate any historical record of their claim to their own land, and has given no indication whatever that he's prepared to stop his aggression.

I mean, the cease-fire he offered to Prime Minister Primakov was ludicrous. He didn't offer to withdraw his troops to where they were before this invasion began. He didn't do that. He basically said, “Well, now, I'll just keep my gang and sit around here, and if everybody wants to stop shooting, that's fine with me.”

Since he's taken all the media out of Kosovo, we would have no way of knowing even whether he was honoring that or not. He could keep right on doing what he's been doing, and there would be no coverage of it.

So this week is a very important week to me personally and to American Christians, to American Jews. Next week will be Easter week for Orthodox observers, Christians not only in—the Serbs, in that part of the world, and among the many, many Orthodox we have in the United States. I hate the idea of having to continue this campaign during this period. But I hate more the idea that we would walk away from this campaign while he continues to clean out house after house after house and village after village after village and kill a lot of innocent people. I think that that would not serve to honor the occasion.

President's Feelings About Kosovo Situation

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, as you always try to do, we're talking in measured tones. As President of the United States, you have to be careful of what you say. But I'm told by those who are close to you that you have a lot of pent-up feelings about what's happening in the Balkans, what we're doing there. Can you share some of that with us?

The President. Well, I guess I do have a lot of pent-up feelings, and I think the President is supposed to keep a lot of those feelings pent up. But let me say, I think throughout human history one of the things that has most bedeviled human beings is their inability to get along with people that are different than they are, and their vulnerability to be led by demagogues who play on their fears of people who are different than they are.

You and I grew up in a part of the country where that was a staple of political life during our childhood. That's why this race issue has always been so important to me in America. And here we are at the end of the cold war; we're on the verge of the 21st century; our stock market went over 10,000 this week; we see the Internet and all this technology with

all this promise for all these people, not just the United States but all over the world; and what is the dominant problem of our time? From the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Bosnia to central Africa, people still wanting to kill each other because of their racial and religious, their ethnic, their cultural differences.

This is crazy. And it is embodied in the policies of Mr. Milosevic. He became the leader of the Serbs by playing on their sense of grievance, which may have had some justification—their sense of ethnic grievance—and made them believe that the only way they could fulfill their appropriate human destiny was to create a Serbs-only state, even if it meant they had to go in and go to war with the Bosnian Muslims and they had to go to war with the Croatian Catholics, they had to go to war with Kosovar Albanian Muslims and clean them all out.

And to be doing it in a place where World War I began, which has been the source of so much heartache, where so much instability can occur in other neighboring countries, in the last year of the 20th century, I think is a tragedy.

And I had hoped—he's a clever man, you know, Mr. Milosevic, not to be underestimated. He's tough; he's smart; he's clever. I told all of our people that. The worst thing you can ever do in life is underestimate your adversary. But underneath all that, for reasons that I cannot fathom, there is a heart that has turned too much to stone, that believes that it's really okay that they killed all those people in Bosnia and they made a quarter of a million refugees there—or millions, probably 2 million by the time it was over, dislocated from their home, and a quarter million people died; and it's really okay what they're doing in Kosovo, that somehow non-Serbs, on land that they want, are less than human.

And I guess I've seen too much of that all my life. And I have all these dreams for what the modern world can mean. When I'm long gone from here, I hope that there will be a level of prosperity and opportunity never before known in human history, not just for Americans but for others. And it's all being threatened all over the world by these ancient hatreds.

We're working, trying to bring an end to the Northern Ireland peace process now. We're trying to keep the Middle East peace process going. All of this stuff, it's all rooted in whether people believe that their primary identity is as

a member of the human race, that they share with others who are different from them; or if they believe their primary identity is as a result of their superiority over people who may share the same village, the same neighborhood, and the same high-rise apartment but they don't belong to the same ethnic group or racial group or religious group, so if they have to be killed, it's just fine.

I mean, I think that is the basis of Milosevic's power. And that is the threat to our children's world. That's what I believe.

NATO Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, there are reports that as we speak, and through this evening, that there will be air attacks in Belgrade itself, that you've gotten NATO to authorize it. Is that correct? Is that accurate?

The President. It is accurate that we are attacking targets that we believe will achieve our stated objective, which is either to raise the price of aggression to an unacceptably high level, so that we can get back to talking peace and security, or to substantially undermine the capacity of the Serbian Government to wage war.

Mr. Rather. Does that include attacks now in Belgrade? In the vernacular of the military, have you authorized them to go downtown?

The President. I have authorized them to attack targets that I believe are appropriate to achieve our objectives. We have worked very hard to minimize the risks of collateral damage. I think a lot of the Serbian people are—like I said, the Serbs, like other people, are good people. They're hearing one side of the story. They've got a state-run media. They don't have anybody that can talk about Mr. Milosevic the way you get to talk about me from time to time. And that's too bad. And some of those targets are in difficult places. But I do not believe that we can rule out any set of targets that are reasonably related to our stated objective.

Mr. Rather. If I report tonight that we are attacking targets inside Belgrade, will that be inaccurate?

The President. I don't think that you can report tonight that I have confirmed any specific set of targets, because I think that's a mistake until we have actually carried out our mission, and I would not do that. You can report that I have said that I have not ruled out any targets

that I believe are reasonably related to our objective of raising the price of his aggression in trying to undermine the capacity to wage war.

Mr. Rather. You know I'm not going to go down a list of targets. When you say that you don't rule out any targets that could help you accomplish the mission, would that—declining to rule out targets—include the Defense Ministry, the Interior Ministry?

The President. I don't think I should discuss the specific targets, because I don't want to compromise our efforts to achieve them. And I don't want to run the risk that unscrupulous people would actually try to stage civilian casualties there that would otherwise not occur. But you can say that I didn't rule out any targets anywhere within Serbia or Kosovo that would be reasonably related to our objectives. You can say that.

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, I want to read to you what some fairly high-ranking military people have said privately. You would understand, they didn't want their names attached to it. "Dan, we're not employing the full power of our Air Force." Another one: "We ran over 200 bombing missions the first day when we moved against Saddam Hussein." There hasn't been a single day in which you've run as many as 50 bombing missions, with the possible exception of today. Why aren't we going all-out? You've described a situation that you feel passionately about, you think is wrong. Everybody knows if you had a street fight with a bully, you want to hit him the hardest right at first.

The President. You have reported—and you mentioned this to me in the beginning that we have stepped up our attacks and that I have pushed for that. I think it's quite important to emphasize—again, let me say, again—we have done this through and with NATO. It is an organization that operates by consensus. One of the things that has struck me is that in the last 48 hours, because of the actions taken by Mr. Milosevic, the will, the steel, the determination, and the outright anger of our allies has been intensifying exponentially, so that we have now, I think, stronger support than we have ever had for taking the most aggressive action we can.

So I will say to you, I've tried to do everything I can, consistent with maintaining allied unity and with achieving our objectives. I understand the frustration of some of our people in the Pentagon. But I think that the Secretary of

Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs would tell you that I have worked very hard with them to give them the maximum possible leeway, showing sensitivity only to targets that would have marginal benefit but cause a lot of collateral damage. I don't want a lot of innocent Serbian civilians to die because they have a man running their country that's doing something atrocious. But some of them are at risk because of that and must be, because we have targets that we need to go after.

Now, we're getting—we've got good allied unity. I think it's worth something to preserve that. And I think that that's what I would ask our military people to understand, too. I know that our top commanders do, because they understand what we're trying to do with NATO. And goodness knows, General Clark, the American general who's the commander of our NATO forces, we have someone who understands Mr. Milosevic very well, who was there during the Bosnian talks, and who is all-out committed to the most aggressive possible response.

So we're doing—we're getting steadily more and more support for being more and more aggressive, and I think that will only grow.

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, I want to pose this next question with all respect, but also directly. Everybody acknowledges you have a brilliant mind; you're an excellent speaker, but sometimes people—people who support you and like you say, well, he parses words too closely—"what is, is" argument, all of that. I want to discuss ground troops. In the context of speaking as directly as you possible can, when you say you have no intention to commit ground troops to accomplishing the mission in Kosovo, does that mean we are not going to have ground troops in there—no way, no how, no time?

The President. It means just what it says. I'll come back to the point, but you say people say I parse words too close. That's what they said about President Roosevelt, too. He made a pretty good President. And when people say you parse words too closely, it usually means they want to ask you a question and get you to give an answer which is inconsistent with the objective you're trying to pursue for the American people, and so you don't do what they want you to do. So normally they criticize you not for what you're doing but for what they wish you would do.

Mr. Rather. Fair enough.

The President. I have used those words carefully. I am very careful in the words I use not to mislead one way or the other. And the reason is, I think I have embraced a strategy here that I believe has a reasonable, good chance, a reasonably good chance of succeeding, maybe even a better chance than that, as long as we have more and more steel and will and determination and unity from all of our NATO Allies. And I want to pursue that strategy. And I believe that all these discussions about, well, other strategies and should we do this, that, or the other thing do not help the ultimate success of the strategy we are pursuing. That is why I have used the words I have used; why I have said the words I have said.

Now, on the merits of it, the thing that bothers me about introducing ground troops into a hostile situation—into Kosovo and into the Balkans—is the prospect of never being able to get them out. If you have a peace agreement, even if it's difficult and even if you have to stay a little longer than you thought you would, like in Bosnia, at least there is an exit strategy, and it's a manageable situation. If you go in in a hostile environment in which you do not believe in ethnic cleansing and you do not wish to see any innocent civilians killed, you could be put in a position of, for example, creating a Kosovar enclave that would keep you there forever. And I don't believe that is an appropriate thing to be discussing at this time.

I do think we've got quite a good chance of succeeding with our strategy if we could keep everybody focused on it. And I simply think that it's wrong for us to be obsessing about other things and not working—people are frustrated because we live in an age where everybody wants things to operate like a 30-second ad. This air campaign is not a 30-second ad. It's only been going on a few days, and it's been undermined to some extent by bad weather. But we are blessed with enormously skilled pilots, a good plan, good technology, and good resolve by our allies. And I'd like to see us keep working on this and not to have our attention diverted by other things.

Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, there's so many questions and so little time. You know I'm going to be in trouble if I don't ask you some questions on some other subjects, but I'd like to do that and then come back to Kosovo because

I know you agree that this war situation—air war at the moment for us—there's nothing more important than that. But let me shift gears for just a moment.

Could you describe for me what you believe to be the responsibilities of a husband of a United States Senator?

The President. [Laughter] I don't know, but I'm willing to fulfill them. I would do whatever. I would fill in at dinners, make speeches when she had to vote. I'd be the main casework officer of the New York office. I'd do whatever I was asked to do.

Let me say seriously, I have no earthly idea what my wife will do. I can tell you that before some New York officials came to her, it had never crossed her mind. And I still think it's a highly unusual thing. And I can imagine that many voters in New York would wonder whether—even though she and I intended to move to New York after we left the White House, although I would also spend a lot of time at home in Arkansas—they would wonder, well, does this make sense for someone to be a United States Senator. And that would be a burden she would have to carry in the campaign and to explain that—why she was doing it, that she was asked to do it, and demonstrate her commitment to the State and its issues.

I think if she could win an election like that, she would be magnificent. But whatever the duties are—for 22 years now or more, we've done what I wanted to do in terms of my political career. So the deal I made was, she gets the next 22 years. And if I'm still around after that, we can argue about the third phase. And so I would be happy to be the spouse of a Senator.

Mr. Rather. And you expect to do that together as man and wife?

The President. Oh, absolutely. I would—like I said, I don't know what the duties are, but I'm sure I could fulfill them.

First Family

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, you know Americans like to know that the First Family is okay, that they're doing all right. Given the year-plus, what you and our First Family have been through, tell us what you can about how the three of you are doing.

The President. Well, I think, given what we've been through, we're doing reasonably well. We're not a large family. We do love each other very much, and we work hard to support one

another. And I think that this trip to north Africa has been a good thing not only for our country—because I think Hillary has done a great job on it—I think it must have been good for Hillary and Chelsea, too, to have that time together, to do some exciting things, to be in a different environment. And I think they've really enjoyed it. I think we're doing quite well considering what we've been through. And God willing, we'll keep after it.

Lessons of the Past Year

Mr. Rather. How about yourself, Mr. President? We're here in a room with pictures of Lincoln, Washington, Continental Congress. And you're thinking about sending our sons and daughters into war; I know that. But I also know you tend to stay up late at night; you always have done that. When you look back over this year-plus, what's the moral of it? Does it have a moral?

The President. Oh, yes, I think there is more than one lesson here. I think, first of all, the moral is—there's a personal moral, which is that every person must bear the consequences of his or her conduct, and when you make a mistake, you pay for it, no matter who you are. And it's true whether or not it's made public, or whether or not what's made public is exactly accurate reflection of what in fact happened—that's not the important thing. The important thing is that there are consequences in people's personal lives, no matter who they are.

The second lesson is that the Constitution works. The Founding Fathers were smart people. They understood that partisan passions which very often get carried away in the temptation to seize on events of the moment would be too great, and that's why they wrote the Constitution the way they did. And they were awfully smart.

The third thing that I think we learned this year is that the American people almost always get it right if you give them enough time to think through things and really work on it.

And the fourth thing I think we learned is that people expect their elected officials to work for them and not be forced to be focused on themselves or their adversaries in Washington, and that they will reward those who they believe get up every day and show up for work and work for them and their future and their children, and they will take account of those they believe do not.

Those are, I think, the lessons of the last year.

Option of Resignation

Mr. Rather. You said the American people, if given enough time—did you ever consider resigning?

The President. Never.

Mr. Rather. Never for a second?

The President. Never. Not a second. Never. Never.

Mr. Rather. Never entered your mind?

The President. Never entered my mind.

Mr. Rather. Did the First Lady ever come to you and say, "Listen, I think we ought to at least consider it?"

The President. No. She felt at least as strongly as I did that it shouldn't be done.

Mr. Rather. That tells me she might have felt even stronger.

The President. At least as strongly as I did. But it never crossed my mind. I wouldn't do that to the Constitution. I wouldn't do that to the Presidency. I wouldn't do that to the history in this country. I would never have legitimized what I believe is horribly wrong with what has occurred here over the last 4 or 5 years. So it never crossed my mind. And I always had faith. I just—I prayed about it. I tried to work on maintaining my inner spiritual strength, and I tried to come to grips with the work I had to do personally with my family and myself and the work I owed the American people. And I just decided that of all the options available, that wasn't one. And it never entered my mind.

Public's Response to President's Conduct

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, I get a lot of letters—not as many as you do, but I get a lot of letters from parents who say, some of them say, "Listen, I like President Clinton, I like what he's doing for the country." Some of them even say they'd "vote for him again, but I don't know what to tell the children on the worst aspects of what happened last year." Let's try to give these parents some help. What can they tell the children? What do they tell—

The President. Well, it's interesting, you know. I get a lot of letters from parents and from children—interesting letters from children—and sometimes pretty young children—11-, 12-, 13-year-old kids writing me, some of them, on this very point, and offended that they're being used in that way, because what they say is, "What

I learned from this is what my parents always told me: that nobody is so big or so important that they're not subject to the same rules of human conduct; and that when they do things they shouldn't, they have to bear the consequences. But if they bear the consequences, say they're sorry and go on, they should be able to go on with their lives, because they also know that every person makes mistakes. No one is so big or so important that they are perfect."

And so that's what I would say to our children. That's what I think the lessons of all those Bible stories are, of the great figures of the Bible who did things they shouldn't have done. The reason those stories are in the Bible is to say, everyone sins, but everyone is held accountable, and everyone has a chance to go on—and that all three of those points need to be made. And if you say that to our children, I think that's what needs to be said.

Kids are pretty smart, and they—this is a good lesson, not a bad lesson for them. I'm sorry that I had to be the example, and it's painful. But the lessons, the right lessons properly learned, will be good for them and good for our country.

Impeachment

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, I hear this clock ticking, and it isn't the "60 Minutes" clock. And I do want to get back to the war situation, but in this category—last question, if you'll indulge me—you agree that whatever you do, however this situation in Kosovo turns out, whatever else you do, in the first paragraph of your obituary is going to be a reference to what you consider among the worst things that has ever happened to you: the only President in the 20th century to be impeached; one of only two Presidents to be impeached. Give me some sense of how you feel about that, within yourself.

The President. Well, first of all, I'm not at all sure that's right, that it will be the first paragraph of the obituary. And secondly, if it is, if the history writers are honest, they'll tell it for just exactly what it was. And I am honored that something that was indefensible was pursued and that I had the opportunity to defend the Constitution. That doesn't have anything to do with the fact that I did something I shouldn't have done, of which I am ashamed of, and which I apologize for. But it had nothing to

do with the impeachment process. And I think that's what the American people, two-thirds of them, knew all along. And I determined that I would defend the Constitution and the work of my administration. And those that did not agree with what I had done and were furious that it had worked and that the country was doing well, and attempted to use what should have been a constitutional and legal process for political ends, did not prevail. And that's the way I saw it.

I have no lingering animosity. I don't wake up every day mad at those people—

Mr. Rather. You've got to be bitter about some of it.

The President. I'm not. I have—I'm not. I learned—look, I'm not. And I'm not saying that for any reason other than that I have—part of the learning process that I went through in the last 6 years, but certainly in the last—and in the last several years when I was dealing with this, when I saw—all these other charges, they were always false; they never amounted to anything. And half the people that were propagating them knew they were false. I realized that, particularly in the last year, if I wanted people to give me forgiveness, I had to extend forgiveness. If I wanted to be free to be the best President and the best husband and father and the best person I could be, I had to free myself of bitterness.

And I have worked very hard at it. And I have had very powerful examples. I look at a man like Nelson Mandela, who suffered enormously. Yes, he was part of a political movement that was threatening to the people who were in, but he didn't deserve to go to jail for 27 years. And in the 27 years he was there, he purged himself of his hatred and also of whatever might have been wrong with himself, and his hatred for other people. Now, if a person like that can rid himself of bitterness, what I went through was peanuts compared to that. It was nothing.

And I think it's an—and any moment I spend full of anger and bitterness is a moment I am robbing from my wife or from my daughter or from my country or from my friends. So it's almost a selfish decision. But I do not regard this impeachment vote as some great badge of shame; I do not. Because it was—I do not believe it was warranted, and I don't think it was right.

And I believe, frankly, if you look back at President Andrew Johnson, who unfortunately, because of the circumstances under which he came to office, didn't have the opportunity to achieve very much while he was President, I think most people believe that he was unjustly impeached and that the fact that he stood up to it and refused to give in and came within much closer than I did—he came within only a vote of actually being removed—reflects well on him and the history of the country, not poorly.

And so I just don't have bad feelings about that. But neither do I have feelings of anger and bitterness against those who did what they did, whether they believed it or whether it was political, or whatever. I just think that it's past us, and we need to put it behind us, and we need to go on. We owe that to the American people, to let it go. And all of us owe it to our families and our personal lives. All the great players here, they need to let it go and go on with the business of the country.

Serbia's Strategy in Kosovo

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, you have been very generous with your time, and I appreciate it. I want to get back to the war. Let me sketch out for you a scenario which a number of diplomats and some military people have said this could happen: Milosevic will have defeated the Kosovo Liberation Army, self-described as such, and he will have rid Kosovo—driven out most of, if not all of, the Albanians. He's very near having accomplished that. So over the next few days, having accomplished that on the ground, while our air campaign tries to build this momentum you've talked about, he then says, "Okay, I'm ready to talk." Doesn't that leave us defeated? Or does it?

The President. It does if we accept that result—if we accept that result. Because I think we've got to say, "But the Kosovars have all got to be able to come home, and they have to be secure, and they have to be given the autonomy of self-government"—

Mr. Rather. Excuse me—you're talking about in some enclave, some protected enclave?

The President. No, I'm talking about they're entitled to come back to Kosovo, to go back to their villages where they were, and to enjoy self-government and security. But keep in mind, Dan, let me say again, there is no scenario

under which this last week could not have occurred, if he was willing to do it.

Mr. Rather. You don't think the air campaign gave him the opening to do this?

The President. No, no, that I'm sure of. I just met with a bunch of Kosovar Albanians here—excuse me, a bunch of Albanian-Americans here—I'm sorry—in the White House. One man told me he had 24 cousins in Pristina. Every one of them said to me, "Don't let people tell you that this NATO air campaign caused Milosevic to do that. Everybody knows that's a bunch of bull."

Mr. Rather. You're absolutely convinced—

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. Rather. —that it didn't touch it off.

The President. No. He had 40,000 soldiers on the border and inside Kosovo.

Mr. Rather. And hundreds of tanks?

The President. Almost 300—before any of this happened. Last October he had already created a quarter of a million refugees before the NATO threat got him to stop. This is a part of his strategy. He started his ethnic cleansing politics with a big speech against the Kosovars in Kosovo 12 years ago, and then he got diverted into his wars in Bosnia and Croatia. So I believe this is a plan he had all along.

Now, suppose—you could take any scenario. If we had said, "Well, if you do this, ground troops are on the way"—suppose that had been said—it would take much longer to mobilize that than it did the air campaign. He had the armor; he had the men; he had the air cover; he had the weapons; he had all this stuff he could do.

And the UCK, the Kosovar Liberation Army, all those people, all they could ever do was to fight what was, in effect, a guerrilla war, which they could still do. They may be run out of the country; they could come back. They may be run up into the hills; they can come down—with support they got from their kinfolks and relatives outside of the region.

So I think it's very important to note that there—that under any set of circumstances, his military could have done what they have done these last 5 days.

Mr. Rather. And you think they would have done—

The President. Absolutely. I am totally convinced of that. So is everyone else that I know who's been dealing with this for any length of time. Would they have waited another week to

do it? Maybe. But I'm convinced that that's exactly what they wanted to do. They didn't show up in those numbers with those tanks for their health. That's what they were going to do.

So I think the real issue is—I think that that was a decision certainly made when he realized—he did not want the framework of the peace agreement, which was, let them have self-government within the autonomous framework that governed Yugoslavia for all those years, and let's have an international force in there to keep them safe. Even though the international force—I want to say again, because there may be a lot of Serbian-Americans listening to this interview—the international force, we made it clear that we would not go in there, and neither would our NATO Allies, unless they were also free to protect the Serbian minority in Kosovo, because so much blood has been shed and so many people that have been dislocated that they, too, are vulnerable to people taking it out on them because they're Serbs. So we said we would not go in there unless we also protected the Serbs.

But, yes, I'm completely convinced. Prime Minister Blair believes that. Chancellor Schroeder believes that.

Mr. Rather. And you believe it.

The President. With every fiber of my being, I am convinced. Look at what this guy did in—let's go back to Bosnia: 2 million refugees, a quarter of a million people dead. There is no question that this is his strategy. And he was very angry that finally what had been a passive resistance from the Kosovars, a peaceful resistance for 10 years, began to manifest itself then in violent exchanges in return for—in reaction to what the Serbs had done.

I think he wanted to clean them out. I think he wanted to ethically cleanse the country as much as he could. I think he wanted to drastically alter the population balance. I think he wanted to eradicate all the records of the Albanians and the property they own. I think he wanted to erase the history and start all over again. That's what I think.

Mr. Rather. Is genocide too strong a word, Mr. President?

The President. Well, as you know, I try to be hesitant in using it. There is no question that a few thousand people have been murdered because they were Kosovar Albanians. There's no question about that.

Mr. Rather. But you hesitate to use the word genocide.

The President. But I think because—it's only a question of whether enough people have been killed yet. There's no question that what he was doing constitutes ethnic cleansing and that he was killing and uprooting people because of their ethnic heritage. There is no question about that. And I think that not only he, but others who are in decisionmaking positions, have to be held accountable for what they've done. And of course, this whole war crimes tribunal that's been set up to review what happened in the Balkans will have to review those facts. But the main thing I want to do is, whatever the label belongs on it, is to stop it if we can.

Legal Status of Kosovo

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, I'm getting the wrap-up sign, and I must ask you—help me as a reporter. You seemed to hint within the last 24 hours, at least hint—and the newspaper stories say, "President hints at a change in position"—an independent Kosovo, as opposed to a semi-autonomous Kosovo. Has there been a change in your thinking? Are you changing the policy? Is there likely to be one? Help me explain that to folks.

The President. What I said, I'll say it again, because I think it's pretty clear. The United States has supported the historic legal status of Kosovo as an autonomous province of Serbia. We think it would be difficult for the Kosovars, politically, economically, to sustain independence because of their small size and because of the stage of their economic development.

But what I said, and I'll say again, is that Mr. Milosevic is in danger of forfeiting the claim of the Serbs to have government over those people in their own land. That's the problem. It's his conduct. It's not that we've had a change of heart about what would be best, if you will, or that we would honor the rule of international law, which still has lodged Kosovo as an independent province of Serbia. It's whether—and we tried to tell Mr. Milosevic all along that this peace process was the best chance he had to keep the Kosovars as a part of Serbia, because there would be a 3-year period during which they could demonstrate, the Serbs, good faith in letting them govern themselves. We could protect the Serbian minority as well as the Albanian majority in Kosovo. And they could see that economically it would be better, as well

as politically. He's just about blown all that off. That's the——

Mr. Rather. You think he now has that at deep risk?

The President. It's very much at risk, not because of a change of heart by us but because of a change of behavior by him.

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, thank you.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 4:21 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House for later

broadcast, and the transcript was embargoed for release until 9 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Prime Minister Yevgeniy Primakov of Russia; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Telephone Remarks From Norfolk, Virginia, to United States Troops at Aviano Air Base in Italy

April 1, 1999

The President. Colonel Nichols, I know you're about to leave on a mission. I just called to tell you we're proud of you, and we appreciate you and all your Buzzards there at the 510th and all the other people who are carrying out this difficult mission.

And you may know that I'm down in Virginia, and I just met with some service families to tell them how much I appreciate their sacrifice. And I know many of you have families back home pulling for you, as well.

So I just want to tell you that and tell you how proud we are. I'm here with Secretary Cohen and General Shelton and a number of other people from Washington, and we're all there for you.

Lt. Col. David Nichols. Thank you, Mr. President, sir. You have the 81st and the 23d Fighter

Squadrons here also. It's a great team. And we are truly honored to have the privilege to hear your voice this afternoon.

The President. Well, thank you. I know that I'm taking you almost up to your departure time, and I don't want to keep you late for your mission. But you just know we're all proud of you, and what you're doing is very important for our country and for the future of the world. And we thank you very much.

Goodbye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:46 p.m. from the dining room of the Pennsylvania House at Norfolk Naval Station, to Lieutenant Colonel Nichols, USAF, Commanding Officer, 510th Fighter Squadron. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Military Community at Norfolk Naval Station

April 1, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. I'm just curious, can you all hear me out there?

Audience member. No!

The President. No? The echo is pretty bad, isn't it? Well, if I speak louder, is it better or worse? No difference. I'll do the best I can.

First, I'd like to thank Secretary Cohen and General Shelton for their truly outstanding serv-

ice in our administration at a difficult time. I'd like to thank Admiral Gehman, Admiral Reason, General Pace, General Keck, and the other leaders of all the forces represented here.

I thank Secretary Danzig, National Security Adviser Berger, and others who came with me from the White House. Mayor Oberndorf, thank you for welcoming me to Virginia Beach.

I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to the Members of Congress who are here: your representatives, Congressmen Scott and Sisisky; Senator Levin, our ranking member of the Armed Services Committee; and a special thanks to my longtime friend Senator Chuck Robb, who is one of the most courageous Members of the United States Congress, and Virginia is very fortunate to be represented by him.

Let me say to all of you, I came here today primarily to thank two groups of people, our men and women in uniform and their families, for the service and sacrifice that makes America strong.

I just met a few moments ago with several members of families, spouses and children of members of four different services who are deployed away from here now. They're all over here to my right. And whatever it is you would like to say to me today, I think there's a very good chance they said it. They did a very good job for you, and I'm very proud of them.

I heard about the financial sacrifices, and I heard about the human sacrifices. I don't think that anyone could say it better than this lady over here with this beautiful baby in the red hat, with the "I miss you, Daddy" sign. I thank you. And this sign, "I love my TR sailor. Support our troops."

I wanted to come here today because I want America to know that the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform are fully mirrored by their families back home, by the opportunities that are missed to be with wives and husbands and children on birthdays and holidays, and just being there for the kids when they're needed at night and in the morning as they go off to school. They are fully felt in terms of the financial sacrifices of the family members left at home to pay the bills and see to the health care and other needs of the children.

And America should know that and should be very, very grateful to all of you. We are grateful, and we think all Americans will be grateful as they know what you do.

Let me also say I had a chance to speak, just before I came out here, with the 510th Fighter Squadron at Aviano Air Base in Italy, part of our Operation Allied Force in Kosovo, to thank them and to hear of their immense pride and determination in their mission.

I know that many, many people here have friends or family members who are working hard

in our mission in Kosovo. I know this port is home to 100 ships, not only the powerful battle groups now at sea led by the *Enterprise* and the *Theodore Roosevelt* but also ships in the Adriatic, guided missile destroyers like the *Gonzalez*, fast-attack submarines like the *Norfolk*. [Applause] Yes, you can clap for your ships; that's okay. [Applause]

I can't name every ship or every unit, but I know that all of you are proud of all of them. Again, let me say, too, a special word of thanks to the family members of those who are deployed in the Kosovo operation now.

And let me say to all of you, we spend a lot of time—perhaps more time than you would think—in the White House, and at the Pentagon, talking about our obligations to the families of our service members. We know that we are asking more and more of you as we have downsized the military and diversified and increased the number of our operations around the world. We know that the more we ask of you, the greater our responsibilities to you.

We know that we owe you the support, the training, the equipment you need to get the job done. We know we owe you fair pay, decent housing, and other support. Our new defense budget contains not only a substantial pay raise but increased funding to keep our readiness razor sharp. It is our solemn obligation to those of you who accept the dangers and hardships of our common security.

Since the cold war ended, we have asked more and more of our Armed Forces, from the Persian Gulf to Korea to Central America to Africa—today, to stand with our allies in NATO against the unspeakable brutality in Kosovo.

Now, this is not an easy challenge with a simple answer. If it were, it would have been resolved a long time ago. The mission I have asked our Armed Forces to carry out with our NATO Allies is a dangerous one, as I have repeatedly said. Danger is something the brave men and women of our country's Armed Forces understand because you live with it every day, even in routine training exercises.

Now, we all know that yesterday three Army infantrymen were seized as they were carrying out a peaceful mission in Macedonia, protecting that country from the violence in neighboring Kosovo. There was absolutely no basis for them to be taken. There is no basis for them to be held. There is certainly no basis for them to

be tried. All Americans are concerned about their welfare.

President Milosevic should make no mistake: The United States takes care of its own. And President Milosevic should make no mistake: We will hold him and his government responsible for their safety and for their well-being.

But I ask you also to resolve that we will continue to carry out our mission with determination and resolve.

Over the past few weeks, I have been talking with the American people about why we're involved with our NATO Allies in Kosovo and the risks of our mission and why they're justified. It's especially important that I speak to you and, through you, to all men and women in uniform about these matters.

The roots of this conflict lie in the policies of Mr. Milosevic, the dictator of Serbia. For more than 10 years now, he has been using ethnic and religious hatred as a path to personal power and a justification for the ethnic cleansing and murder of innocent civilians. That is what he did first in Bosnia and Croatia, where the United States, with our allies, did so much to end the war. And that is what he is doing in Kosovo today. That is what he will continue to do to his own people and his neighbors unless we and our allies stand in the way.

For months, we tried and tried and tried every conceivable peaceful alternative. We did everything we could through diplomacy to solve this problem. With diplomacy backed by the threat of NATO force, we forged a cease-fire last October that rescued from cold and hunger hundreds of thousands of people in Kosovo whom he had driven from their homes.

In February, with our allies and with Russia, we proposed a peace agreement that would have given the people of Kosovo the autonomy they were guaranteed under their constitution before Mr. Milosevic came to power and ended the fighting for good.

Now, the Kosovar leaders, they signed that agreement, even though it didn't give them the independence they said they wanted and that they had been fighting for. But Mr. Milosevic refused. In fact, while pretending to negotiate for peace, he massed 40,000 troops and hundreds of tanks in and around Kosovo, planning a new campaign of destruction and defiance. He started carrying out that campaign the moment the peace talks ended.

Now the troops and police of the Serbian dictator are rampaging through tiny Kosovo, separating men from their families, executing many of them in cold blood, burning homes—sometimes, we now hear, with people inside—forcing survivors to leave everything behind, confiscating their identity papers, destroying their records so their history and their property is erased forever.

Yesterday Mr. Milosevic actually said this problem can only be solved by negotiations. But yesterday, as he said that, his forces continued to hunt down the very Kosovar leaders with whom he was supposed to be negotiating.

All together now, more than half a million Kosovars have been pushed from their homes since the conflict began. They are arriving at the borders of the country, shaken by what they have seen and been through. But they also say—as a delegation of Albanian-Americans, many of whom have relatives in Kosovo, told me personally in the White House yesterday—that NATO's military action has at least given them some hope that they have not been completely abandoned in their suffering.

Had we not acted, the Serbian offensive would have been carried out with impunity. We are determined that it will carry a very high price, indeed.

We also act to prevent a wider war. If you saw my address to the country the other night and the maps that I showed, you know that Kosovo is a very small place. But it sits right at the dividing line of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East; the dividing line between Islam and Christianity; close to our Turkish and Greek allies to the south; our new allies, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic, to the north; surrounded by small and struggling democracies that easily could be overwhelmed by the flood of refugees Mr. Milosevic is creating.

Already, Macedonia is so threatened. Already, Serbian forces have made forays into Albania, which borders Kosovo. If we were to do nothing, eventually our allies and then the United States would be drawn into a larger conflict, at far greater risks to our people and far greater costs.

Now, we can't respond to every tragedy in every corner of the world. But just because we can't do everything for everyone doesn't mean that for the sake of consistency we should do nothing for no one.

Remember now, these atrocities are happening at the doorstep of NATO, which has preserved the security of Europe for 50 years because of the alliance between the United States and our allies. They are happening in violation of specific commitments Mr. Milosevic gave to us, to our NATO Allies, to other European countries, and to Russia. They are happening to people who embrace peace and promise to lay down their own arms. They put their trust in us, and we can't let them down.

Our objective is to restore the Kosovars to their homes with security and self-government. Our bombing campaign is designed to exact an unacceptably high price for Mr. Milosevic's present policy of repression and ethnic cleansing and to seriously diminish his military capacity to maintain that policy.

We've been doing this for 7 days now—just 7 days. Our pilots have performed bravely and well in the face of dangerous conditions and often abysmal weather. But we must be determined and patient. Remember, the Serbs had 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo and nearly 300 tanks when they began this, before the first NATO plane got in the air. They had a sophisticated air-defense system. They also have a problem which has been festering for a decade, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Milosevic to make people hate each other in the former Yugoslavia because they are Muslims instead of Orthodox Christians or Catholics; because they're Albanians instead of Serbians or Croats, or Bosnian Muslims, or Macedonians, or you have—whatever. It is appalling.

For decades, those people lived in peace with one another. For 10 years and more, now, a dictator has sought to make himself powerful by convincing the largest group, the Serbs, that the only way they can amount to anything is to uproot, disrupt, destroy, and kill other people who don't have the same means of destruction—no matter what the consequences are to everybody around them, no matter how many innocent children and their parents die, no matter how much it disrupts other countries.

Why? Because they want power, and they want to base it on the kind of ethnic and religious hatred that is bedeviling the whole world today. You can see it in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland. You can see it in the tribal wars in Africa. You can see that it is one of the dominant problems the whole world faces. And this is right in the underbelly of Europe.

We have to decide whether we are going to take a stand with our NATO Allies and whether we are prepared to pay the price of time to make him pay the price of aggression and murder. Are we, in the last year of the 20th century, going to look the other way as entire peoples in Europe are forced to abandon their homelands or die? Are we going to impose a price on that kind of conduct and seek to end it?

Mr. Milosevic often justifies his behavior by talking about the history of the Serbs going back to the 14th century. Well, I value the history of this country, and I value what happened here in the 18th century. But I don't want to take America back to the 18th century. And he acts like he wants to take Serbia back to the 14th century, to 14th century values, 14th century ways of looking at other human beings.

We are on the edge of a new century and a new millennium, where the people in poor countries all over the world, because of technology and the Internet and the spreading of information, will have unprecedented opportunities to share prosperity and to give their kids an education and have a decent future, if only they will live in peace with the basic human regard for other people. That is absolutely antithetical to everything that Mr. Milosevic has done.

So I ask you—you say, what has this got to do with America? Remember, we fought two World Wars in Europe. Remember that the unity, the freedom, the prosperity, the peace of Europe is important to the future of the children in this room today. That is, in the end, what this is about.

We're not doing this on our own. We could not have undertaken it on our own. This is something we're doing with our NATO Allies. They're up there in the air, too. If there's a peace agreement, they've agreed to provide 85 percent of the troops on the ground to help to monitor the peace agreement and protect all the ethnic groups, including the Serbs.

This is something we are doing to try to avoid in the 21st century the kind of widespread war, large American casualties, and heartbreak that we saw too much of in the century we are about to leave.

So this is not just about a small piece of the Balkans. But let me ask you something. When we are moved by the plight of three servicemen, when we stay up half the night hoping that our rescue teams find that fine pilot

who went down when his plane was hit, when we see a sign that says, "I love my TR sailor" or "I miss my Daddy," we remember that all political and military decisions ultimately have a human component that is highly individualized.

Think how you would feel if you were part of the half million people who lived peaceably in a place, just wanted to be let alone to practice your religion and educate your children and do your work, if people came to your house and your village and said, "Pack up your belongings and go. We're going to burn your property records; we're going to burn your identity records. And if your husband or your son is of military service age, we might take them out behind the barn and shoot them dead"—just because you have a different religion, just because you have a different ethnic background. Is that really what we want the 21st century to be about for our children?

Now, that is what is at stake here. We cannot do everything in the world, but we must do what we can. We can never forget the Holocaust, the genocide, the carnage of the 20th century. We don't want the new century to bring us the same nightmares in a different guise.

We also want to say again how proud the United States is that each of NATO's 19 members is supporting the mission in Kosovo in some way—France and Germany, Turkey and Greece, Poland and Hungary, the Czech Republic, Britain, Canada, all the others. And this is also important.

Let me finally say—I'd like to read you something. Near the end of the Second World War, President Roosevelt prepared a speech to give at a holiday honoring Virginia's famous son Thomas Jefferson. He never got to give the speech. But it still speaks to us, his last words. And to those of you who wear the uniform of our Nation and to those of you who are

part of the families of our Uniformed Service members. I ask you to heed these words.

After the long war was almost drawing to a close, these were Franklin Roosevelt's last words that he never got to deliver: "We as Americans do not choose to deny our responsibilities. Nor do we intend to abandon our determination that within the lives of our children and our children's children, there will not be a third world war. We seek peace, enduring peace. More than an end to war, we want an end to the beginnings of all wars."

That is what we are trying to achieve in Kosovo. That is what many of you in this room, perhaps, and your colleagues, did achieve in Bosnia. We want to end a war that has begun in Europe and prevent a larger war. And we want to alleviate the burdens and the killing of defenseless people. Let us heed President Roosevelt's last words.

Let me say again, for those of you who serve and for those of you who serve as family members and who sacrifice as wives and husbands and children: I thank you for your service and your sacrifice, and America thanks you.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. in Hangar SP2. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Harold W. Gehman, Jr., USN, Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic; Adm. J. Paul Reason, USN, Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; Lt. Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Europe; Lt. Gen. Thomas Keck, USAF, Vice Commander, Air Combat Command; Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf of Virginia Beach; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen in custody in Serbia.

Statement on the 2000 Census

April 1, 1999

Exactly one year from today, America will commence the first census of the 21st century. The responsibility to conduct the census is near-

ly as old as our Nation. Beginning in 1790, and every 10 years since, America has counted

its people, charted its growth, and by doing so, prepared for its future.

The census is a vital statistical snapshot that tells us who we are and where we are going as a nation. And though it is taken only once a decade, it is important to our everyday lives. The census helps communities determine where to build everything from schools to supermarkets and from homes to hospitals. It helps the Government decide how to distribute funds and assistance to States and localities. It is used to draw the lines of legislative districts and reapportion the seats each State holds in Congress.

The Census Bureau estimates it will count about 275 million people next year across our Nation. But America must be accurate—and more so than we have been in the past. The previous census, in 1990, missed 8.4 million people and counted more than 4 million twice. Children, minorities, and low income Americans have been often overlooked. We must do better. Every person in America counts—so every American must be counted.

I am committed to ensuring that Census 2000 is as accurate, complete, and fair as possible. That will be an enormous undertaking—demanding the largest peacetime mobilization in our Nation's history, involving hundreds of thousands of local census takers and community volunteers. I have, therefore, asked every executive department and agency of the Federal Government to develop an action plan that helps recruit census workers and promotes full participation in Census 2000. The Census Bureau has put forth a comprehensive and complete plan that includes a full enumeration and modern scientific methods. The Bureau will also build unprecedented partnerships with business, community groups, schools, and State, local, and tribal governments and use, for the first time, radio, television, and billboard advertisements to encourage everyone to participate in Census 2000.

Working together, we can ensure that Census 2000 truly reflects who we are as a people and that each American can make the best of the opportunities of the 21st century.

Statement on Results From a Florida Youth Antismoking Program

April 1, 1999

Today the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is publishing promising new results from the youth antismoking program launched by the late Florida Governor Lawton Chiles. The study shows that in just one year, smoking has declined by 19 percent among middle school students and by 8 percent among high schoolers. These results show why every State should have a comprehensive program to reduce youth smoking and why I oppose any legislation waiving the Federal Government's claim to to-

bacco settlement funds without making a commitment from the States to fund such efforts. Without such a commitment, States won't have to spend a single penny of the \$246 billion settlement to reduce youth smoking. We must act now: Every day 3,000 children become regular smokers, and 1,000 will have their lives cut short as a result.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release until 4 p.m.

Remarks on the National Economy and Kosovar Refugees and an Exchange With Reporters

April 2, 1999

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to make some fairly brief comments today about the situation in Kosovo and the humanitarian issue, and also about the good news today

we received on the domestic economy. Let me make the economic remarks first, and then I will talk about Kosovo and refer to the folks

from the administration who are here to my right.

As I think all of you know by now, it was reported today that last month the unemployment rate in the United States dropped to 4.2 percent, the lowest in this long expansion and the lowest monthly unemployment rate the United States has enjoyed since 1970. This is also an expansion that is widening the circle of opportunity. We had, among other things in this last monthly report, the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded. Now we know also that real wages went up last year at the highest rate in two decades.

Now, these economic indicators are more than just economic indicators; they mean wider opportunity and a better chance for millions of Americans to have stronger families and give their children a better chance. It is a reminder of the gains we have made because we have done the right things economically for the long run.

And now we must act to extend that prosperity. That means, among other things, we have to be very, very smart about how we deal with the question of the surplus. In the coming months, I will continue to insist that a substantial portion of the surplus—the majority—as I have outlined since the State of the Union, be set aside in a way that will save Social Security and Medicare and will enable us to pay down the debt, to keep interest rates low, to keep investment high, to keep this economy going.

I hope that today this good news on unemployment will remind us of how we got here and not make us forget how we got here.

Now, let me say a few words about Kosovo, and in particular, the humanitarian situation. I am glad to be joined by the folks to my right: Hattie Babbitt, the Deputy USAID Administrator; Julia Taft, the Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration; General John McDuffie, the Chairman's Director for Logistics of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Eric Schwartz, who is our Director for Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs at the NSC.

The humanitarian situation, as all of you know, remains grave in Kosovo. Since last year, nearly one in three people there have been pushed from their homes.

I met this morning with representatives of humanitarian organizations that are leading relief efforts in the area. They are doing courageous

work under difficult circumstances. We want to support them in every way we can.

I can tell you that I was very impressed that they reported that the refugees coming out strongly support the action that NATO has taken and clearly understand that that action did not provoke the attempt to remove them from their homes, that that is part of an operation that has been going on since last year, that there were 40,000 troops and nearly 300 tanks—Serbian troops and tanks—massed in and around Kosovo at the time the peace talks in France broke up. And they are quite clear that what has happened to them was what was planned for quite a long while. And I appreciate the support—and the great difficulty of maintaining it—of these people who have suffered so much.

Now, what are we doing about this? This week I authorized an additional \$50 million in emergency aid to augment our contributions to the UNHCR and to the other relief organizations and to ensure that our military can do more to help them get aid to the people in need.

Today NATO agreed that its forces in Macedonia should support the relief effort there by providing transport, shelter, and logistical support.

While many people are arriving in neighboring countries, and Macedonia and Albania are especially burdened, we are able to provide help there—although we need more countries to join us in providing help there.

We must be increasingly concerned about the plight of displaced people who are actually trapped inside Kosovo and are under attack or certainly vulnerable to attack by Serbian forces. That is why our airstrikes are now increasingly focused on military targets there. There's no doubt that what Mr. Milosevic wants to do is to keep the land of Kosovo and rid it of its people. We cannot let that happen with impunity.

I said yesterday in Virginia to our troops, and I want to say again, we must be determined; we must be persistent; we must be patient if we expect to see this mission through. And I am absolutely determined to do that.

We have to make sure that Mr. Milosevic pays a heavy price for this policy of repression. We have to seriously diminish his capacity to maintain that policy. Ultimately, we want to make it possible for the victims to return home, to live in security, and enjoy self-government.

Let me also reaffirm what I said yesterday about the three Army infantrymen who were seized on Wednesday as they were carrying out a completely peaceful mission in Macedonia. There was no basis for them to be taken. There is no basis for them to be held. There is absolutely no justification for putting them on trial or displaying them in public in violation of the Geneva Convention. As long as they are detained, they have the status of POW's and are entitled to all the protections that come with that status. As I made clear yesterday, we will hold President Milosevic and his government responsible for their safety and well-being.

Ground Troops

Q. Mr. President, is Kosovo lost, sir?

Q. Mr. President, those same refugees you just cited a moment ago are, by and large, also saying that they believe that only NATO ground forces will be able to get them back into their country. Do you still feel the same way you do about ground forces?

The President. I still believe that we have a good possibility of achieving our mission with the means that we have deployed. Remember, we have been at this for a week. I see all of you—and I don't blame you for doing this because everybody's trying to get their hands around a very complex problem—referring to Desert Storm or other historical analogies. Is this like the Persian Gulf; is this like Vietnam; what is this like? Is it like what happened in World War II?

Let me remind you, for these people who talk about ground forces, the ground forces that were deployed in the Middle East were deployed after the objective had been achieved by Saddam Hussein, after he had captured Kuwait. It took, as I remember, maybe more than 5 months to do the preparatory deployment before any action could be taken.

So this air campaign has been much more rapid in getting up and getting underway than any sort of ground operation could be. And it seems to me we have a real obligation to try to keep the NATO Allies together and to vigorously pursue this. We are making the air campaign more intense; we are adding targets; we are keeping the NATO Allies together. And I believe we have quite a good chance of achieving our objectives of the return of the Kosovars to live in security with the measure of self-government that they enjoyed under the old

Yugoslav Constitution before Mr. Milosevic took it away from them. And I believe that is what we should continue to do. That is what I intend to continue to do.

President's Policy on Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, with villages burning, sir, and refugees coming out at a rate of nearly 100,000 a day, is it not unfair to say that Kosovo is already lost? And if it is lost, sir, is it your policy to get it back?

The President. My policy is to stick with the NATO Allies to provide for return of the Kosovars in conditions of security where they have the self—the autonomy that they had before Mr. Milosevic took it away. That is my policy.

Keep in mind, this campaign of his started last year. There were hundreds of thousands of refugees before the peace talks in France started. Before that happened, there were 40,000 troops and nearly 300 tanks in Kosovo or on the borders. So there has been a lot of speculation—was this—I don't think anybody in our military was under any illusion that he did not have the capacity to do what has been done. And what we have tried to do is to gear up this air campaign as quickly as we could and, given the limitations of the weather, proceed.

We have strong allied unity. We have real firm determination today in Europe that these objectives will be achieved. And we intend to stay after them until they are.

I do not believe—I think that—I do not believe that anyone should expect, or should have expected—we recognized when we started that this campaign, this air campaign, would not be a week or two proposition.

Q. But, sir, even many of those who advised and represented the Kosovars at Rambouillet say that process is now dead, given what has happened on the ground. Will there have to be some new security and political arrangement beyond what was envisioned at those peace talks? And what will the U.S.—

The President. Well, I think there will have to be some sort of security arrangement in order for them to live safely. And then there will have to be some sort of agreement that entails the autonomy to which they are entitled. That is clearly right.

So the elements that were discussed at the peace talks in France are still elements that

have to be resolved before the Kosovars can either stay home or go home, for those who have left, and do so peacefully, and do so with some measure of autonomy. And it seems to me that will require, clearly, for some period of time, some sort of international force that will be able to protect their security.

So the elements, the framework that we dealt with in France is still the framework people are going to have to deal with; whatever label you put on it, those are the—the objectives that we seek to achieve will require certain means to realize.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Russian Involvement

Q. Mr. President, what about the deepening Russian involvement? Apparently, we understand they are now going to offer aid; they're sending ships into the Mediterranean. Are they ready for a fight?

The President. I don't believe so. I believe that—as I said before and I'll say again, one of the unfortunate side effects of this whole crisis—and we saw it a little bit in Bosnia, but we were able to resolve it, thank goodness, in Bosnia in a way that brought us together with the Russians in the peacekeeping force there—

is that this whole issue has put great strains on the domestic politics of Russia, in the Russian Duma, because of the religious and cultural identity and the ethnic identity of the Russians with the Serbs.

But I think that, based on my experience in dealing with this in the last few days, and my experience in dealing with the Russians over the last 6 years, and what appear to be the facts now, they are looking for ways to continue to oppose what NATO is doing, but to leave open the prospect that they could play a very constructive role in making a peace. I don't think anyone wants to see this conflict escalate, and I certainly don't believe the Russian Government does.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:23 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen in custody in Serbia; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The President also referred to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Statement on Signing the Small Business Year 2000 Readiness Act *April 2, 1999*

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 314, the "Small Business Year 2000 Readiness Act."

In 9 months we will enter the new millennium. We have made tremendous progress in our efforts to address the Year 2000 (Y2K) computer problem. In spite of this progress, however, too many businesses, especially small- and medium-sized firms, will not be ready unless they act immediately.

This week, the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Department of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture, and other Federal departments and agencies of the President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion are sponsoring "Small Business Y2K Action Week." At hundreds of Y2K seminars and training events across the country, these agencies are educating

small businesses on the steps necessary for achieving Y2K compliance.

The message we are delivering to small businesses at these events is that every small business must take responsibility for making sure it is ready for the Year 2000 by taking action now. Every business should assess its exposure to the Y2K problem, ask its vendors and suppliers to be ready as well, and develop contingency plans in case its own critical systems or the systems of its vendors fail as we move into the Year 2000.

The legislation I am signing today will help ensure that the Nation's small businesses have access to the capital they need to be "Y2K-OK" in the Year 2000. The Act will authorize the SBA to provide loan guarantees for two Y2K

purposes. First, it will enable small businesses to purchase the systems, software, equipment, and services necessary to become Y2K compliant. Second, it will assist small businesses that suffer economic injury as a result of the Y2K problem during the Year 2000. Authority for this special program will terminate on December 31, 2000.

I want to especially recognize the job that Administrator Aida Alvarez and the Small Business Administration have done in ensuring that the Nation's small business community is ready to meet the Y2K challenge. Through its leadership of Small Business Y2K Action Week, and its other extensive outreach efforts, the SBA has done an excellent job of raising the awareness of small businesses concerning the Y2K chal-

lenge. I would also like to thank the Congress for acting swiftly this session to ensure that we have this additional tool for assisting small businesses in their efforts to address this problem.

The Nation's small businesses are the backbone of our country's vibrant and growing economy. In signing S. 314 today, I hope to ensure that our small business community will move into the Year 2000 with minimal disruption to our Nation's economy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 2, 1999

NOTE: S. 314, approved April 2, was assigned Public Law No. 106-8.

Message on the Observance of Easter, 1999

April 2, 1999

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Easter.

Today Christians across America and around the world commemorate with great joy the central mystery of their faith: the Resurrection of Jesus. In this season, we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death, and we rejoice in the new life that He won for us through His suffering, death, and rising from the dead.

That new life empowers us to overcome sin and to recognize our capacity for forgiveness and love. We have seen in our own communities and in other nations across the globe the vio-

lence and human tragedy spawned by hatred, intolerance, and fear born of ignorance. If we are to destroy the roots of hatred, we must examine our own hearts and actions and learn what we can and must do to build just communities united in understanding and mutual respect. May this sacred season of renewal, hope, and new beginnings inspire our efforts and light our way to a brighter, more peaceful future.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a blessed and joyous Easter celebration.

BILL CLINTON

The President's Radio Address

April 3, 1999

As we gather in our homes during this sacred week to observe Easter and Passover, let us take a moment to think about the plight of the people in Kosovo, who have been forced from their homes by a campaign of violence and destruction, and who look to us for help and hope.

The tragedy in Kosovo has been mounting for over a year now. Over the last 2 weeks,

Serbian forces have intensified their attacks against innocent civilians there, leaving no doubt about the cold, clear goal of their leader, Slobodan Milosevic, to keep Kosovo's land while ridding it of its people.

Nearly one out of every three people in Kosovo has been made homeless since the start of this conflict. Even before the recent surge, well over a quarter of a million people had

been displaced. Every hour of every day, more arrive at Kosovo's borders, tired, hungry, shaken by what they have been through.

Among them are elderly people, who have lived their whole lives in peace with their neighbors, only to be told now to leave everything behind in minutes or to be killed on the spot. Among them are small children who walked for miles over mountains, sometimes after watching their fathers and uncles and brothers taken from them and shot before their eyes.

Some have been shelled by artillery on their long trek to safety. Many have had their identity papers and family records stolen and destroyed, their history in Kosovo erased, their very existence denied.

Our Nation cannot do everything. We can't end all suffering. We can't stop all violence. But there are times when looking away simply is not an option. Right now, in the middle of Europe, at the doorstep of NATO, an entire people are being made to abandon their homeland or die, not because of anything they've done but simply because of who they are.

If there's one lesson we've learned in this century, it's that that kind of poison will spread if not stopped. If there's one pledge that binds the past and future generations, it is that we cannot allow people to be destroyed because of their ethnic or racial or religious groups when we do have the power to do something about it.

Our military mission in Kosovo is a difficult and dangerous one, but it's necessary and right, and we must stand with all our NATO Allies to see it through. Our goal is to exact a very high price for Mr. Milosevic's policy of repression and to seriously diminish his military capacity to maintain that policy.

We also must open our hearts and our arms to the innocent victims of this conflict. This week I authorized the expenditure of \$50 million in emergency funds to support the relief effort and directed our military to do its part to get critical supplies to people in need. We'll work with the United Nations and with the many courageous volunteers working on the

ground with nongovernmental organizations from all around the world.

You can help, too. I urge you to call your local Red Cross or church-based charity and ask them how you can get involved. Together, we'll provide food, water, and medicine, blankets, clothing, and shelter to Kosovar refugees. We'll remind the victims of this conflict that for all they have lost, they have not been abandoned or forgotten.

European countries are helping as well. Kosovo's neighbors, Macedonia and Albania, are taking the refugees in, despite the huge burden this places on these poor, struggling nations; so are Greece, Bosnia, and Bulgaria, showing there's more mercy than madness in the Balkans, more compassion than cruelty in this troubled region of the world.

All of us want to provide for the refugees; all of us want to make it possible for them to return home. Let us do our part for all the innocent people whose lives have been shattered by this conflict. And let us give our thanks to our men and women in uniform who are risking their lives today for our ideals, our interests, and their lives.

Let us keep in our prayers the three brave American servicemen now being held without justification in Belgrade that they may return to us soon. Let us do what we can, and what we must, for peace to prevail. And let us stay the course until it does.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:05 p.m. on April 2 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen in custody in Serbia.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Forces to Macedonia and Albania

April 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Since I reported to the Congress on March 25, 1999, under section 8115 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-262), there have been dramatic and very serious developments in Kosovo and the region, particularly Macedonia and Albania. Belgrade's sustained and accelerating repression and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo has created a humanitarian crisis of staggering dimensions. Estimates are that more than 800,000 Kosovars have been displaced from their homes and villages, with large concentrations in Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro, and with the numbers rising dramatically every day. Throughout Kosovo, Serb forces have burned villages. Homes throughout the region have been looted and are smoldering. In Pristina, Kosovars are being forced into rail cars and shipped to the Macedonian border.

As the refugee flow out of Kosovo has surged, the limited ability of Albania and Macedonia to deal with the situation has been overwhelmed. The international organizations engaged in refugee assistance do not currently have in the region the ability and resources to deal with a refugee crisis of this magnitude. Unless adequate care can be provided for these refugees, a humanitarian disaster of immense proportions will result. In addition to the human suffering involved, such a disaster carries with it the very real possibility of destabilizing the governments and societies of Albania and Macedonia. This disaster could have the effect of spreading violence in the region that NATO is determined to prevent.

In the light of these disturbing events, I have directed that additional U.S. forces be deployed to Albania and Macedonia in order to support disaster relief by, among other activities, delivering food and essentials, constructing shelter, providing coordination and assisting in onward movement, and when necessary, providing protection for relief supplies and refugees. In regard to the elements of section 815(a)(1)-(8), I am providing the following information.

1 & 2. *National Security Interests.* I hereby certify that the deployment of additional forces to Albania and Macedonia as described above

is necessary in the national security interests of the United States. These actions will provide additional forces to aid in the relief efforts supporting Kosovar refugees. They also will contribute to the overall effort to stabilize this region that has historically been a tinderbox, thereby helping to preserve peace and security in the region.

3. *Numbers.* The number of U.S. personnel who will be deployed for these purposes cannot be definitively provided at this time, since planning for the deployment is ongoing. I would anticipate, at a minimum, a deployment of 1,000 personnel. It can be anticipated that headquarters elements, air crews, airlift control elements, selected transport and rotary wing aircraft, security personnel, civil affairs and psychological operations personnel, medical and engineer forces, and logistics support forces may become involved in the operation. These forces will operate under U.S. and NATO operational control. I will ensure that the Congress is informed in a timely manner about deployments described in this report when the information is available.

4. *Mission/Objectives.* As stated above and in my report to the Congress of March 25, the overall objective of our efforts with our allies is to maintain stability in the region and prevent a humanitarian disaster resulting from the ongoing offensive against the people of Kosovo. The specific military mission of the forces deployed as described in this report would be to support disaster relief operations to aid in the care and protection of Kosovar refugees and to provide for their own security.

5. *Schedule.* At this point, it is not possible to determine how long these deployments to Albania and Macedonia in response to this dire need will be required. This will be affected by how long Belgrade continues its campaign of ethnic cleansing and how long beyond the cessation of that campaign it will take before the Kosovar refugees will be able to return to their

homes or resettle elsewhere. Circumstances permitting, it will be our objective to transfer responsibility for the refugees to other organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as soon as possible.

6. *Exit Strategy.* The duration of the requirement for a U.S. military presence in Albania and Macedonia for these purposes will depend on the course of events, and in particular, on Belgrade's conduct on the ground in Kosovo. So long as Belgrade forces the Kosovar refugees to remain dispossessed, and the enormity of the situation continues to overwhelm the ability of Albania, Macedonia, and the international relief community to deal with the situation, it is likely that U.S. forces deployed for these purposes will be required. Nevertheless, as stated above, it will be our objective to transfer responsibility for the refugees to other organizations as soon as the emergency has subsided. In addition, we are working with our European partners to provide temporary asylum to some of the refugees in third countries.

7. *Costs.* The costs of the deployment described in this notice will be paid initially from FY99 Defense appropriations, including the provision of defense commodities and services directed pursuant to Presidential Determination 99-20 of March 31, 1999. An estimate of likely costs for these deployments is being prepared, and I will ensure that it is provided to the Congress as soon as it is available.

8. *Effect on Morale, Retention and Readiness.* In the first instance, these deployments will have a positive effect on morale, retention and readiness because they will demonstrate the commitment of the necessary resources to those aspects of operations relating to response to the wors-

ening conditions brought by the refugee crisis in the area.

United States forces participating in these operations, as well as U.S. forces deployed for other purposes in the region are dedicated professionals serving with great pride and enthusiasm. Given the importance of these activities, particularly in humanitarian terms, we anticipate that U.S. forces would maintain the highest morale and effectiveness. It has been our experience that personnel serving in these types of operations manifest great pride and satisfaction in demonstrating America's capacity to ensure care and protection for people in need.

However, we recognize that even deployments for the best of reasons increase the periods of separation from family and add other burdens to military service.

The Department of Defense has underway extensive and effective programs to do what is necessary to manage personnel and other resources so as to reduce these problems. As with any operational deployment, the effects on readiness are mixed. In these operations, U.S. forces will be conducting one of the missions they have been trained to perform, which will provide an unparalleled opportunity to apply their skills in a unique environment. We believe that this will contribute significantly to a high state of morale and readiness.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 5.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Forces to Macedonia and Albania

April 4, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Further to my report to the Congress of March 25 and April 3, 1999, under section 8115 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-262), this report is to inform you of my decision to deploy addi-

tional U.S. forces to Albania in support of ongoing NATO air operations to reduce the capacity of the Serbian military and security forces to conduct offensive operations.

In particular, rotary wing, artillery, and tactical missile systems will be deployed to establish

a deep strike task force in Albania to enhance NATO's ability to conduct effective air operations in Kosovo as part of the current NATO mission. In regard to the elements of section 8115(a)(1)–(8), I am providing the following to supplement information provided on these elements in my reports of March 25 and April 3, 1999.

1 & 2. *National Security Interests.* I hereby certify that the deployment of additional forces to Albania as described above is necessary in the national security interests of the United States. This deployment will provide additional specialized forces to reduce the capacity of the Serbian military and security forces to continue repression and ethnic cleansing and to deter the threat to regional peace and security.

3. *Numbers.* I anticipate that a substantial deep strike task force, comprised of rotary wing, artillery, and tactical missile systems, together with supporting and security elements, will be deployed to Albania for these purposes. There is not at this time a definitive number of U.S. military personnel who will be deployed as part of this task force, but I anticipate that, at a minimum, approximately 2,000 will be required. I will ensure that the Congress is informed in a timely manner about the deployment described in this report when the information is available.

4. *Mission/Objectives.* The overall objective of our efforts with our allies in the region has been detailed in my previous reports of March 25 and April 3, 1999. The specific military mission of the strike task force deployed to Albania will be to support ongoing NATO air operations to reduce the capacity of the Serbian military and security forces to conduct offensive operations. The ground force component is for the

support and security of the deep strike elements. Their mission does not include any planned deployment of ground troops into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

5. *Schedule.* Although it is not possible at this time to determine how long NATO operations will need to continue, we are determined to sustain this effort along with our allies as long as necessary to meet our objectives.

6. *Exit Strategy.* The duration of the requirement for this strike task force deployment to Albania will depend on the course of events, and in particular, on Belgrade's reaction to NATO operations.

7. *Costs.* The costs of the deployment covered by this notice, like the costs of the U.S. contribution to NATO air operations, will be paid initially from FY99 Defense Operations and Maintenance appropriations. An estimate of likely costs for these deployments is being prepared, and I will ensure that it is provided to the Congress as soon as it is available.

8. *Effect on Morale, Retention and Readiness.* In addition to the specific points I made on these matters in my reports of March 25 and April 3, I would only underscore and express my deep gratitude for the great pride, courage, professionalism, and enthusiasm of the men and women of our Armed Forces who are carrying out this critical mission.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 5.

Remarks at the White House Easter Egg Roll

April 5, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. I want to welcome you to the White House today. And before I say anything else, I want to say in this season of peace for us I know all of us will send our thoughts and prayers to our men and women in uniform in Kosovo and our prayers and best wishes to the many thousands of

refugees that have been generated by that terrible conflict.

Now, let me first begin by thanking our sponsors who make this possible every year, and I thank the White House volunteers. I'd also like to thank the staff for preparing—listen to this—7,000 eggs for today's event. That's more

than we ask them to prepare for a state dinner.
[Laughter]

I'd also like to thank Scholastic, Inc., for the Prescription for Reading program that Hillary mentioned and tell you all that we have tried to make this an occasion for family learning, for children and their parents to learn together. The Prescription is one example. You can also see an electronic presentation on the White House at the CD-ROM pavilion. You can meet American figures in our history at the Historical Fun Stage. There will be a lot of storytelling sessions. We have a lot of old regulars here and a lot of new people, like Jamie Lee Curtis, who's come to join us this year. And we thank all of them for participating.

Now, I want to get on with the show, but I want to know: Where are the people for the Easter egg roll? Are we down there? Turn around. If you want to see it, they're down right behind us.

The First Lady. And over there, too.

The President. And over there. Are you ready? Where's our famous, faithful whistle blower? Hey, Bernie. All right.

On your mark. Get ready, set, go!

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to actress Jamie Lee Curtis and White House volunteer Bernie Fairbanks.

Remarks on the Situation in the Balkans and an Exchange With Reporters April 5, 1999

The President. Good afternoon. I want to speak for a few moments today about the situation in Kosovo, the goals of our mission, and our efforts to respond to the humanitarian crisis there.

The weather is now clearing in the region, and the air campaign is continuing. We're striking hard at Serbia's machinery of repression, while making a deliberate effort to minimize harm to innocent people. Serbian forces, on the other hand, continue their deliberate, systematic attacks against civilians, who are guilty of nothing more than being ethnic Albanians.

Mr. Milosevic has created a humanitarian disaster in Kosovo. He can end it today by stopping the killing. He could end the bombing. He could end the suffering of the refugees by withdrawing from Kosovo his military police and paramilitary forces, by accepting the deployment of an international security force, and making it possible for all refugees to return, as we move toward a political framework for Kosovo on the basis of the Rambouillet accords.

But more empty promises and token half-measures won't do the job. A commitment to cease killing in a Kosovo denied its freedom and devoid of its people is not acceptable.

If Mr. Milosevic does not do what is necessary, NATO will continue an air campaign. It will be undiminished, unceasing, and unre-

lenting. It will inflict such damage that either he will change his calculations, or we will seriously diminish his capacity to maintain his grip and impose his control on Kosovo. We are prepared to sustain this effort for the long haul. Our plan is to persist until we prevail.

We know we are up against a dictator who has shown time and again that he would rather rule over rubble than not rule at all, someone who recognized no limits on his behavior except those imposed by others. We have seen this kind of evil conduct before in this century, but rarely has the world stood up to it as rapidly and with such unity and resolve as we see today with NATO's coalition of 19 democracies, each with its own domestic pressures and procedures, but all united in our outrage and in our determination to see this mission through. In the meantime, we've got to do all we can to aid the victims of Mr. Milosevic's expulsion policy.

Before the Serbian offensive began, we prepositioned 36,000 metric tons of food in the region, enough to feed half a million people for 3 months. We worked with the United Nations to ready lifesaving supplies at Kosovo's borders with Albania and Macedonia. But it is impossible to prepare fully for the chaos that this kind of cruelty inevitably creates.

We now have committed another \$50 million, over and above the 100 million we had provided

before the current crisis. Also at our urging, NATO has put its 11,000 troops in Macedonia to work addressing the humanitarian crisis. It is planning to deploy several thousand troops to Albania, not only to provide aid but to provide security for relief operations.

We've begun shipping 500,000 humanitarian daily rations for refugees in Albania, the first of which arrived in Tirana yesterday. Today a large shipment was delivered to Italy by the first of eight 747 flights. We'll be flying 10 missions daily by C-130 aircraft to Italy—from Italy to Tirana, and taking supplies from there to the border by helicopter.

The first of four shipments of tents for Albania will be flown from Travis Air Force Base in California soon. We're also shipping supplies out of bases in Germany for Macedonia, and we're preparing an additional 600,000 daily rations for that country.

Today, in Los Angeles, the Vice President is meeting with Albanian-American families whose relatives are suffering in Kosovo. Today Secretary Albright and I have named Brian Atwood, who is here with us today, the Administrator for our Agency for International Development, to coordinate our overall humanitarian response in the region.

He will head up a coordinating council that will include three other distinguished public officials. Julia Taft, our Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration, will take the lead in response by civilian agencies to this humanitarian crisis. She is now in Geneva, conferring with the U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees. James Lee Witt, the Director of our Federal Emergency Management Agency, who is also present, will coordinate private donations to the aid effort and help to ensure that they go where they need to go. FEMA will also provide its expertise to our assessment teams in the region. Finally, I am announcing that Lieutenant General Mike McDuffie, who is here, will be our military coordinator for this operation, which we are calling Operation Sustain Hope.

I hope American citizens will help, as well. We've established an 800 number. It's 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. Now, I know that's got 11 numbers in it, but we tried it just before we came in, and it works anyway. And it's easier to remember: 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. Any American can call and make contributions to private humanitarian organizations and can get

information about the private organizations that are providing relief. Many of them are represented in this room today by the people who are sitting here, and I want to thank all of them from the bottom of my heart for their commitment and their tireless efforts.

Americans all over this country want to know what they can do. I can tell you, right now, in the short run, with all those people building up at the borders, the most important thing the American people can do right now is to make financial contributions to these organizations. They're there; they're organized; they know who the people are; they know how to deliver the relief; and we can get it done. We do need help. We're doing all we can. We need more help.

So if we can get this 800 number out—and again, I'm hoping that the fact that there are more numbers than normal in it will actually increase the knowledge of it—1-800-USAID-RELIEF. It will help a lot. I know the American people are profoundly concerned about this. We can tell by mail and the calls coming into the White House, and I hope very much that we will see a big upsurge in personal donations to help the relief effort as well.

Now, let me say in addition to that, we've got to do something to take the pressure off of Albania and Macedonia in terms of the sheer numbers of people that are there. Many nations, from Norway to Turkey, have agreed to take in large numbers of refugees temporarily, until they can go home. As others do their part, we should be prepared to do ours, as well. Today I can say that we are prepared to accept up to 20,000 refugees. Our goal is to take some of the burden off the struggling frontline nations.

But let me be clear: The ethnic cleansing of Kosovo cannot stand as a permanent event. We cannot say, "Well, we just take all these folks and forget about their rights to go home." I don't believe anyone wants to do that. That's not what we're about. But we have to help deal with the practical, immediate human problems these families face and that these frontline nations face. The refugees belong in their own homes, on their own land. Our immediate goal is to provide relief; our long-term goal is to give them their right to return.

1988 Pan Am 103 Bombing Suspects

Now, before I close, I'd like to say just a word about another important development in another part of the world, something that's been of concern to me for many years. Today the two suspects accused of carrying out the bombing of Pan Am 103 in 1988 were delivered by the United Nations to the custody of Dutch authorities, to be tried before a Scottish court sitting in The Netherlands. This is a moment much awaited and long overdue.

When I became President, we promised the families of Pan Am 103 that we would pursue the suspects in this case no matter how long it took. We have worked hard on this for years. I want to thank all the people who are still in the administration, and some of those who have gone on to other endeavors, for their passionate devotion to this effort.

For over a decade, the families have kept the memories of their loved ones alive. Now our determination and that of our friends in Great Britain and elsewhere finally has paid off. Finally, diplomacy and sanctions have produced the result we wanted. Finally, we have an opportunity to see justice done.

I know that I speak for all the American people when I say that our thoughts and prayers and support are with the families of Pan Am 103. And we thank all of those who are involved and who have played a role in making this important day come to pass.

Thank you very much.

Pentagon Support for Kosovo Policy

Q. Mr. President, do your military share your goals in the operation on Kosovo? We have read many, many stories that—

The President. I know that.

Q. —the Pentagon people are not with you.

The President. Let me say, I will answer this question, and then I think we might want Secretary Cohen and General Shelton to answer it, since they're here. And I want to give them a chance to comment.

First, let me say that one of the jobs that the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs have is to report to me faithfully the view of the Chiefs, the Service Chiefs, the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And they have performed that faithfully, so that when there is a difference of opinion, when there is even a nuance, they have let me know that, as far as I know, in every important matter.

Ultimately, after all, I am responsible for all these decisions and must bear the burden of them, regardless.

Now, in this case, everybody's first choice was diplomacy. Let me remind—let's do a little bit of brief history here. In February of '98, over a year ago, this problem started. We worked on it through diplomacy and with the threat of NATO force, all the way up until last fall. In October we finally got an agreement that allowed hundreds of thousands of people to come down out of the hills to avoid starvation and freezing with the pending winter. We all knew—no one was blind to the difficulties of having to carry forward with any kind of military sanctions.

Now, that worked. Then the problems arose again this year. When the talks failed, we had a series of difficult choices. In the end, everybody agreed that of a bunch of bad options, our military campaign was the best available option to show aggressive action, to keep NATO's word, to keep our NATO allies together, and to give us a chance to preserve our objectives.

Secretary Albright made a point—I believe it was yesterday—that I would like to reiterate. We have a lot of tough questions to answer about this operation. And I am quite sure that we cannot answer every one to everyone's satisfaction. But I would far rather be standing here answering these questions with these people talking about this endeavor, than I would to be standing here having you ask me why we are permitting a wholesale ethnic slaughter and ethnic cleansing and the creation of hundreds of thousands of refugees and not lifting a finger to do anything about it.

So I recognize that I cannot answer every question to everyone's satisfaction. That is a legitimate question; all the questions are. We are doing the best we can to keep the Alliance together, to be forthright, to be clear, and to achieve our objectives. And I believe we will prevail.

Q. Well, are the military with you?

The President. My impression is—and again, I think I owe it to the Secretary of Defense and General Shelton, to give them a chance to answer, because they're here—that everyone agreed that while there were problems with the air campaign, including the weather, which all of you saw last week, that this was the best available option for us to maximize the possibility of achieving our mission of standing up

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against ethnic cleansing, fulfilling NATO's commitment, getting the refugees to be able to go back home, live in peace and security, and have some autonomy.

So that's what I believe. But I want to—Mr. Secretary Cohen?

Q. Will you come back after they answer, Mr. President?

The President. No. [Laughter]

Q. Can we just ask—

The President. No, no—go ahead—I want Secretary Cohen to answer the question.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Lt. Gen. John M. (Mike) McDuffie, USA, Director for Logistics (J-4), Department of Defense Joint Staff; and Pan Am 103 bombing suspects Lamen Khalifa Fhimah and Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the closing remarks of Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen.

Statement on the Delivery of the Pan Am Flight 103 Bombing Suspects to Dutch Custody

April 5, 1999

I am gratified that the two suspects accused in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 were delivered by the United Nations to the custody of Dutch authorities. Legal proceedings will now take place in accordance with the U.S.-UK initiative for a Scottish trial before a Scottish court sitting in The Netherlands.

The terrorist bombing of Pan Am 103 provoked outrage the world over. It led to more than 10 years of effort by the United States and United Kingdom, with the support of other nations, to bring the suspects to justice.

I am especially thankful for the repeated intervention of U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who worked tirelessly to implement the Security Council resolutions. I am also deeply grateful for the efforts of President Mandela,

President Mubarak, and the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar, on behalf of King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah.

But most important, today is a day to remember the men and women who lost their lives on Pan Am 103. I know their loved ones have suffered greatly. They, too, have labored hard to bring justice. Last December, on the 10th anniversary of the bombing, I renewed my pledge to the families that I would make my best efforts to bring the accused to trial. Now, at last, the road to justice has begun.

NOTE: The President referred to suspects Lamen Khalifa Fhimah and Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi; President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Angola (UNITA)

April 5, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the National Union for

the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks on Proposed Hate Crimes Prevention Legislation *April 6, 1999*

Thank you very much. Senator Leahy, Senator Specter, Congressmen Cardin and Delahunt, Secretary Riley, Acting Assistant Attorney General Bill Lann Lee; to our DC Police Chief, Charles Ramsey, and the other distinguished guests in the audience who are in support, broadened support, of the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act."

Let me begin by thanking Attorney General Ketterer and Bishop Jane Holmes Dixon for being here. I want you to know that the attorney general got up at 3 o'clock this morning to drive down here from Maine. And of course, he got up that early so he could stay lawfully within the speed limit—[laughter]—coming down here. And he set a good example, and he was wide awake and very persuasive on the law.

Bishop, we thank you for your very moving remarks. Remind me never to speak behind you again. [Laughter] It was—so much of what the bishop said about the setting of this is many things that I have thought. I think you know she and I and those of us who grew up in the segregated South are perhaps more sensitive to all these various hate crimes issues, because we grew up in a culture that was dominated for too long by people who thought they only counted if they had somebody to look down on, that they could only lift themselves up if they were pushing someone else down, that their whole definition of a positive life required a negative definition of another group of people. That's really what this is all about.

And if you—as she said, if you look at the whole history of this violence we see in Kosovo, what we went through in Bosnia, this, the fifth anniversary of the awful Rwandan genocide, that I regret so much the world was not organized enough to move quickly enough to deal with it before hundreds of thousands of lives were lost—with the oppression of women in Afghanistan, with the lingering bitterness in the Middle East—you see all these things. When you strip it all away, down deep inside there is this idea

that you cannot organize personal life or social life unless some group feels better about itself only when they are oppressing someone else. Or people at least believe that they ought to have the right to do violence against someone else solely because of who they are, not because of what they do. Now at the bottom, that's what this is all about.

And I have said repeatedly since I have been President that one of the things I have sought to do in our country is to bridge all these divides and to get all of our people not to agree with one another, not to even like one another all the time—goodness knows, we can't like everybody all the time—but to recognize that our common humanity is more important than these categorical differences and also to recognize that over the long run, America will not be able to be a force for good abroad unless we are good at home.

If you think about the brave men and women who are working with our NATO Allies today in Kosovo and you remember that this basically all started 12 years ago when Mr. Milosevic decided to rally the support of his ethnic Serbian group by turning their hatred against the Kosovar Albanians and later the Bosnian Muslims and the Croatian Catholics and the others, it is very important that we deal with these challenges here at home, even as we continue to support the work of our people in uniform in the Balkans.

I want to say again, the United States would never choose force as anything other than a last option. And Mr. Milosevic could end it now by withdrawing his military police and paramilitary forces, by accepting the deployment of an international security force to protect not only the Kosovar Albanians, most but not all of whom are Muslims, but also the Serbian minority in Kosovo—everybody—we're not for anybody's hate crimes—and by making it possible

for all the refugees to return and to move toward a political framework based on the accords reached in France.

Now, as I said, we can't continue to organize ourselves to try to stand against these things around the world—which I firmly hope we will. I applaud the women in America who have done so much to bring to the world's attention the terrible treatment of women in Afghanistan, for example. And we have worked hard in Africa to work with other African forces to build an Africa Crisis Response Initiative so that something like the Rwanda genocide cannot happen again. We have to keep working on these things.

But first of all, we must always be working on ourselves. That's really what this is about. Because we know this is more the work of the bishop than the President, but we know that inside each of us there are vulnerabilities to dehumanizing other people simply by putting them in a category that permits us to dismiss them or that permits us to put them in a category so that on a bad day, when we're feeling especially bad about something we've done, we can say, "Well, thank God I'm not them." And it is a short step from that—a short, short step from that—to licensing or even participating in acts of violence.

As I said, it may be—I was standing here looking at Secretary Riley and Bishop Dixon; I was thinking about all the years that Secretary Riley and I worked together. It may be that the three of us are more sensitive to this because we grew up in the segregated South, but it is very easy to get into a social system where you always get to think a little better of yourself because you've always got someone that you can dehumanize. And that's really what this whole issue with gays is today in America.

We're not talking about everybody agreeing with everybody else on every political issue. We're talking about whether people have a right, if they show up and work hard and obey the law and are good citizens, to pursue their lives and dignity without—free of fear, without fear of being abused.

And this should not be a partisan issue. I want to thank Senator Specter for showing up here today. This ought not to be anything other than a basic, simple statement of American principle.

But I would like to say one other thing, just as a practical matter. Isn't it interesting to you that we are on the eve of a new century and

a new millennium, which will be largely characterized by globalization, the explosion of technology, especially information, and the integration of people, and the number one security threat to that is the persistence of old, even primitive, hatreds? Don't you think that's interesting?

So what I worry about all the time is whether terrorists can get on the Internet and figure out how to make chemical and biological weapons to pursue agendas against people of different ethnic or religious groups. And so it's very humbling, I think, for those of us who think we have brought the modern world and prosperity and rationality to all of human affairs, to see what is going on in the Balkans and to see these terrible examples of violence here in our own country. It's very humbling. We should remember that each of us almost wakes up every day with the scales of light and darkness in our own hearts, and we've got to keep them in proper balance. And we have to be, in the United States, absolutely resolute about this.

That's why I think this hate crimes issue is so important. That's why I convened the first White House Conference on Hate Crimes a year and a half ago. Since then, I would like to say, we have substantially increased the number of FBI agents working on these crimes. We have successfully prosecuted a number of serious cases. We have formed local hate crimes working groups in U.S. Attorneys' offices around the country.

But this is a significant problem. In 1997, the last year for which we have statistics, over 8,000 hate crime incidents were reported in the United States. That's almost one an hour—almost one an hour.

So, what are we going to do about it? I would like to mention—we've already talked about the law and I'll say more about that in a minute, but first of all, let me mention three other things. I've asked the Justice Department and the Education Department to include in their annual report card on school safety crucial information on hate crimes among young people both at and away from schools, not only to warn but to educate.

Secondly, I'm asking the Department of Education to collect important data for the first time on hate crimes and bias on college campuses. Another cruel irony, isn't it—college, the place

where we're supposed to have the most freedom, the place where we're supposed to be the most rational, the place where we're supposed to think the highest thoughts with the greatest amount of space. We have significant hate crime problems there, and we need to shine the light on that.

Third—I'm very pleased about this—we are going to have a public/private partnership to help reach middle school students to discuss this whole issue with them and talk about tolerance, why it is a moral, as well as a practical imperative. And the partnership includes AT&T, Court TV—good for them—[laughter]—the National Middle School Association, the Anti-Defamation League, Cable in the Classrooms, as well as the Departments of Education and Justice. I would like to thank them all, because we have to not only punish bad things when they happen, the larger mission is to change the mind, the heart, and the habits of our people when they're young to keep bad things from happening.

Finally, let me join the others—the attorney general and the bishop—in saying, Congress should pass this law this year. The Federal laws already punish some crimes committed against people on the basis of race or religion or national origin, but as the attorney general made so clear, not all crimes committed for that purpose. This would strengthen and expand the ability of the Justice Department by removing needless jurisdictional requirements for existing crimes and giving Federal prosecutors the ability to prosecute hate crimes committed because of sexual orientation, gender, or disability, along with race and religion.

Now, again I say, when we get exercised about these things, in particular, when someone dies in a horrible incident in America or when we see slaughter or ethnic cleansing abroad, we should remember that we defeat these things by teaching and by practicing a different way of life and by reacting vigorously when they occur within our own midst. That is what this is about. And we should remember, whenever we, ourselves, commit even a small slip, where we dehumanize or demonize someone else who is different from us, that every society must teach, practice, and react, if you want to make the most of the world toward which we are moving.

Our diversity is a godsend for us and the world of the 21st century. But it is also the potential for the old, haunting demons that are hard to root out of the human spirit. The "Hate Crimes Prevention Act" would be important, substantively and symbolically, to send a message to ourselves and to the world that we are going into the 21st century determined to preach and to practice what is right.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:51 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Andrew Ketterer, Maine attorney general; Rt. Rev. Jane Holmes Dixon, Suffragan Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, DC, who introduced the President; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Memorandum on Hate Crimes in Schools and College Campuses

April 6, 1999

Memorandum for the Attorney General, the Secretary of Education

Subject: Annual Reports on Hate Crimes in Schools and College Campuses

One of the greatest challenges facing our Nation is to ensure that all Americans share the same opportunities, regardless of their race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

To meet this challenge, we must ensure that our Nation's laws fully protect all its citizens. That is why I have called on the Congress to pass legislation to strengthen existing Federal hate crimes laws by removing needless barriers to prosecuting violent crimes based on race, color, religion, or national origin and expanding the law to cover acts of violence committed because of a person's sexual orientation, gender, or disability. This legislation will assist us in

responding to the kind of heinous and cowardly hate crimes we have witnessed in the last year.

At the same time, we must learn more about the prevalence of hate crimes and other acts of intolerance—especially among our young people, whose attitudes and experiences will shape the America of the 21st century. In order to better understand the problem of hate crimes and intolerance among young people, I direct the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education to include in their annual report card on school safety a section on hate crimes among young people, covering crimes committed both during and after school. In addition, I direct the Secretary of Education, with appropriate assistance from the Attorney General, to collect

data on hate crimes and bias on college campuses for periodic publication.

These steps will help us better understand the problems of bigotry we face among young people, and to improve the ways we respond to these problems, through improved curricula, after-school youth programs, and similar measures. At the same time, our proposed legislation will help to ensure that when hate crimes do occur, they are prosecuted as effectively as possible. I appreciate your commitment to improving the enforcement of this Nation's laws and to fighting bigotry among young people and others, and I look forward to your continuing leadership in these areas.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks to the United States Institute of Peace *April 7, 1999*

Thank you, Richard. Max Kampelman, thank you for being with me today. And I thank the U.S. Institute for Peace for arranging this presentation on, as I'm sure all of you know, relatively short notice.

I'd also like to acknowledge the presence here with me today of Secretary Albright and Ambassador Barshefsky, National Security Adviser Berger, and two important former members of my national security team, Tony Lake and Tara Sonenshine, who is a senior adviser here to the Institute for Peace.

I would like to begin just by thanking this body for what you do every day to help our administration and the Congress and the American people think through the most challenging foreign policy issues of our time. And I thank you in particular for your determination to reach out to a younger generation of Americans to talk to them about the importance of these issues and the world they will live in.

In February I gave a speech in San Francisco about America's role in the century to come. We all know it's an extraordinary moment when there is no overriding threat to our security, when no great power need feel that any other is a military threat, when freedom is expanding, and open markets and technology are raising living standards on every continent, bringing the world closer together in countless ways.

But I also argued that globalization is not an unmixed blessing. In fact, the benefits of globalization, openness and opportunity, depend on the very things globalization alone cannot guarantee: peace, democracy, the stability of markets, social justice, the protection of health and the environment.

Globalization can bring repression and human rights violations and suffering into the open, but it cannot prevent them. It can promote integration among nations but also lead to disintegration within them. It can bring prosperity on every continent but still leave many, many people behind. It can give people the modern tools of the 21st century, but it cannot purge their hearts of the primitive hatreds that may lead to the misuse of those tools. Only national governments, working together, can reap the full promise and reduce the problems of the 21st century.

The United States, as the largest and strongest country in the world at this moment—largest in economic terms and military terms—has the unavoidable responsibility to lead in this increasingly interdependent world, to try to help meet the challenges of this new era.

Clearly, our first challenge is to build a more peaceful world, one that will apparently be dominated by ethnic and religious conflicts we once thought of—primitive but which Senator

Moynihan, for example, has referred to now as postmodern. We know that we cannot stop all such conflicts. But when the harm is great and when our values and interests are at stake and when we have the means to make a difference, we should try.

That is what we and our NATO Allies are doing in Kosovo, trying to end the horrible war there, trying to aid the struggling democracies of southeastern Europe, all of whom are threatened by the violence, the hatred, the human exodus President Milosevic's brutal campaign has unleashed. We are determined to stay united and to persist until we prevail.

It is not enough now for Mr. Milosevic to say that his forces will cease fire in Kosovo, denied its freedom and devoid of its people. He must withdraw his forces, let the refugees return, permit the deployment of an international security force. Nothing less will bring peace with security to the people of Kosovo.

The second challenge I discussed in San Francisco in February is that of bringing our former adversaries Russia and China into the international system as open, prosperous, and stable nations. Today I want to speak especially about our relationship with China, one that is being tested and hotly debated today as China's Premier, Zhu Rongji, travels to Washington.

Of course, we all know that perceptions affect policies. And American perceptions about China have often changed in this century. In the early 1900's, most Americans saw China through the eyes of missionaries seeking open hearts or traders seeking open markets. During World War II, China was our ally, during the Korean war, our adversary. During the cold war, we debated whether China was a solid stone in the monolith of world communism or a country with interests and traditions that could make it a counterweight to Soviet power.

More recently, many Americans have looked to China to see either the world's next great capitalist tiger and an enormous mother lode of economic opportunity for American companies and American workers or the world's largest great Communist dragon and next great threat to freedom and security.

For a long time, it seems to me, we have argued about China with competing caricatures. Is this a country to be engaged or isolated? Is this a country beyond our power to influence or a country that is ours to gain and ours to lose? Now we hear that China is a country to

be feared. A growing number of people say that it is the next great threat to our security and our well-being.

What about this argument? Well, those who say it point out, factually, that if China's economy continues to grow on its present trajectory, it will be the world's largest in the next century. They argue, correctly, that the Chinese Government often defines its interests in ways sharply divergent from ours. They are concerned, rightly, by Chinese missiles aimed at Taiwan and at others. From this they conclude that China is or will be our enemy.

They claim it is building up its military machine for aggression and using the profits of our trade to pay for it. They urge us, therefore, to contain China, to deny it access to our markets, our technology, our investment, and to bolster the strength of our allies in Asia to counter the threat a strong China will pose in the 21st century.

What about that scenario? Clearly, if it chooses to do so, China could pursue such a course, pouring much more of its wealth into military might and into traditional great power geopolitics. Of course, this would rob it of much of its future prosperity, and it is far from inevitable that China will choose this path. Therefore, I would argue that we should not make it more likely that China will choose this path by acting as if that decision has already been made.

I say this over and over again, but when I see this China debate in America, with people talking about how we've got to contain China, and they present a terrible threat to us in the future and it's inevitable and how awful it is, I remind people who work with us that the same kind of debate is going on in China, people saying, "The Americans do not want us to emerge. They do not want us to have our rightful position in the world. Their whole strategy is designed to keep us down on the farm."

And we have to follow a different course. We cannot afford caricatures. I believe we have to work for the better future that we want, even as we remain prepared for any outcome. This approach will clearly put us at odds with those who believe America must always have a great enemy. How can you be the great force for good in the world and justify all the things you do if you don't have a great enemy?

I don't believe that. I believe we have to work for the best but do it in a way that will

never leave us unprepared in the event that our efforts do not succeed.

Among the first decisions I made in 1993 was to preserve the alliances that kept the peace during the cold war. That meant in Asia, we kept 100,000 troops there and maintained robust alliances with Japan, Korea, Thailand, Australia, and the Philippines. We did this and have done it not to contain China or anyone else but to give confidence to all that the potential threats to Asia's security will remain just that, potential, and that America remains committed to being involved with Asia and to Asia's stability.

We've maintained our strong, unofficial ties to a democratic Taiwan while upholding our "one China" policy. We've encouraged both sides to resolve their differences peacefully and to have increased contact. We've made it clear that neither can count on our acceptance if it violates these principles.

We know that in the past decade, China has increased its deployment of missiles near Taiwan. When China tested some of those missiles in 1996, tensions grew in the Taiwan Straits. We demonstrated then, with the deployment of our carriers, that America will act to prevent a miscalculation there. Our interests lie in peace and stability in Taiwan and in China, in the strait and in the region, and in a peaceful resolution of the differences. We will do what is necessary to maintain our interests.

Now, we have known since the early 1980's that China has nuclear armed missiles capable of reaching the United States. Our defense posture has and will continue to take account of that reality. In part, because of our engagement, China has, at best, only marginally increased its deployed nuclear threat in the last 15 years. By signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, China has accepted constraints on its ability to modernize its arsenal at a time when the nuclear balance remains overwhelmingly in our favor. China has fewer than two dozen long-range nuclear weapons today; we have over 6,000.

We are determined to prevent the diversion of technology and sensitive information to China. The restrictions we place on our exports to China are tougher than those applied to any other major exporting country in the world.

When we first learned, in 1995, that a compromise had occurred at our weapons labs, our first priority was to find the leak, to stop it, and to prevent further damage. When the Energy Department and the FBI discovered wider

vulnerabilities, we launched a comprehensive effort to address them. Last year I issued a directive to dramatically strengthen security at the Energy labs. We have increased the Department's counterintelligence budget by fifteenfold since 1995.

But we need to be sure we're getting the job done. Last month I asked the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, an independent, bipartisan body chaired by former Senator Warren Rudman, to review the security threat and the adequacy of the measures we have taken to address it. It is vital that we meet this challenge with firmness and openness but without fear.

The issue is how to respond to this. I believe we should not look at China through rose-colored glasses, nor should we look through a glass darkly to see an image that distorts China's strength and ignores its complexities. We need to see China clearly, its progress and its problems, its system and its strains, its policies and its perceptions of us, of itself, of the world. Indeed, we should apply a bit of universal wisdom that China's late leader, Deng Xiaoping, used to preach: We should seek the truth from facts.

In the last 20 years, China has made incredible progress in building a new economy, lifting more than 200 million people out of absolute poverty. But consider this: Its working age population is increasing by more than 10 million people, the equivalent of the State of Illinois, every year. Tens of millions of Chinese families are migrating from the countryside, where they see no future, to the city where only some find work. Due in part to the Asian economic crisis, China's economic growth is slowing just when it needs to be rising to create jobs for the unemployed and to maintain support for economic reform.

For all the progress of China's reforms, private enterprise still accounts for less than 20 percent of the nonfarm economy. Much of China's landscape is still dominated by unprofitable, polluting state industries. China state banks are still making massive loans to struggling state firms, the sector of the economy least likely to succeed.

Now, I've met with Premier Zhu before. I know, and I think all of you know, that he is committed to making necessary, far-reaching changes. He and President Jiang are working to reform banks and state enterprises and to

fight corruption. Indeed, one of China's highest public security officials was arrested several weeks ago on corruption charges.

They also know that in the short run, reform will cause more unemployment, and that can cause unrest. But so far, they've been unwilling to open up China's political system because they see that as contributing to instability—when, in fact, giving people a say in their decisions actually provides a peaceful outlet for venting frustration.

China's biggest challenge in the coming years will be to maintain stability and growth at home by meeting, not stifling, the growing demands of its people for openness and accountability. It is easy for us to say; for them, it is a daunting task.

What does all this mean for us? Well, if we've learned anything in the last few years from Japan's long recession and Russia's current economic troubles, it is that the weaknesses of great nations can pose as big a challenge to America as their strengths. So as we focus on the potential challenge that a strong China could present to the United States in the future, let us not forget the risk of a weak China, beset by internal conflicts, social dislocation, and criminal activity, becoming a vast zone of instability in Asia.

Despite Beijing's best efforts to rein in these problems, we have seen the first danger signs: free-wheeling Chinese enterprises selling weapons abroad; the rise in China of organized crime; stirrings of ethnic tensions and rural unrest; the use of Chinese territory for heroin trafficking; and even piracy of ships at sea. In short, we're seeing in China the kinds of problems a society can face when it is moving away from the rule of fear but is not yet firmly rooted in the rule of law.

The solutions fundamentally lie in the choices China makes. But I think we would all agree, we have an interest in seeking to make a difference and in not pretending that the outcome is foreordained. We can't do that simply by confronting China or trying to contain her. We can only deal with the challenge if we continue a policy of principled, purposeful engagement with China's leaders and China's people.

Our long-term strategy must be to encourage the right kind of development in China; to help China grow at home into a strong, prosperous, and open society, coming together, not falling apart; to integrate China into the institutions that promote global norms on proliferation,

trade, the environment, and human rights. We must build on opportunities for cooperation with China where we agree, even as we strongly defend our interests and values where we disagree. That is the purpose of engagement: not to insulate our relationship from the consequences of Chinese actions but to use our relationship to influence China's actions in a way that advances our values and our interests.

That is what we have done for the last 6 years, with the following tangible results: In no small measure as a result of our engagement, China helped us to convince North Korea to freeze the production of plutonium and, for now, to refrain from more missile tests. It has been our partner in averting a nuclear confrontation in South Asia. Not long ago, China was selling dangerous weapons and technologies with impunity. Since the 1980's, it has joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and accepted the safeguards, reporting requirements, and inspection systems that go with each.

We have also convinced China not to provide new assistance to Iran's nuclear program, to stop selling Iran antiship cruise missiles, and to halt assistance to unsafeguarded nuclear facilities in Pakistan. Now it's important that China join the Missile Technology Control Regime, a step President Jiang agreed to consider at last year's summit in Beijing.

We also have an interest in integrating China into the world trading system and in seeing it join the World Trade Organization on clearly acceptable, commercial terms. This is a goal America has been working toward in a bipartisan fashion for 13 years now. Getting this done and getting it done right is profoundly in our national interests. It is not a favor to China; it is the best way to level the playing field.

China already has broad access to our markets, as you can see from any perusal of recent trade figures. If China accepts the responsibilities that come with WTO membership, that will give us broad access to China's markets, while accelerating its internal reforms and propelling it toward acceptance of the rule of law. The bottom line is this: If China is willing to play by the global rules of trade, it would be an inexplicable mistake for the United States to say no.

We have an interest as well in working with China to preserve the global environment. Toward the middle of the next century, China will surpass the United States as the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases. At last year's summit in China, I made it clear there can be no meaningful solution to this problem unless China is a part of it. But I also emphasized, as I do over and over again, with sometimes mixed effect, that rapidly developing technologies now make it possible for China—indeed, for India, for any other developing economy—to be environmentally responsible without sacrificing economic growth.

That challenge is at the top of Vice President Gore's agenda on the forum on environment and development he shares with Premier Zhu. It will be meeting this week.

We have been encouraging the development of clean natural gas in China and cleaner technologies for burning coal. We've been working with China on a study of emissions trading, a tool that has cut pollution at low cost in the United States and which could do the same for China. In the information age, China need not, indeed, China will not be able to grow its economy by clinging to industrial age energy practices.

Finally, let me say we have an interest in encouraging China to respect the human rights of its people and to give them a chance to shape the political destiny of their country. This is an interest that cuts to the heart of our concerns about China's future.

Because wealth is generated by ideas today, China will be less likely to succeed if its people cannot exchange information freely. China also will be less likely to succeed if it does not build the legal and political foundation to compete for global capital, less likely to succeed if its political system does not gain the legitimacy that comes from democratic choice.

China's leaders believe that significant political reform carries enormous risk of instability at this moment in their history. We owe it to any country to give a respectful listen to their stated policy about such matters. But the experience of the rest of Asia during this present economic crisis shows that the risks of delaying reform are greater than the risks of embracing it.

As Indonesia learned, you cannot deal with social resentment by denying people the right to voice it. As Korea and Thailand have shown

the world, expressed dissent is far less dangerous than repressed dissent. Both countries are doing better now because their elected governments have the legitimacy to pursue reform.

In fact, almost every goal to which China's leaders are dedicated, from maintaining stability to rooting out corruption to reuniting peacefully with Taiwan, would actually be advanced if they embraced greater openness and accountability.

We have promoted that goal by airing differences candidly and directly with China's leaders, by encouraging closer ties between American and Chinese people. Those ties have followed in the wake of official contacts and have the potential to bring change.

The people-to-people ties have made it possible for over 100,000 Chinese students and scholars to study in America and thousands of American teachers and scholars—students to go to China. They have enabled American non-governmental organizations to help people in China set up NGO's of their own. They have allowed Americans to work with local governments, universities, and citizens' groups in China to save wetlands and forests, to manage urban growth, to support China's first private schools, to hook up schools to the Internet, to train journalists, to promote literacy for poor women, to make loans for Tibetan entrepreneurs, to begin countless projects that are sparking the growth of China's civil society. They have permitted Chinese lawyers, judges, and legal scholars to come to America to study our system.

Now, we don't assume for a moment that this kind of engagement alone can give rise to political reform in China. But despite the obstacles they face, the Chinese people clearly enjoy more freedom, in where they work and where they live and where they go, than they did a decade ago.

China has seen the emergence of political associations, consumer groups, tenant organizations, newspapers that expose corruption, and experiments in village democracy. It has seen workers demanding representation and a growing number of people seeking the right to form political parties, despite the persecution they face. I met with many such agents of change when I visited China last year.

Of course, it is precisely because these changes are meaningful that the Chinese Government is pushing back. Its actions may be aimed at individuals, but they are clearly designed to send a message to all Chinese that

they should not test the limits of political freedom. The message they send the world, however, is quite different. It is one of insecurity, not strength. We often see that a tight grip is actually a sign of a weak hand.

Now, we have made it clear to China's leaders that we think it's simply wrong to arrest people whose only offense has been to engage in organized and peaceful political expression. That right is universally recognized, and democratic nations have a duty to defend it. That is why we are seeking support at the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva for a resolution on human rights in China.

We will also urge China to embrace the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in word and in deed. We will keep pressing the Congress to fund programs that promote the rule of law in China. We will keep working to promote a dialog between China and the Dalai Lama and respect for Tibet's cultural and religious heritage.

But there is one thing that we will not do. We will not change our policy in a way that isolates China from the global forces that have begun to empower the Chinese people to change their society and build a better future, for that would leave the people of China with less access to information, less contact with the democratic world, and more resistance from their government to outside influence and ideas.

In all these areas, the debate China's policy has sparked in our country can be constructive by reminding us that we still face challenges in the world that require our vigilance. It can also remind the Chinese Government that the relationship between our two countries depends in large measure not only on the actions of the President and the executive branch but on the support of the American people and our Congress, which cannot be taken for granted.

But as the next Presidential election approaches, we cannot allow a healthy argument to lead us toward a campaign-driven cold war with China, for that would have tragic consequences: an America riven by mistrust and bitter accusations; an end to diplomatic contact that has produced tangible gains for our people; a climate of mistrust that hurts Chinese-Americans and undermines the exchanges that are opening China to the world.

No one could possibly gain from that except for the most rigid, backward-looking elements in China itself. Remember what I said at the

outset: The debate we're having about China today in the United States is mirrored by a debate going on in China about the United States. And we must be sensitive to how we handle this and responsible.

I know the vast majority of Americans and Members of Congress don't want this to happen. I will do everything in our power to see that it does not, so that we stay focused on our vital interests and the real challenges ahead.

We have much to be concerned about: There is North Korea, South Asia, the potential for tensions in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea; there is the tragic plight of political prisoners; the possibility, also, that China will not realize its growth potential, that it will become unstable because of the distressed economy and angry people.

But we have every reason to approach our challenges with confidence and with patience. Our country, after all, now, is at the height of its power and the peak of its prosperity. Democratic values are ascendant throughout much of the world. And while we cannot know where China is heading for sure, the forces pulling China toward integration and openness are more powerful today than ever before. And these are the only forces that can make China a truly successful power, meeting the demands of its people and exercising appropriate and positive influence in the larger world in the 21st century.

Such a China would indeed be stronger, but it also would be more at peace with itself and at ease with its neighbors. It would be a good thing for the Chinese people and for the American people.

This has been the lodestar of our policy for the last 6 years—a goal that is consistent with our interests and that keeps faith with our values, an objective that we will continue to pursue, with your help and understanding, in the months and years ahead.

This visit by Premier Zhu is very important. The issues that are raised from time to time, which cause tensions in our relationship, they are also very important. But I ask you at this Institute not to let the American people or American policymakers or American politicians in a political season lose sight of the larger interests we have in seeing that this very great country has the maximum possible chance to emerge a more stable, freer, more prosperous, more

constructive partner with the United States in the new century.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. in the East Room at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Richard H. Solomon, presi-

dent and Max M. Kampelman, vice chair, U.S. Institute of Peace; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Premier Zhu Rongji, former President Deng Xiaoping, and President Jiang Zemin of China. The President also referred to Presidential Decision Directive 61.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Equal Pay April 7, 1999

[The First Lady opened the program with brief remarks concerning wage discrepancies between men and women. She then introduced the President, joking that he said the wage gap went the other direction in their family until he became President.]

The President. Thank you. That is the truth. *[Laughter]* But Hillary didn't tell you the rest of the story. Senator Harkin, whose wonderful wife, Ruth, was also a part of our administration for several years, she has often made more money than her husband. And so we decided that maybe we should become part of a small but vocal radical caucus saying we shouldn't stop at equal pay; we like it when our wives make more money than we do. *[Laughter]* We have enjoyed the benefits of that.

I would like to thank Senator Harkin and Eleanor Holmes Norton for being here and for being longtime champions of this cause. I thank Ida Castro, our EEOC Chair, the local officials who are here, and Secretary Herman, who bears a lot of the responsibilities for what we are trying to achieve, for her work.

I'd like to make just a few brief points. Hillary has made most of the points that need to be made, and we all know here we're preaching to the saved in trying to get a message out to the country. But I'd like to point out as I tried to do in the State of the Union that the time in which we are living now in terms of our economic prosperity is virtually unprecedented. We had 4.2 percent unemployment last month.

I remember a meeting I had—and huge argument I had in December of 1992 when I had been elected but not inaugurated President, about how low we could get unemployment before inflation would go up. And all the tradi-

tional economists said, "Man, when you get below 6 percent, you know, you will just see what will happen." And the American people turned out to be a lot more productive, a lot more efficient; technology turned out to be a lot more helpful; we were in a much more competitive environment. So now, we have 4.2 percent unemployment, lowest rate since 1970, lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957, 18 million new jobs.

But we still have some significant long-term challenges in this country. We have pockets of America—in rural America, in urban America, in our medium-size industrial cities, our Native American reservations—which have not felt any of the impact of the economic recovery. We still have substantial long-term challenges to Social Security, to Medicare. And we still have a significant fact of inequality in the pay of women and men.

And the central point I would like to make is that we should not allow the political climate or anything else to deter us from concentrating our minds on the fact that this is a precious gift that the American people have received, even though they have earned it. Countries rarely have conditions like this. If we can't use this moment to deal with these long-term challenges, including the equal-pay challenge, when will we ever get around to it?

That is the message I want America to send back to Washington. Yes, have your disagreements. Yes, have your fights. Yes, conduct your campaigns. Yes, do all this. But for goodness sakes, realize that this is, at a minimum, the opportunity of a generation, maybe more. And every single problem that we can take off the table for our successors and for our children

is an obligation we ought to shoulder and get the job done. That's what this is about.

And those of us who are old enough to remember what the economy was like in the 1970's with the long gas lines, what it was like in the 1980's when we had the so-called bicoastal economy and my State and Senator Harkin's State had double-digit unemployment in county after county—I'm telling you, when times get tough and then you go around and try to talk to people about problems like this, their eyes glaze over because even the people who would benefit, they're just trying to keep body and soul together. They're worried about holding on to what they have. We have an opportunity now to make a better America for our children, for all of our children.

The second point I want to make is the one I made jokingly in the story about Tom and me having the privilege of living with women who make more money than we do. And that is that this is not just a women's issue. The women who are discriminated against often are in families, raising children with husbands who are also hurt if their wives work hard and don't have the benefits of equal pay. A lot of the women who are single mothers are out there working, and they have boy children as well as girl children. This is not just a gender issue, and men should be very interested in this.

I can say furthermore that I believe that it would be good for our overall economy. You know, you hear all these problems that they say it will cause the economy if you do this. All this stuff is largely not true. I mean, every time we try to make a change to have a stronger society, whether it's a raise in the minimum wage or cleaning up the environment or passing the family leave law, the people that are against it say the same thing. And we now have decades of experience in trying to improve our social fabric. And America has had a particular genius in figuring out how to do these things in a way that would permit us to generate more economic opportunity and more jobs and more advances.

I'd like to make a third point not in my notes, but Hillary made me think of it. There are these people now who are out there saying, "Well, there really isn't much of an equal pay problem because it's almost exclusively confined to women who have children. And women who have children have to have more intermittent periods in the workplace"—you've heard all the

arguments—"and once you factor that out, well, there's no problem."

Well, I have two reactions to that. First of all, if you take that argument to its logical conclusion, we would be depopulating America before you know it. No one else has really figured out any way to bring children around, as far as I know. [*Laughter*]

Secondly, if that is true, it still doesn't make it right. If you give the people the entire argument—which I don't think the analysis supports—but if you did, what does that mean? It means that an important part of the equal pay battle should be strengthening the family and medical leave law, for example, something I've been trying to do without success ever since we signed the first bill. It ought to apply to more companies. It ought to be more extensive. It ought to cover more situations. We've proved that we can do this without hurting the economy.

And if you believe that having children is a significant factor here and if you believe as I do that's the most important work of any society, then why shouldn't we continue with something that's done so much good, this family leave law, to find other ways to do it, to find other incentives for flex-time, all kinds of things we could be doing if this is a problem.

Now, finally, let's talk a little bit about what I think we can do about this right now. Earlier this year, I asked Congress to pass two measures to strengthen our wage discrimination laws and to boost enforcement of existing ones. I ask Congress again to pass the \$14 million equal pay initiative that's in our balanced budget to help the EEOC identify and respond to wage discrimination, to educate employers and workers about their rights and responsibilities—you'll hear some pretty impressive people talk about that on our panel in a moment—and to help bring more women into better paying jobs.

Again, I ask the Congress to pass the "Pay-check Fairness Act" sponsored by Senator Daschle and Congresswoman DeLauro, which would put employers on notice that wage discrimination against women is just as unacceptable as discrimination based on race or ethnicity. Under current law, those who are denied equal pay because of race can receive compensatory and punitive damages. This new legislation would give women the same right. It will make a difference. It would protect employees who share salary information from retaliation. It

would expand training for EEOC workers, strengthen research, establish an award for exemplary workers.

We can do more. Today I'm pleased to announce that we want to strengthen our legislation by requiring the EEOC to determine what new information on workers' salaries they need to improve enforcement of wage discrimination laws and to find a way to collect that information. The new provision would call on the EEOC to issue a new rule within 18 months to gather, in the most effective and efficient way possible, pay data from companies based on race, sex, and national origin of employees.

Addressing wage discrimination takes courage, as our panelists can tell you. It takes courage as an employee to speak out, to gather evidence, to make the case. It takes courage as an employer to recognize problems in pay equity and take steps to remedy them.

Just recently—let me just mention the experience of one of our panelists—we saw this courage among the administrators and women scientists at MIT, one of our country's most outstanding institutions of higher education. Together, they looked at the cold, hard facts about disparities in everything from lab space to annual salary. They sought to make things right, and they told the whole public the truth about it, which is a rare thing. And I appreciate what they did. I commend them. I hope their success and their example can be replicated throughout our country.

Now again I say, this should not be a partisan issue. It should be an American issue. And as you argue through these matters this year, I ask you, every time you are in contact with any person in a position to vote on this in Congress or influence a vote in Congress, ask them this simple question: If we don't deal with this now, when will we ever get around to it?

Thank you very much.

[Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman thanked the President and First Lady and made brief remarks. She then introduced the roundtable participants, and each made brief remarks on their perspective on equal pay issues.]

The President. I would like to just start. We're going to do a little roundtable and just give the participants a chance to answer a few questions and amplify on their remarks. And taking account of Sanya Tyler's voice problems, I still want to ask her one question, because obviously

the situation at Howard and the situation at MIT were resolved in different ways.

After you won the lawsuit, did you feel that the administration treated you and other people who were in the same situation fairly? Did you feel like that the work environment was worse, and did you believe that the program also began to get more support, as well as on the wages? Was title IX and the other efforts you made, did you get more support for the program, as well as for your income?

[Ms. Tyler, head coach of women's basketball at Howard University, said she was proud of the university's response after she won her title IX discrimination suit, indicating that the current president made it clear that women had a significant role not only in the sports program but in the development and leadership of the university. The First Lady then called on Professor Nancy Hopkins, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who stated that 5 years ago there were only 15 tenured women in MIT's School of Science and that discrimination against women at MIT was subtle and difficult to identify. She said that when an incident inspired her to prepare a strong letter of complaint to MIT's president, the other female faculty members all signed the letter and gathered data on the problem. After reviewing the data, MIT administrators took immediate action to institute changes. The First Lady agreed that often such problems were not readily apparent, and she commended MIT for its action.]

The President. You know, the question that I wanted to ask, because this MIT thing is so unusual, is, do you believe that they knew it was going on before? And if they didn't know it was going on before—but all the women you went to had immediately related in the same way you did and signed up—how did it happen? Because I think this is something that data may not tell you. But I think this is what is really important, because there may be a lot of organizations out there where this sort of just creeps in, but the people now running these organizations don't know it.

And what I'm hoping is that—it's not like—it may not be as overt as it was when Carolyn was in the work force, so how do you think this happened? It's very impressive that the president said, "Okay, let's go do the right thing." But that raises the question of how did it happen in the first place?

[Professor Hopkins stated that the top levels where power resided were the last frontier of the civil rights/affirmative action process. She said that the discrimination there wasn't conscious, and thus the women themselves weren't aware of it; however, gender bias that was small in each instance added up to 20 percent pay.]

The President. Let me ask a specific question. Do you think—if there was no deliberate policy to hire all these people at a lower salary, and then not to raise them at some point to a comparable salary, and there was never a systematic policy, do you believe that—here's what I'm trying to get at—is there a still, sort of in the minds of at least the men who are making these hiring or pay decisions, this notion that there's a marketplace out there, and it's a big deal for a woman to be a tenured professor at MIT? And therefore, this was a market-based decision; this is what I can get this talent for; and this is what I'm going to pay? Is that what you think happened? And if not, what is it that you think happened?

[Professor Hopkins said that men approached these decisions differently than women, and that women had to share in the decisionmaking power. The First Lady then introduced Carolyn Gantt, an employee at a Washington, DC, senior center, who during her career had witnessed men with the same or lesser qualifications, in the same or lesser jobs, receiving more benefits and higher pay. When Mrs. Clinton asked how she became aware of the situation, Ms. Gantt replied that contacts in the community gave her access to lists of how much individuals in her organization were paid, and her knowledge of individuals' duties and qualifications led her to recognize the disparity in compensation. After going to the organization's board, she got a promotion but became a pariah. When she moved into a new position in the District of Columbia Government, she encountered the same situation.]

The President. Let me just use this remarkable woman's case as an illustration of a point I made in my remarks, that this is something that imposes great economic costs on the society as a whole.

You have seven children, right?

Ms. Gantt. I still have seven, but they're grown. *[Laughter]*

The President. And you're still working part-time? And how old are you?

Ms. Gantt. Do you really want me—*[Laughter]*

The President. Let me ask you this. Let me ask you another question. You are—

Ms. Gantt. —*[inaudible]*—category. *[Laughter]*

The President. I know I shouldn't have asked. *[Laughter]* The reason I ask you is because you look so much younger than you are. *[Laughter]*

But let me ask—the point I wanted to make is, she has been for some time eligible for Social Security. Here's the point I want to make about the issue. You know we're having this big Social Security debate here now, and we're in an argument in the Congress about how to save Social Security. Why? Because the number of people over 65 are going to double between now and the year 2030. And the Trust Fund runs out of money in 35 years. And for it to be stable, it needs to last for 75 years. But in addition to that, we need to lift the earnings limit for people who work when they're over 65, I think, so they can still draw their Social Security, number one. And number two, we need to have a remedial program to deal with the fact that the poverty rate among single elderly women is twice, almost twice the general poverty rate among seniors in this country.

Why? A lot of it is because of stories like this. So you've either got people like this remarkable lady who is healthy enough and, as you can see, more than quite alert and on top of things and energetic, who continue to work on and on, or you have people who can't do that, and they are twice as likely to be living in poverty even when they draw Social Security.

This is another of the consequences of this. And so the rest of you are going to have to pay to fix this, unless you just want to let it go on. And I don't think, since we have some money to fix it now, I presume none of us want to let it go on, and we'd like to fix it.

But we should understand that none of this—this kind of discrimination is not free to the rest of us, as well. Just because you haven't felt it directly doesn't mean that you're not weakened and lessened because of the quality of life, the strength of your society, the fabric of it is not eroded by this. And that's the point I wanted—I didn't want to embarrass her about her age, but I think it's important that you understand that this is a cost imposed on the whole

society. And one of the big efforts we're going to make this year in this saving Social Security is to do something about this dramatic difference in the poverty rate. And it would be much, much lower if no one had ever had the experiences you just heard described.

[Secretary Herman commented that the pension gap was even greater than the 75-cents-to-every-dollar gap for regular wages and that only 40 percent of women had pension coverage. The First Lady then introduced Patricia Higgins, a nurse who had encountered subtle wage discrimination in her field. She said that while the profession required idealism and dedication, medical advances meant that levels of training, skill, and responsibility had increased, and compensation should also increase. Secretary Herman commented that many institutions had good policies and procedures which were often not supported in practice. She said the administration was supporting legislation to share salary information without fear of reprisal and asked Ms. Tyler if she thought that would be helpful.

Ms. Tyler stated that pursuing her case in court had been very successful and generated real dollars for the many coaches affected.]

The President. Thank you very much. Let me say on behalf of all of us, we're delighted that you're here. We especially thank Senator Harkin and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for their leadership, and we thank our panelists. They were all terrific.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The discussion began at 1:53 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Title IX—Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, part of Public Law 92–318, the Education Amendments of 1972. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the full text of the remarks of the First Lady and the roundtable participants. The National Equal Pay Day proclamation of April 7 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) April 7, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I reported to the Congress on March 26, 1999, on the participation of U.S. military forces in the series of air strikes conducted by NATO in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in response to the FRY government's campaign of violence and repression against the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo. Since my report on March 26, there have been dramatic and very serious developments in the FRY. Belgrade's sustained and accelerating repression is creating a humanitarian disaster of staggering dimensions. Estimates now are that well over one million Kosovars have been displaced from their homes and villages. At this time, more than 400,000 Kosovars are in Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro.

The worsening instability in Kosovo directly threatens peace in the region. We will continue to intensify our actions to achieve the objectives I described in my report to the Congress of March 26 and to support the international relief

efforts being conducted in the region. I have directed U.S. military forces to deploy to Albania and Macedonia in order to support humanitarian disaster relief operations for the Kosovar refugees. These relief efforts will include delivering food and supplies, constructing shelters, providing coordination and assisting in logistics movement of displaced persons and relief supplies, and when necessary, providing protection for displaced persons and relief supplies. As a force protection measure, the U.S. military forces will be equipped for combat.

Separate from this effort, I have also ordered additional U.S. forces to Albania. These forces consist of rotary wing aircraft, artillery, and tactical missile systems and will be stationed in Albania to provide a deep strike task force to enhance NATO's ability to conduct effective air operations in the FRY. Approximately 2,500 soldiers and aviators will deploy as part of this task force. The mission of the force does not include deploying into the FRY.

It is not possible to predict how long either of these operations will continue. The duration of the deployments depend upon the course of events in Kosovo, and in particular, on Belgrade's conduct with respect to its campaign of ethnic cleansing and the duration of the threat posed to peace and security in the region. It is our objective to transfer responsibilities for the relief effort to other organizations over time, and to redeploy those U.S. forces, in all circumstances, as soon as the situation permits.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. In doing so, I have taken into ac-

count the views and support expressed by the Congress in S. Con. Res. 21 and H. Con. Res. 42.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the continued support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for Premier Zhu Rongji of China *April 8, 1999*

Premier Zhu, Madam Lao, members of the Chinese delegation, distinguished guests. Premier Zhu, welcome to the White House and welcome to the United States. Your visit is an important event in the long relations between our people, a relationship that spans nearly the entire history of the United States. Before this city even existed, even before our Constitution was signed, China granted our newly independent Nation equal standing with the powers of Europe.

In the late 18th century, it took a ship sailing out of Boston over a year to make the voyage to China and back. Today, our people can communicate back and forth in less than the time needed to speak this sentence. But better communication has not always brought better comprehension.

We have done great things together, and we have disagreed on many occasions. For over two decades in this century, we had no conversations at all. That was not healthy for either China or the United States.

At the dawn of a new century, we now recognize that our interests coincide on many issues and diverge on some others but that we have a fundamental responsibility to speak with candor and listen with an open mind. And certainly, we can agree that China and the United States can best achieve our hopes in the next century if we continue to build a constructive strategic

partnership, a relationship that allows us to make progress on the issues that matter to our people.

Those issues include stopping the spread of deadly weapons, building a secure and stable Asia-Pacific region, ensuring free and fair trade under international rules, promoting economic growth while protecting the environment, embracing the universal principles of political freedom and human dignity.

Mr. Premier, under your leadership, China has pursued wise economic policies, striving to maintain growth, low inflation, a stable currency. You have fought hard against corruption, reinvented your government to make it more efficient, and reformed state-owned enterprises.

China's stability during the Asian economic crisis has been crucial to Asia's hopes for a recovery. That has been good for millions of Asians who depend upon China's economic health and for millions of Americans, from small investors to farmers to people who work for the many companies doing business in China. America has a stake in China's success, in a China that has overcome the challenges it faces at home, a China that is integrated into the institutions that promote global norms on proliferation, trade, and the environment, a China that respects human rights and promotes peace.

I am grateful for the Premier's visit, following up on President Jiang's visit here and my visit

to China. I am very grateful for the opportunity it gives to both of us to address our potential and our differences in an honest, open, realistic manner.

Mr. Premier, I hope you and the American people learn a lot from each other as you travel across our Nation and speak in your candid, forthright way. I look forward to our discussion this morning. And again I say, welcome, you are very welcome to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Premier Zhu was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Premier Zhu's wife, Lao An, and President Jiang Zemin of China. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Premier Zhu.

The President's News Conference With Premier Zhu Rongji of China *April 8, 1999*

President Clinton. Good afternoon. Please be seated. Premier Zhu and members of the Chinese delegation, I want to thank you again for coming to the United States. It is important for the leaders of America and China to meet regularly.

Today we were able to make progress in areas that benefit both the American and Chinese people. We had the chance to speak directly and openly on matters where we have disagreements. We reviewed our ongoing efforts to enhance the security of both our nations and to build world peace and stability in our efforts to seek peace on the Korean Peninsula, to work with India and Pakistan to curb their nuclear competition, to join in adherence to international agreements limiting the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

In that regard, let me say I hope that both our nations soon will ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to end all nuclear testing.

We also discussed our common efforts to increase prosperity for both our nations. Economics is Premier Zhu's primary portfolio. With his leadership, China's economy has withstood Asia's financial turmoil and helped to mitigate its impact on other nations in the region. Now, with Asia's recovery underway but regional growth still fragile, Premier Zhu has been squarely addressing China's toughest economic challenges: reforming state-owned industries and financial institutions, rooting out corruption, bringing China into the information age, and expanding international trade. These efforts will benefit China and its trading partners, including America's businesses, workers, and farmers.

Our nations also will benefit from new cooperative initiatives we have agreed upon in recent days to develop a private housing market in China, to create a U.S.-China dialog on job training and labor rights, to support clean energy projects in China. Today we will sign a civil aviation agreement that will double passenger and cargo flights between our countries, bringing jobs and economic activity to both.

And after extensive efforts by our negotiators, China has agreed to direct all its government agencies to use only licensed computer software, which will greatly assist our software industry in China, now the world's fifth-largest personal computer market. Additionally, we have reached an important agreement that will open China's markets for U.S. exports of citrus, meat products, and Pacific Northwest wheat, all highly important for our farmers.

I am also pleased we have made significant progress toward bringing China into the World Trade Organization on fair commercial terms, although we are not quite there yet. A fair WTO agreement will go far toward leveling the playing field for our companies and our workers in China's markets, will commit China to play by the rules of the international trading system, and bring China fully into that system in a way that will bring greater opportunity for its citizens and its industries as well.

Today we are issuing a joint statement recording the significant progress we have made on WTO and committing to work to resolve all remaining issues this year.

Ultimately, to succeed in the market-based, information-driven world economy, China must

continue its efforts toward reform. Premier Zhu has worked very hard on them. There is still work to be done, and we want to support China in its efforts to strengthen its legal system, impose stronger labor and environmental protections, improve accountability, give citizens greater freedom, and increase their access to information.

We disagree, of course, on the meaning and reach of human rights, because I am convinced that greater freedom, debate, and openness are vital to improving China's citizens' lives as well as China's economy over the long run. It is troubling that in the past year, China has taken some steps backwards on human rights, in arresting people basically for seeking to express their political views. I also regret that more progress has not been made to open a dialog with the Dalai Lama.

We honor China's remarkable achievements, its greater prosperity, and the greater range of personal choices available to its citizens, as well as the movement toward local democracy. We appreciate the magnitude of its struggles, far greater than those faced by any other country in the world. But the American people and, indeed, people all around the world believe that all persons are entitled to fundamental freedoms that include freedom of speech, religion, and association.

I hope that China's leaders will conclude that in these areas, too, benefits of change outweigh the risks. I hope and believe we can make the kind of progress together that will enable both of us to have the kind of strong partnership that would be very much in the world's interest in the 21st century, a partnership against war and terrorism, against dangerous weapons and crime, for better health care and education, for a cleaner environment, achievements in the arts and the sciences, a deepening of democratic values, and prosperity for all our citizens and, indeed, for all the world.

I have no illusions that cooperation with China can resolve all of our differences. Our countries are too large. Our backgrounds are too different. Where our interests diverge, we will continue to stand for our values and to protect our national security. But a policy of confrontation for confrontation's sake, as I said yesterday, will accomplish nothing but the fulfillment of the bleakest prophecies held by people in both the United States and China.

Yesterday I said we should not see this relationship through rose-colored glasses, nor should we see it through a glass darkly. We should see it with clear eyes. It is in the interest of the American people and the Chinese people that whenever we can cooperate, we should. This relationship, complex though it may be, is profoundly important to the future of every American and every Chinese citizen and, indeed, to all the world.

Premier Zhu.

Premier Zhu. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to thank President Clinton for his invitation, and now the delegation of the People's Republic of China is visiting the United States. And today I'm very honored to join President Clinton, to meet all the friends coming from the press. And I am ready to convey through the friends from the media my most sincere greetings and best regards to the American people.

From the moment since I set foot on the American soil, which started from Los Angeles, when maybe God did not welcome me very much, for it rained very hard, but it appears to me that the American people like me. And today we received a very grand welcome from the President, and we had a very good talk with the President and his colleagues. And at noon I also attended a very grand luncheon hosted by Secretary Albright, which was an opportunity for me to meet many old friends.

I believe that our talks were frank and candid, and they were constructive and fruitful. Naturally, the result has not been measured by how many agreements we may have reached; I believe we've already reached quite a number of agreements. What is the key that the PRC delegation is able to have the opportunity of meeting people from different walks of life in the United States and that we can have an opportunity to talk directly to the American people to explain to them what is our views.

As I said in the morning, it is not that only friends who say yes to you are good friends. We believe that maybe the friends who are able to say no to you are the best friends for you.

And from Washington, I will also travel to Denver, to Chicago, to New York, and to Boston, where I will meet quite a lot of friends from the United States. I'm ready to talk to them, and I'm also prepared to argue, to debate with them. I believe by doing so, we will be able to promote the communication and mutual

understanding between our two peoples, thus promoting the relationship between us, or rather, the objective of working to build a constructive strategic partnership between the two sides as opened up by the two Presidents, and also to continue to develop the friendship between us.

As the President said earlier this morning, we also reached certain agreement on the WTO question, and we shall issue a joint statement on this question. And also on these areas we've already agreed upon, such as on the agricultural questions, we will sign certain agreements. In my view, all these will further promote the development of friendship and cooperation between China and the United States.

And today I am ready to answer your questions in a very candid manner. But as the Premier of China, I took my office only on the 17th of March last year, and today is my first time to experience such press conference—so my heart is now beating. *[Laughter]* I'm not as experienced as the President, because the President is very experienced in dealing with you. *[Laughter]* I'm not that experienced, so should I say something which is not appropriate very much, I do hope that you will exercise certain leniency and try to promote what is good and try as much as you can to cover what may not be that appropriate. *[Laughter]*

Thank you.

Premier Zhu's Visit

Q. Thank you, Mr. Premier. As a matter of fact, before your visit to the United States, and also since you set your foot on the American soil, many of our leaders have such a question—that is, given such difficulties that the China-U.S. relations encountered, why did you still decide to visit the United States as scheduled? What are your real thoughts? And how do you think China-U.S. relations should develop at the turn of the century?

Premier Zhu. Are you asking me to tell you the truth? To tell you the truth, I was really reluctant to come. *[Laughter]* Two days before my departure from China for the United States, I received two congressional delegations from the United States, one headed by Mr. Thomas, the other by Mr. Roth. All together, more than 20 Senators and Congressmen were at the meetings. I said to them, "As the current political atmosphere in the United States is so anti-China, I really lack the guts to pay the visit

to the United States at present." And they told me that "You should go. We welcome you, because we Americans like your new face."

I said, "My old friend Ambassador Sasser told me he was going to go back to the United States before me, and he was going to each and every place that I was going to visit to introduce me to the local people and also to promote my trip. And he also told me that he was fully prepared to be even beaten black and blue, and maybe with a bandage wrapped around his face when he saw me in the United States." Then I said, "Even your Ambassador Sasser, an American, had such a risk of being beaten black and blue, then what would my fate be as a Chinese? Will my new face be turned into a bloody face?" *[Laughter]*

The Senators and the Congressmen didn't give me any guarantee. But President Jiang Zemin decided that I should come according to a schedule, and he is number one in China, so I had to obey him. *[Laughter]* Now, I can tell you that I am now in a much better mood than when I was just about to make the trip, because since I came to the United States I've seen so many friendly faces, and I've been accorded very warm welcome and reception.

I believe that through my current visit to the United States I will be able to contribute some of my part to the continued growth of the friendly relations and the cooperation between China and the United States. And more than that, I will also be able to get more understanding from the American people and maybe develop more consensus with the American side on the issues over which we still argue.

And we'll also be able to conclude several agreements in the economic field, for instance on SPS. And actually, our negotiations in the field of WTO have been going on for 13 years. And on the part of the Chinese side, we have already made a lot of concessions. For instance, in the area of TCK wheat, now we have already agreed to lift the ban on the exports of wheat from seven American U.S. States to China. And now we have also decided to lift the restriction on the export of citrus from four States of the United States, including California, to China.

On the question of China's accession into the WTO, in my view, the gap between the two sides is really not very significant. Maybe Mr. President does not quite agree with me on that; their side still believes that the gap is significant.

So that's why at present we are only in a position to sign a joint statement instead of a full package agreement.

If you want to hear some honest words, then I should say that now the problem does not lie with this big difference or big gap but lies with the political atmosphere. But we are very optimistic about the prospect of the development of friendly relations and the cooperation between China and the United States.

As I said this morning, I don't think there's any problem or question between our two countries that cannot be resolved satisfactorily through friendly consultations.

As for some other issues, such as human rights and the Dalai Lama, President Clinton mentioned all these issues in his opening remarks. I think we have enough time to argue over these questions, so I don't want to dwell on these questions long here.

President Clinton. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, I have a three-part question on—[laughter]—

President Clinton. You learned from her, right?

Q. —on Kosovo. Solana says that there are ongoing discussions on ground troops. Has the U.S. position changed? Two, has the Cypriot intervention helped to pave the way for the release of the American servicemen? And three, is Milosevic a war criminal by Nuremberg standards?

President Clinton. The answer to the first question is no. I believe our present strategy will work if we can keep the allies with it.

The answer to the second question is, I don't know. I hope so. We would like to see the servicemen released, because they never should have been detained in the first place. They were in Macedonia. They had nothing to do with the operations against Serbia. And I would be for anything honorable that would secure their release, obviously.

The answer to the third question is that that is, strictly speaking, a legal decision that has to be made, but I certainly think it should be looked into.

Q. Why are nine commanders named by the State Department to be possibly indicted, and you don't mention Milosevic?

President Clinton. The answer to that is, I'm not sure. The question I want to emphasize to you is, when you start talking about indicting people, there are laws, there are standards of proof, there are coverages, there are all those issues. We have asked that this be looked at.

What we do know is this. Let's look at what we know. What we know is that by a deliberate policy he has caused hundreds of thousands of people to be refugees. We know that thousands of innocent people have been killed—defenseless, completely defenseless people. We know that people were herded up and pushed to the borders and pushed over the borders. And today you all have stories saying that the same borders that people were herded up and pushed over or pushed up next to are now being mined, so if they try to get across them to save their lives they can be blown up.

We know that he supported, strongly, the Serbian actions in the Bosnian war, which led to the deaths of over a quarter of a million people and over 2½ million people being made refugees.

Now, the important thing to me is to stop the killing, to stop the exodus, to see the refugees return, to see them safe, to see a political solution that gives them the autonomy that they were promised, to have an international peace-keeping force that will prevent this from happening again.

But I have been very clear, Helen—I think quite unambiguous that, on the war crimes issue, that is something—we have a tribunal set up for that. We have people whose job it is to make that determination. They should examine it and make that determination.

And I think that's all that is appropriate for me to say, because it's not my job, and I'm not a legal expert on that question. But I do think that the facts are clear. The humanitarian suffering and loss here is staggering, and it is a repeat of what we saw in Bosnia. And it is his direct political strategy for first getting and then maintaining power. And the human loss has been breathtaking.

Taiwan

Q. Seven hours before you landed in Andrews Air Force Base yesterday, President Clinton made a foreign policy speech in which he mentioned the sending of carriers to the waters in the Taiwan Straits in March 1996. And he said that that move had helped maintain the security

in the Taiwan Straits. So in your view, how do you see the effect of the military capabilities of the United States on the situation across the Taiwan Straits? And do you think there should be a timetable for the reunification of the mainland and Taiwan of China? And do you wish to pay a visit to Taiwan?

Premier Zhu. The policy of China and the reunification of the mainland and Taiwan of China is a very clear-cut one and the President, Jiang Zemin, has already expounded on China's policy in this regard. So I don't see the need for me to reiterate here.

Since the return of Hong Kong to the motherland, the policy of one country, two systems, Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong, Hong Kong enduring a high degree of autonomy, have been fully implemented, which is a fact there for the people in the entire world to see. And our policy for the reunification of China with Taiwan is more generous than our policy towards Hong Kong. That is to say, Taiwan will be allowed to maintain its army, and we're also prepared to let the head of Taiwan come to the central government to serve as the deputy head.

But as for whether he or she is able to be the head, then I'm not sure. But I'm afraid it would not get enough votes. Nobody would vote for him.

On the question of the reunification, the Chinese Government has repeatedly stated that we strive for a peaceful reunification of the motherland. But we have never undertaken to renounce the use of force in this regard, because if we were to make such a pledge, make such an undertaking, then I'm afraid that Taiwan would be in the perpetual state of separation from the motherland.

Just now, in the Oval Office of President Clinton, I saw the portrait of President Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln, in order to maintain the unity of the United States and oppose independence of the southern part, he had resorted to the use of force and fought a war for that, for maintaining the unity of the United States. So I think Abraham Lincoln, President, is a model, is an example.

As for whether I'm going to visit Taiwan, since none of them have issued an invitation to me, so how can I go there and in what capacity should I go there? I hope you will also help me to think of this. *[Laughter]*

Thank you.

President Clinton. I think I have to say just one thing, if I might, since I got zapped by Abraham Lincoln. *[Laughter]* First of all, the United States has a "one China" policy, and I have reaffirmed that at every opportunity. I do so again today.

Secondly, we believe that this matter should be resolved peacefully. The facts of the relationship between Taiwan and China over the last 50 years are somewhat different than the facts leading up to the American Civil War, as I'm sure that you would all agree.

It does seem to me that China and Taiwan, apart from the blood ties of being Chinese—even the native Taiwanese—that you have a lot to offer each other, including economic power but beyond that as well.

And so I hope that we will see a resolution of this. And I think if the Premier is as humorous and clever in Taiwan as he is here, I think it would be a good thing for him to go. *[Laughter]*

Terry *[Terence Hunt, Associated Press].*

Premier Zhu. President Clinton's black and blue. *[Laughter]*

Chinese Nuclear Espionage/1996 Campaign Financing/Benefits of Engagement

Q. A question to the Premier. Sir, how do you respond to charges that China stole nuclear warhead designs and perhaps neutron bomb technology from the United States, and also funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars to President Clinton's reelection campaign? *[Laughter]*

And Mr. Clinton, do you find any of these charges credible? And what do you say to criticism that your policy of engaging China has benefited China and not penalized them at all for human rights abuses, trade problems, and espionage?

Premier Zhu. In the capacity of the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, I'd like to make a very solemn statement here that I have no knowledge whatsoever of any allegation of espionage or the theft of nuclear technology. And I don't believe such a story.

I've also asked President Jiang, and he does not have any knowledge of that at all. It is not the policy of China to steal so-called military secrets from the United States. And I don't think there can be such a problem, given the tight security measures in the United States and advanced technology. Although, it seems that

to the technology, with regard to this microphone, is not that advanced. [Laughter]

I think it's entirely impossible for China to have any effective—or to steal any nuclear technology or military secrets from the United States effectively under such conditions, such tight security measures.

In the scientific exchanges between scholars of our two countries, they may have some exchanges concerning defense technologies. But I don't believe that such exchanges will involve any substantive or key technologies.

As a senior engineer, I've been in charge of the industry in China for more than 40 years, and I have never known any of our most advanced technology came from the United States. But the technology development, or technologies, are the common heritage or common property of mankind. And in scientific inventions, actually, all roads lead to Rome. And in terms of the missile and the nuclear technologies, indeed, we have learned that from foreign countries.

While in the area of missile technology, the pioneer in China is Mr. Tsien Hsueh-sen, who returned from the United States. And in terms of the nuclear technology the pioneer in China is Qian Sanqiang, who returned from the lab of Madame Curie of France. But I can assure you that when they returned back, they didn't bring back even a piece of paper; they just brought back with them their brains.

That's why I said at the press conference last March that I hope you don't underestimate your own ability, your own security ability, or your own ability to keep secrets, and don't underestimate the capability of the Chinese people to develop their own technology.

At a luncheon hosted by the mayor of Los Angeles, the wife of the mayor asked me, "How are you going to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic?" I told her that we planned to hold a very grand military review and also the latest weaponry will be on display. And I also told her that all the weaponry are developed by China itself, not stolen from the United States. The wife of the mayor gave me advice, and she said, "Maybe you should put a sign on the weaponry, the missiles, that they are 'Made in China, not from the United States.'" I appreciated her sense of humor very much, and I said, "That's a good idea." [Laughter]

Mr. Clinton stated in the speech that the United States has more than 6,000 nuclear missiles, while China only has less than two dozen. I think he knows better than I do. I, to tell you the truth, don't know the exact number of missiles that we have. [Laughter] Although I do not know the exact number of our missiles, I agree with you in your conclusion; that is, we have a very small number of missiles, and you have a very large number. So China does not constitute a threat whatsoever to the United States.

On the allegation of political contributions or campaign financing, I can also state in a very responsible manner here that neither I nor President Jiang Zemin know anything about that. And we, too, also once asked the senior military leaders in China, and they told us they didn't have any knowledge of that.

I think this shows that some Americans really had underestimated us. If the political contribution were to be really that effective, then now I have \$146 billion U.S. of foreign exchange reserve, so I should have put out at least \$10 billion U.S. for that purpose. Why just \$300,000? That would be too foolish. [Laughter] I've learned that some people have spent a lot in lobbying here, but I never believed such rumors.

I think through such mutual discussions and even debates, we can develop consensus and reach agreement on many issues that will serve the interests of both the Chinese and American peoples. And we also trust the American people, and we, actually, we have never and we would not do such kind of thing. Thank you.

President Clinton. Let me respond to the question you asked me. First of all, with regard to the two issues, the campaign finance issue and the espionage allegations, I raised both these issues with Premier Zhu last night. He gave me the same answer he just gave you today. And my response was that I hope that he and his Government would cooperate with these two investigations.

You know, China is a big country with a big Government. And I can only say that America is a big country with a big Government, and occasionally, things happen in this Government that I don't know about. And so I think it's important that we continue the investigation and do our best to find out what happened, and I asked for his cooperation.

Now as to the second part of your question, which is, "What do we get out of this"—the sort of anti-China crowd in America says—first of all, the implication is that if someone wants to have a relationship with us, they should agree with us about everything. That's just not going to happen.

But I would like to point out the following things: Because of our cooperation with China, we have lessened the tensions on the Korean Peninsula for several years. China has participated with us in any number of arms control initiatives, including an agreement to restrain its transfers of dangerous weapons and technology to other countries. China is a signatory to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. And China has worked very hard, as I already said, to stabilize the Asian economy at a time when it was not only hurting people in Asia but it was beginning to affect the American economy. So we get quite a lot out of our cooperation with China.

Last point. When you say, "What do we get out of it," he could have people asking him that in China. They could say, "It is the United States, not the European Union, that sponsors the human rights resolution. The United States has stricter controls on technology transfer to China than any other country with which it deals." Both of which are true.

But let me just give you one final example—take the WTO. How could it possibly serve America's interests not to open more Chinese markets to America's workers and businesses and farmers? They have a much bigger share of our market, in terms of exports, than we have of theirs. How could it possibly be against our interest to bring more Chinese into contact with more Americans and to give more opportunities for America to honestly compete in the Chinese market?

I think it is clear that the more we work together and talk together, and the more China is involved with the rest of the world, the more likely we are to reach positive outcomes. That is the logic of the policy and the logic of what we are doing in particular on WTO.

Premier Zhu. I agree to cooperate with your side in investigation, so long as you can provide some clues. And no matter who it may involve, we will investigate into it.

I'd like here to respond to what President Clinton said on WTO. He said that to allow China in the WTO will be in the best interest

of the American people. And I want to say that, although China has made the biggest concessions, that will also be in the interest of the Chinese people. Many Hong Kong newspapers say that I've come to the United States to present a very big gift. I don't think such a suggestion is right. I'm sorry; I'm afraid I've offended the press. [*Laughter*]

Because if China wants to join the WTO, wants to be integrated in the international community, then China must play by the rules of the game. China cannot do that without making concessions. Of course, such concessions might bring about a very huge impact on China's national economy, on some state-owned enterprises, and also on China's market.

But I have every assurance to say here, thanks to the achievements made in our reform and opening up process, we will be able to stand such impact. And the competition arising from such impact will also promote a more rapid and more healthy development of China's national economy.

Here I'd like to call the attention of the Hong Kong press people. In your future reports, don't ever write things like "present a big gift," because that would be interpreted—equivalent to a political contribution or campaign financing. That would be very much detrimental to President Clinton. [*Laughter*]

China and the Asian Economies

Q. I'm a correspondent with CCTV China. Recently, there has been much talk within and out of China about China's economic development, reform, and opening up policy. So, Mr. Premier, would you please make some observations on the current state of China's economy and the prospect of economic development in China? And what impact do you think China's economic development will have on the stability and the development of the economy in Asia and the world at large?

Premier Zhu. Last year, China's economy experienced extreme difficulties due to the Asian financial crisis and the devastating floods hitting some areas in China. But we have tided over these difficulties and managed to achieve a 7.8 percent growth of our GDP. And we have maintained a policy of not to devalue the RMB currency. And the prices in China have been maintained basically stable, and some have somewhat declined or have dropped.

As for the economic development in China this year, many foreigners are predicting that China will be the next to be hit by an economic crisis. But I don't think that will be the case. This year the projected GDP growth is 7 percent, but in the first quarter of the year the growth rate was 8.3 percent. So I expect China's economic development this year to be better than that of last year, not in terms of the speed, simply in terms of speed, but in terms of the economic efficiency, economic results.

Secondly, some foreigners are saying that China's economic reform has come to a stop. I wish to state here in very explicit terms that last year, instead of coming to a standstill, China's reforms made greater progress than originally planned.

Firstly, in terms of the reform of the Government institutions, last year we set the objective of cutting the size of the central Government by half in 3 years' time; that is, from 33,000 people to 16,000 people. And this objective had been realized last year, just in one year. Apart from 4,000 Government functionaries who have now gone to universities or colleges for further study, all the rest have been reemployed by other sectors, by enterprises. And so I think that represents a very major achievement.

And this year, we plan to press forward the reform of the local governments. We also plan to cut the size of the local governments by half in 3 years' time; that is, to cut from 5 million people to 2.5.

Third, some foreigners are saying that there is a very serious problem of unemployment in China, a lot of people have been laid off from state-owned enterprises, and this has caused a social instability in China. I think anybody who has been to China will know that this is not true.

In the beginning of last year, indeed, there were 10 million laid-off workers or unemployed workers. Thanks to our efforts over the past year, we have put in place a social security system. Now all those laid-off workers or unemployed workers can get basic living allowances. And many of them have been reemployed. Now there are 6 million unemployed or laid-off workers who are in those reemployment service centers waiting for being reemployed, while the establishment of such a social security system is very helpful to our efforts to revitalize, rejuvenate the state-owned enterprises by introducing shareholding system into the large state-owned

enterprises and also to reform the small and the medium-sized enterprises in various ways, including to privatize some of the small ones.

Lastly, China now is introducing an unprecedented reform in its banking system. We are drawing on the experience of the RTC in the United States to form the assets management companies in China to handle the nonperforming loans of the state-owned banks. I believe that such reform is conducive to turning the state-owned commercial banks into genuine commercial banks, and is also conducive to helping enhance the ability of the central bank to supervise and to regulate according to international practice.

So here I'd like to say that China's RMB will not be depreciated, and it will remain stable. So here I'd like to call on the American business people to go to China for investment. You will not face the risk of devaluation of RMB. If you don't believe me, then I would take the advice from Professor Milton Miller of Chicago University. He advised me to offer a put option to those who don't believe me.

Thank you very much.

President Clinton. Larry [Larry McQuillan, Reuters]?

[*At this point, while the microphone was being passed to Mr. McQuillan, Sam Donaldson, ABC News, feigned asking a question.*]

Q. That was tough.

President Clinton. That was real statesmanship. [Laughter]

Human Rights/Chinese Nuclear Espionage

Q. I think it was more of a ham, but I have questions for both you gentlemen. Mr. Premier, as you know, the U.S. State Department issued a rather scathing report on human rights abuses in your country, and the United States is in the process of sponsoring a resolution before a U.N. group to criticize human rights in your country. Do you consider these assessments totally unfair, or do you think it's possible that there are problems within your country that need to be corrected?

And President Clinton, at your last formal news conference, you spoke about the problems, or at least allegations, of Chinese spying, and you said that it mainly dealt in the 1980's, that there were no indications that it involved your Presidency. In the wake of today's New York Times report, can you still make that statement?

Or are you concerned that perhaps you were misled or had information withheld from you about the extent of the allegations?

Premier Zhu. Me first? [Laughter]

President Clinton. You're the guest. [Laughter]

Premier Zhu. Thank you. Firstly, I wish to say I'm firmly opposed to the U.S. tabling of a draft resolution directed at China at the Human Rights Commission session. I not only regard that as unfair but also take it as an interference in China's internal affairs.

I wish to make three points here. Firstly, China has made very big progress in the human rights area over the past several decades since the founding of new China. And the Chinese people today enjoy unprecedented extensive democratic and political rights. Through certain legal procedures, through certain procedures, the Chinese people can voice their criticisms of the Government, and they can also exercise supervision over the Government. And they can express fully their opinions. And in my view, in terms of the freedom of speech and freedom of press, China indeed has made very great progress.

Secondly, I also think that we should put the question of human rights in a historical perspective. And I think different countries may have a different understanding of this question. In terms of the human rights concept, Mencius, who lived in a period more than 2,000 years ago in China, he stated that people are the most important and the most precious, while the state is next to that, and the emperor or the kings are the least important. So that kind of thought was much earlier than Rousseau of France and then the Human Rights Declaration of France.

And also, different countries have different conditions, and human rights actually is also a concept that has evolved in history. In terms of per capita income, the per capita income of the United States is 20 times that of China. And also, in terms of education, the ratio of university graduates in the United States, in its total population, is higher than the ratio of the illiterate people, plus the primary school graduates to the total population in China. So given such different levels of education and also income, it's natural that people may have different concepts of human rights.

For instance, if you want to talk about human rights to a very poor person, maybe what he

is more interested in is—if you want to just talk to him about direct election. But maybe that is not what he is most interested in. What he is interested in most is the other aspects of human rights, such as the right to education, the right to subsistence, the right to development, the right to a cultural life, and the right to medical care, health care. So I think human rights actually include so many aspects.

So I think every country has its own approach in improving its human rights. One should not be too impatient, but to tell the truth, I'm more impatient than you are in how to further, constantly improve the human rights in China.

Thirdly, I concede that there is room for improvement in human rights conditions in China. As you may know, China has a history of several thousand years of a feudal system, feudal society, so people have very deep-rooted concepts influenced by this historical background. It's quite difficult to change such mentality or concept overnight.

And also in China, the legal workers, the people working in the legal and the judicial field, some of them are not that qualified, are not that competent, so sometimes in dealing with certain cases they need to improve their work. So under such conditions it's really not realistic to demand a very perfect practice in the human rights field.

So we are willing to listen to you, and we are willing to have channels of dialog on human rights questions. We don't want to stage a confrontation in this regard.

Actually, in China, when I received some foreign visitors, they tend to put forward a list of so-called dissidents and ask me to release these people. Well actually, we took this matter very seriously, and we have looked into all these cases, and if we found that the person on the list has not committed any criminal offenses, then we will just release him.

Well, before I came to the United States, many of my friends mailed me a lot of materials in which they contained a lot of information about the problems of human rights in the United States. And they urged me to bring such materials to President Clinton, but I haven't brought them with me. I don't want to hand that over to President Clinton because I trust you are able to resolve your own problems.

President Clinton. Actually, sometimes we could use a little outside help, too. [Laughter]

Let me say, first of all, in response to the question you raise, I read the New York Times article today, and while I can't comment on specific intelligence reports as a matter of policy, I noted that even the article acknowledged that the alleged espionage might not have been connected to the national labs, which is the question I was asked in the press conference.

But let me say, I've looked into it, and we're doing our best to resolve all outstanding questions. And I've asked the law enforcement agencies to try to accelerate their inquiries insofar as they can.

The real issue is, and one that we made perfectly clear last week, is that for quite a long while, from the eighties coming right up through the time I became President, the security at the labs was inadequate. And I think it grew out of, partly, the kind of dual culture of the labs—part of—they're great centers of science and learning, and they've done a lot of path-breaking work in energy and alternative sources of energy and computer processing and the use of software for all kinds of very important non-defense matters, while maintaining their responsibilities in the nuclear area.

And to me, the most important thing of all now, besides finishing the investigations in an appropriate way, is making sure we get the security right. You know that I signed that Executive

order in early 1998. You know what Secretary Richardson has done recently. And I have also asked the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Chairman, Senator Rudman, to head a bipartisan panel to look into what we have done and to tell us if we haven't done enough and what else we ought to do.

So I think the most important thing now is to recognize that for quite a long while, the security at the labs was not adequate, that we have been moving to do a lot of things in the last year-plus, that we have much more to do, perhaps, and we asked somebody to look into it, and then to do these investigations and do them right and do them as quickly as possible.

NOTE: The President's 172d news conference began at 3:51 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen in custody in Serbia; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). He also referred to Presidential Decision Directive 61. Premier Zhu spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, Premier Zhu referred to Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles, CA, and his wife, Nancy.

Joint United States-China Statement: Status of Negotiations on China's Accession to the World Trade Organization

April 8, 1999

On the occasion of the official visit of the Premier of the Government of the People's Republic of China Premier Zhu Rongji, to the United States, President of the United States William Jefferson Clinton and Premier Zhu Rongji jointly affirm that China's admission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) is in the interest of the United States, the People's Republic of China, and the global trading system. To that end, they welcome the significant progress made by the United States and the People's Republic of China toward a strong agreement based on a balance of rights and obligations. Noting that agreement has not been reached on some important issues, they commit

to work to resolve these remaining issues through further bilateral negotiations in order to conclude a strong agreement as the basis for the accession of the People's Republic of China to the WTO.

President Clinton and Premier Zhu recognize the complexity of WTO accession negotiations. In this regard, they note that agreement has been reached on market access for agricultural and industrial goods as well as a wide range of services sectors, as set out in Attachment 1, but that certain matters remain to be resolved in banking, including consumer auto finance, as well as securities and audio visual services. They further welcome the conclusion of the Sino-U.S.

Agricultural Cooperation Agreement, especially the resolution of bilateral issues concerning imports by the People's Republic of China of U.S. citrus, meat products, and Pacific Northwest wheat, as set out in Attachment 2. President Clinton and Premier Zhu note agreement has been reached on a variety of important rules to be applicable to the WTO, concerning trading rights, technology transfer and offsets, state enterprises, and subsidies, as set out in Attachment 3. However, they recognize that certain differences remain to be resolved on a mechanism to ensure implementation, the duration of provi-

sions governing dumping and product safeguards, and rules governing textiles trade.

President Clinton and Premier Zhu welcome this significant progress and instruct their trade ministers to resume bilateral negotiations in order to satisfactorily resolve the important remaining issues as soon as possible in support of the common goal of admission of the People's Republic of China to the WTO on strong commercial terms in 1999.

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

Remarks at the State Dinner Honoring Premier Zhu Rongji of China April 8, 1999

May I have your attention, please. Can you hear? Ladies and gentlemen, Premier Zhu, Madam Lao, distinguished members of the Chinese delegation; to all of our guests here. And I would like to say a special word of welcome to two special Americans who made an extraordinary effort to be here tonight, Reverend Billy Graham and his wife, Ruth. We thank them for joining us. Thank you very much.

I would like to begin with two profound observations about China. The Chinese civilization has dazzled the world for thousands of years, and the Chinese do not have a tradition of long speeches before dinner. *[Laughter]* I think there must be a connection. *[Laughter]* Therefore, I will be brief.

It is not as brief in Chinese as in English. *[Laughter]*

Since 1784, Chinese and Americans have shared a lively dialog over how to achieve common cause in the countless pursuits that animate great nations. Thomas Jefferson took care to promote what he called "good dispositions" between the United States and China. Abraham Lincoln, in his first annual message to Congress, predicted our extensive trade with China. And of course, Franklin Roosevelt made it America's purpose to join with China in defense of freedom.

Our dialog and cooperation have now survived over two centuries and over considerable challenges. Today the Premier and I worked hard to renew both. We spoke to each other with

candor and respect about our hopes for our people and our children's future. Sometimes speaking candidly is difficult.

Premier Zhu, I know your own life bears witness to this painful truth. But as you said this morning, only good friends tell each other what they really think. If you're right about that, you have turned out to be quite a good friend, indeed. *[Laughter]*

As you know, the American people are glad to see you and to return the hospitality you so generously extended to Hillary and me and our delegation last year. People are interested in you. After all, there aren't many leaders who understand both the intricacies of global finance and the intricacies of the Beijing Opera, who play the huqin, a kind of Chinese fiddle, and who voice both blunt political views and blunt musical opinions. For example, this morning's New York Times reported that you said Western opera makes you want to take a nap. *[Laughter]* I hope Yo Yo Ma understands the pressure on him tonight. *[Laughter]*

Premier, we have profound respect for your efforts to change China in sweeping ways, to build a 21st century China in which all Chinese have a chance to live full and prosperous lives. Of course, we have some differences over what is required to achieve that goal. And here in America we are still trying, ourselves, to form the "more perfect Union" of our Founders' dreams.

But we both believe tomorrow can be better than today, and we believe that our responsibility is to make it so before our brief journeys through life are over.

Last year on March 5th, the Chinese people celebrated the centennial of the birth of the first Premier of the People's Republic, Zhou Enlai. Americans still remember well the man who greeted President Nixon in 1972 and said to him in a toast: "The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history. We are confident," he went on to say, "that the day will surely come when this common desire of our two peoples will be

realized." Mr. Premier, as Zhou Enlai's successor, you have done much to bring this day closer.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast to the Premier of China, Zhu Rongji, Madam Lao, and the people of China.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:04 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Premier Zhu's wife, Lao An, and cellist Yo Yo Ma. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Premier Zhu.

Remarks on the Situation in the Balkans *April 9, 1999*

Good morning. Before we depart, I'd like to say a few words about the situation in Kosovo. Over the last several days, we have struck hard at Serbia's machinery of repression and at the infrastructure that supports it. Our humanitarian relief operation is bringing life-saving supplies to refugees in Macedonia and Albania. Our military is doing its part to help there, too.

I'm gratified by the efforts of all involved and confident that, after 2 weeks, NATO is determined to persist and prevail. If anything, Mr. Milosevic's actions have strengthened the unity and resolve of our allies.

As our strikes have intensified, Mr. Milosevic has tried to rearrange the facts on the ground by declaring a cease-fire while holding his borders—closing his borders to fleeing refugees. But the fundamental reality is unchanged. Attacks on innocent people continue. Refugees who were pushed from their homes by force now see their escape routes blocked by force.

Mr. Milosevic still thinks he can manipulate the situation by cynically using innocent people. He hopes that we will accept as permanent the results of his ethnic cleansing. We will not, not when a quarter of Kosovo's people are living in refugee camps beyond Kosovo's borders, not when hundreds of thousands more are trapped inside, afraid to go home, but unable to leave.

If we settle for half-measures from Mr. Milosevic, we will get nothing more. And what we have from Mr. Milosevic today is not even

partial compliance but the illusion of partial compliance. We and our allies have properly rejected it.

President Milosevic must withdraw from Kosovo his military police and paramilitary forces; they are responsible for the violence. He must permit deployment of an international security force, for we have seen in the past that this is the only way to ensure his promises are kept. He must allow the unconditional return of our refugees because their expulsion from their homes and their land cannot be tolerated.

He must take these essential steps as we move toward self-government and security for the people of Kosovo. In the meantime, we will continue to do all we can to help the victims of the tragedy.

Today the First Lady is going to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, the main east coast departure point for humanitarian supplies, where a C-5 aircraft, our largest transport plane, loaded with humanitarian daily rations headed for Albania and Macedonia, will be stocked. Thus far, we have seen 800,000 of the 1.1 million daily rations we've pledged for the region.

I am deeply gratified that the American people have placed over 15,000 calls to the 1-800 number I announced Monday to make donations. I also know that many churches and other religious institutions have been taking up collections and sending them in; we are grateful for

that as well. I ask the American people to continue their steadfast support. I believe that they will. I am confident we will prevail.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Philadelphia, PA. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks on the Patients' Bill of Rights in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania April 9, 1999

Thank you, Joan, for making the trip up here and for your very, very moving account of your experience. I want to thank all of you who have come here today: John Sweeney; and Congressmen Brady, Borski, and Fattah; Congresswoman DeLauro; my good friend Congressman Dingell, who flew up with me this morning; and Congressman Dave Bonior.

I'd like to thank the other Members of Congress who are here: Congressmen Ron Klink and Joe Hoeffel, from Pennsylvania; Congressmen Donald Payne and Rob Andrews from New Jersey; Congresswomen Carolyn Maloney, Carolyn McCarthy, Congressman Joe Crowley from New York; Congressman Ted Strickland from Ohio. That's a pretty impressive group, and we had Congressman Pallone here a little earlier, from New Jersey. I thank them all.

I also want to thank Judy Lichtman from the National Partnership for Women and Families; Ron Pollack and Families USA; Fran Visco and the National Breast Cancer Coalition; Beverly Malone and the American Nurses Association. And there are 150 other provider, consumer, and patient organizations, all of them working for the Patients' Bill of Rights. I thank them all. That's very, very impressive.

I want to thank the local Pennsylvania leaders who are here: Senator Schwartz; Senator Fumo; former Congresswoman Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky; Representative Bill DeWeese, the Democratic House leader. And I think the city council president is here, Anna Verna, and other members of the Philadelphia City Council. I thank them all for coming.

But I want to say a special word of congratulations to the mayor. This is the last year of his term. You know, I was a Governor for a dozen years, and I loved every day of it. And in the late 1970's and early 1980's, most of the

new ideas for what we should be doing as a people were coming out of the Governors' mansions of the country. In the 1990's, most of the new ideas and most of the innovations have come out of the mayors' offices. There's not a better mayor in America than Ed Rendell, and I'm very proud of him. I also want you to know that he has worried me to death on a number of issues for Philadelphia—[laughter]—but none more than the Philadelphia Navy Yard. And I am so glad we got that worked out, so that the city can be—[applause]—

And you know, I've been working on this Patients' Bill of Rights for a long time. And I've listened to all the Members of Congress speak, to my good friend John Sweeney, to the mayor, and to Joan, and—did you watch the Oscars? You know, where Benigni, that great Italian actor, says—the second time they called him up, he said, “This is a terrible mistake. I used up all my English!” [Laughter] They used up all my English! [Laughter] They have said everything that needs to be said.

But I would like to make a couple of points, to hammer home what this is about and why we're here. First of all, we're here in Philadelphia, as has been said, not only because it is the home of the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights; it was also, interestingly enough, the home of the very first petition drive. Back in 1701, the citizens of Philadelphia launched what I think was the first successful petition drive in the New World, when they asserted and won the full and unfettered right to practice whatever religion they chose.

Philadelphia, thanks to Ben Franklin, was the home of America's first hospital, later America's first medical school and first nursing school, still

one of the most important medical centers not only in the United States but in the world.

Now, this petition, as Rosa DeLauro said when she gave you the right address, is a little bit more modern. But we have to do it. And I'd like to say why and what the larger stakes are, and go back over this one more time.

Why are we having to do this petition? I mean, this is a bill supported by over 70 percent of the American people and by almost equal margins, in every research document, almost equal margins, by Republicans and Democrats and independents. As a matter of fact, it is virtually the only issue that I have worked on in the last 5 years where there is almost no difference by party in levels of support, except in Washington, DC.

Now, why is that? That's because the people who are against it, basically the large HMO's, the insurers, have got the ear of the congressional majority, and they have a lot of political influence. And how Washington works, for good or ill, is that—people say, “Well, who cares if there are a lot of people for it; this is not very high up on their scale. The economy's doing fine. Most people are all right. There aren't all that many stories like Joan's. We'll let this slide.”

Now, that's what's going on here. We need this petition drive because unless there is a clear, unambiguous signal from the people of the United States—not just that we want this, not just that we need this, not just that we believe in this—the organized forces of the status quo will do nothing. They will say, “Oh, well, the President went to Philadelphia, and he brought all the Congress Members here. And there were 100 Members of Congress around the country, but they probably can't break through on the evening news tonight because of Kosovo. That's another excuse we'll have to let this thing slide.”

You know, this is the kind of thing you can do when you're not running for office anymore. You can be more frank with people. *[Laughter]* I'm just telling you, that's what's going on.

Now, I have talked about this until I am blue in the face. I have met with people like Joan, and I have heard these stories. And I want you to know that I feel a special responsibility to do this, because I don't oppose all managed care. I think managed care has done some good in this country. Health care costs were going up at 3 times the rate of inflation when I be-

came President. It was going to bankrupt the country. We should want all organizations, including health care organizations, run as efficiently as possible. But every organization that forgets its primary purpose is doomed to fail. The primary purpose is not to deliver cheap health care; the primary purpose is to deliver quality health care as inexpensively as possible.

Now, I wish we had somebody here representing the other side, standing here beside another microphone. Here's what they would say. They'd say, “Well, Mr. President, that's very compelling, and you got a nice applause line. But the truth is, there are just hard decisions, and you've got to decide whether you want to bankrupt us or not, and this Patients' Bill of Rights will bankrupt us.” So let me make a counter case.

Here's what we asked for in the bill. Number one, the right to have a specialist when you need it. That's Joan's story, right? She got the specialist, all right, after she lost her sight. I've sat with people who got the specialist after their loved one lost their life or when it was too late to do the medical procedure. Because the way these things are organized—you heard John talk about his doctor friend who got fired—if you're down the chain in the review process in one of these organizations, you just know one thing: You are never going to get in trouble for saying no.

You know, put yourself in the position of a young person working for an HMO; suppose you've got a little kid; suppose you're worried about your Christmas bonus; suppose you've got to save your job. You will never get in trouble if you say no, because you say, “Well, they can always appeal it to somebody else higher.” So delay is one of the biggest problems here—the right to see a specialist when you need it.

The right to emergency room care, wherever and whenever you need it. I know you find this hard to believe if it's never happened to you, but Philadelphia's a pretty big city, with a lot of hospitals; if you get hurt on one side of Philadelphia, and the hospital that your HMO works with is on the other side, they can go past three hospitals after you've been hit by a car. That's wrong. You know, that may not seem like a big deal unless that happens to you, but that's wrong.

The right to have your doctor level with you and discuss all your treatment options.

The right to a timely and independent appeals process.

The right to hold your plan accountable if it causes you or a loved one harm.

The right to know—this is a big deal—the right to know that you won't be forced to switch doctors in the middle of a treatment, like a pregnancy or a chemotherapy treatment. That may seem unbelievable, but a lot of employers, particularly smaller employers—to be fair to them, they have to change their providers from time to time. They're always struggling to try to get affordable coverage. All we say is, "Okay, nobody wants to stop you from changing your providers, but if one of your employees is 7 months into a pregnancy, or another one is halfway through a chemotherapy treatment, then the provider, the new provider can't force them to change the people that are giving them the health care." It seems to me that this is basic human decency.

Now, we have worked hard to do our part and to try to honestly explore the contention of the opponents of this bill that this is going to cost them too much money. We are the single largest buyer, the Federal Government, of private health insurance. Today—today—we are completing the process of giving the 9 million men, women, and children who receive their health benefits through the Federal Government all the vital patient protections recommended by the Health Care Quality Commission. We're informing—listen to this—all 285 companies who provide coverage for Federal employees that if they want to do business with us, they've got to add the last two of our protections.

We've already imposed the rest of the requirements; now we're saying you can't make people switch doctors in the middle of treatment, and you have to provide full disclosure of what the plans cover, what incentives are offered to doctors, and how satisfied other patients have been with their care.

Now, here is the important point. This is the answer to the opponents of our bill. A new analysis by the Office of Personnel Management—Janice Lachance, the head of that office, is here with me today—shows that providing all these protections—listen to this—all these protections will cost less than \$1 per person per month—less than \$1 per person per month. I think that is worth it to stop the story that Joan just told us, and the hundreds of stories around this country.

Now, today, the Republican leadership in the House is not even debating a comprehensive bill. In the Senate the leadership plan does not ensure access to specialists, does not prevent the health care plans from forcing you to change doctors in mid-treatment, does not give you adequate recourse if your health plan fails to provide adequate care, and because it applies only to self-insured plans, actually leaves more than 120 million patients without all these guarantees.

Now, this is a clear choice. But again, I say, this does not need to be a partisan issue. This is not a partisan issue anywhere in America but Washington, DC. I've heard tell that most doctors are Republicans, but the AMA is for this. The Nurses Association is for this. The health care providers are for this. And I'm telling you, a lot of us who have supported the idea of more efficient management of the health care system are for it. What is the purpose of the health care system? It is quality health care at the least cost.

Now, let me just ask you one last thing. Everybody says, anybody says, "Well, one of the things that worries me about the modern world is that we're going to leave people behind." Well, I've been working for 6 years to stop that. You heard the mayor mention Chaka Fattah's work with us to try to make sure all of our kids can go to college. We changed the law so that we wouldn't leave anybody behind; everybody could afford to go to college.

We talked about this part of Philadelphia being in the empowerment zone. We are now offering to Congress a new market initiative to bring jobs to the poorest part of America by giving people who invest in those areas the same incentives we give them if they invest in some other country—to have the same incentive to invest in America and create jobs, to close the job gap in America.

So we've got to close the education gap; we've got to close the job gap; we've got to close the technology gap. But this is closing the health care gap. Do you know what would happen to me this afternoon if I started having the symptoms Joan did? Do you have any idea what would happen to me? Within 15 minutes, I'd be on a helicopter; within half an hour I'd be there. I would have whatever specialist was needed, and I would get it. And when I'm gone from the Presidency, because I'll have a good pension, and if, God willing, I stay healthy, a decent income, the same thing would happen.

Maybe it would take an hour longer. Not a month longer. [*Laughter*]

Now, we can laugh about this, because sometimes it hurts too much to cry. But I am telling you, the political reality is that the system believes it can resist the opinion and the desire of the American people. That is what this petition drive is all about.

And don't you think it won't make a difference. This could be a good education for a lot of people all over America. They could teach people how to use the Internet for the first time by putting their name on this petition. We ought to have schoolchildren doing it. We ought to have civic clubs doing it. We ought to have religious organizations doing it. People ought to be accessing—this could be their first experience on the Internet.

But the reason we are here, the true, honest-to-goodness reason we're here is that everybody knows we need to do it; we have now proved we can afford to do it; the whole country is

for it; the system in Washington is resisting it; and the people still rule if they will make their voices heard loud enough. Stand up and be heard.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. in the Great Hall at Memorial Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Joan Bleakly, a patient who was denied access to a specialist; John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; Judith L. Lichtman, president, National Partnership for Women and Families; Ronald F. Pollack, vice president and executive director, Families USA; Frances M. Visco, president, National Breast Cancer Coalition; Beverly L. Malone, president, American Nurses Association; State Senators Allyson Y. Schwartz and Vincent J. Fumo; State Representative H. William DeWeese, Democratic House leader; Anna C. Verna, president, Philadelphia City Council; Mayor Edward G. Rendell of Philadelphia; and actor-director Roberto Benigni.

Radio Remarks on the Philadelphia Shipyard

April 9, 1999

Last week the U.S. Navy and Philadelphia signed several important agreements that are good for the city, the Navy, and our Nation. I want to thank Mayor Rendell, the people of the United States Navy, and others who were critical to this important achievement. These agreements, combined with the decision by the Norwegian company Kvaerner to invest here, will help transform Philadelphia's huge and historic naval shipyard, generating thousands of high paying jobs, helping to revitalize America's commercial shipbuilding industry. Working together, this remarkable partnership of business,

labor, and Government will modernize the shipyard and train workers to produce state-of-the-art commercial ships. Congratulations to the people of Philadelphia on an important new economic venture.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 12:30 p.m. in the administrative offices of Memorial Hall in Philadelphia, PA, for later broadcast. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Edward G. Rendell of Philadelphia. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on Signing the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Wild and Scenic River Act

April 9, 1999

I have today signed into law H.R. 193, the "Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Wild and Scenic River Act." The Act will designate portions

of the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers in Massachusetts as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. I am pleased that

the Congress has moved quickly to pass this legislation, which has bipartisan support.

This Act recognizes 29 free-flowing miles of these three rivers for their outstanding ecology, history, scenery, recreation values, and place in American literature. Located about 25 miles west of Boston, these rivers are remarkably undeveloped and provide recreational opportunities in a natural setting to several million people living in the Greater Boston metropolitan area. Ten of the river miles lie within the boundary of the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, which was established to protect the outstanding waterfowl habitat associated with extensive riparian wetlands. Historic sites of national importance, including many in the Minute Man National Historical Park, are located near the rivers in the Town of Concord. Among these is Old North Bridge, site of the Revolution's "shot heard round the world." The rivers are featured prominently in the works of 19th century authors Hawthorne, Emerson, and Thoreau, and have been the subject of ornithological studies since early days of field observation techniques.

Important to the designation of these rivers and their long-term protection is the strong local support and commitment to management and preservation as expressed by the communities and property owners along the river segments. Each of the eight towns along the river seg-

ments held town meetings regarding the designation of these river segments. Votes at these meetings in support of designation and endorsement of the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord River Conservation Plan were unanimous among the eight towns. The Conservation Plan relies on local and private initiatives to protect the river segments through local zoning and land use controls.

I am pleased to add these 29 miles of the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. I commend the elected officials and people of Massachusetts who worked so diligently on the river study, building local support for the wild and scenic river designation and the passage of this legislation. I want to particularly commend the efforts of Representative Marty Meehan, the principal sponsor of H.R. 193, whose leadership led to the enactment of this important legislation. I also want to recognize Senator Kennedy who championed this bill in the Senate.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 193, approved April 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-20.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting a Certification Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Convention on Nuclear Safety

April 9, 1999

Dear _____:

In accordance with Condition (1) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, adopted by the United States Senate on March 25, 1999, I hereby certify that the United States Government will not engage in any multilateral activity in the field of international nuclear regulation or nuclear safety that unnecessarily duplicates a multilateral activity undertaken pursuant to the Convention.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations.

The President's Radio Address *April 10, 1999*

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about our continuing efforts to break the cycle of dependency and make responsibility and work a way of life for all Americans.

Work is more than just a weekly paycheck. It is, at heart, our way of life. Work lends purpose and dignity to our lives, instills in our children the basic values that built our Nation. But for too long, too many Americans were trapped in a broken welfare system that exiled generation after generation from the mainstream of American life by cutting them off from the world of work.

I took office determined to change that, from giving States the flexibility they needed to make welfare a second chance, not a way of life, to passing the historic bipartisan welfare reform bill that ended welfare as we knew it, to launching the Welfare to Work partnership to create private sector jobs for welfare recipients. We have made remarkable progress.

Today I am pleased to announce that since 1993, we cut the welfare rolls nearly in half by a record 6½ million people. Thanks to our strong economy and strong leadership in the States and the private sector, the number of Americans who are beginning to replace welfare checks with paychecks has tripled since 1992. I'm proud to announce that we in the National Government are doing our part to help, surpassing the goal we set for ourselves by hiring almost 12,000 welfare recipients in just 2 years.

You can see the evidence of our progress in communities across our country, in hard-pressed neighborhoods where bus drivers who used to pass by empty stations now report their buses are filled with people on their way to work. You can see it on inner-city streets where new storefront tax preparing businesses are helping people file their income tax returns, some for the very first time in their lives. April 15th may not be the most favorite day for Americans, but for these people it's a cause for celebration.

Reforming our broken welfare system was the right thing to do. Now we must finish the job. Today I am pleased to unveil the final rules that will carry out the welfare reform bill I signed into law in 1996. This major new regula-

tion does two important things. First, it enforces strict State work requirements and holds States accountable for moving people from the welfare rolls to the workplace. Second, the new regulation makes it easier for States to use their welfare block grant to pay for child care, for transportation, for job retention services, to help people who have left welfare stay off the rolls and help families from going on welfare in the first place.

This regulation says loud and clear: People ought to get paychecks, not welfare checks. But to finish the job on welfare reform, we must press on in our efforts to restore responsibility and make work a way of life again for all Americans. Now, in this time of great prosperity, with our economy booming and our confidence high, we can't afford to leave anyone behind.

One of the biggest obstacles facing all working families is finding child care they can afford and trust. I'm pleased that the Senate recently approved, with bipartisan support, significant new funding to help low income families pay for child care. I hope Congress takes this critical step to give America's working families the support they need to thrive. Frankly, I hope they will also pass the rest of my child care proposal to give tax credits and other support to working families. That will help more people move from welfare to work and stay off welfare.

Finally, we can't finish the job of welfare reform without doing more to help people who have the hardest time moving from welfare to work, those who live in the poorest neighborhoods and have the poorest job skills. That's why I call on Congress to pass my plan to extend the Labor Department's Welfare to Work program and to fully fund my proposal to provide transportation grants and housing vouchers that will help more Americans leave welfare behind by getting from where they are to where the jobs are.

With these steps, we can make the legacy of welfare dependency a memory of the 20th century and build a community of work and responsibility in the 21st century.

Thank for listening.

Apr. 10 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:50 p.m. on April 9 in the administrative offices of Memorial Hall in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 10. The transcript was made

available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Joint Statement by President Bill Clinton and Premier Zhu Rongji *April 10, 1999*

On the occasion of the signing of the Agreement on U.S. China Agricultural Cooperation, President Bill Clinton and Premier Zhu Rongji reaffirmed that the United States and the People's Republic of China have advanced substantially their common goal of China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). This Agreement and the significant consensus achieved on a broad range of market access and Protocol issues have further advanced that goal. President Clinton and Premier Zhu wel-

come this significant progress. The United States strongly supports the accession of the People's Republic of China to the WTO in 1999. Therefore, President Clinton and Premier Zhu instruct their trade ministers to continue bilateral negotiations in order to satisfactorily resolve the important remaining issues and reach agreement on strong commercial terms as soon as possible.

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

Statement on the Observance of Orthodox Easter *April 11, 1999*

I wish to send a warm message of greetings today to the 6 million Orthodox Christian Americans and the quarter-billion Orthodox Christians around the world, as they gather to proclaim that "Christ has risen."

I know the feeling of joy that comes on Easter Sunday, when we celebrate the miracle of Jesus' Resurrection and His gift to us of eternal life. Yet I also understand that on this particular Easter Sunday, the joy Orthodox Christians feel may be mixed with other emotions: with sadness over the tragic events in and around Kosovo, and with fear for those whose lives may still

be in danger. The majority of those forced from Kosovo in the last 2 weeks are Muslim, but among them are Catholics and Orthodox Christians, too. Our hearts and prayers must go out to all who have suffered. We hope and pray for the restoration of peace and a resolution based on democracy and tolerance.

On this holiest of days, when Orthodox Christians celebrate the triumph of life over death, of hope over despair, let us recommit to seeking peace, human rights, and an end to suffering for people around the world.

Remarks to the Community at Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, Louisiana *April 12, 1999*

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Secretary Cohen and General Shelton for their truly outstanding leadership on behalf

of our Nation's military. They are eloquent and profound representatives of what is best about this country, and I thank them.

I want to thank Senator Breaux, Senator Landrieu, Representative McCrery for their support for you and for our country. I would like to acknowledge in the audience today, or here with us, other Members of Congress: Congressmen Bill Jefferson and Chris John, from Louisiana, and Congressman Thornberry and Congressman Sandlin, who've come from the neighboring State of Texas to be with us. So I thank all of them for their support.

I would like to thank the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Mike Ryan, for coming down here with me; the Acting Secretary of the Air Force, Whitt Peters; my National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger. We also have the FEMA Director here, James Lee Witt, because, you know, you've had some pretty tough natural disasters here recently, and we're here doing double duty.

And General Marcotte and General Smoak, thank you for welcoming me here and for giving me the chance to meet with some of the fine people with whom you work who have also been involved in our work over Kosovo.

I thank the adjutant general, Bennett Landreneau, who is representing Governor Foster; Treasurer Ken Duncan; and the mayor of Bossier City, George Dement; and the mayor of Shreveport, Keith Hightower, for coming to meet me as well.

Now, the nice thing about speaking last is that everything that needs to be said has been said, but not everyone has said it. *[Laughter]* What I would like to do is to be just serious for a moment and first thank all the previous speakers for what they have said and try to put this in some larger context.

The conflict in Kosovo in which we are involved is really about two things: first, what you know and see every night—all those hundreds of thousands of innocent people uprooted, many of them killed, some of them dying from disease in refugee camps, some families divided forever—not because of anything they did but because they happen to be Albanian instead of Serbian, Muslim instead of Orthodox Christian. It is a human tragedy that touches everyone.

But there is a second issue here, as well, and that is whether we and our allies in Europe are going to allow that kind of problem—hatred based on race or ethnicity or religion—to be the defining force of the next 20 or 30 years. In other words, whether we're going to go into the 21st century, this great modern time where

all our kids can do amazing things on the Internet, where all of our planes can do amazing things with high technology, and have all of the tools of the modern world put at the service of the most primitive hatreds known to man; or whether our European allies—18 other countries in NATO and their friends and sympathizers across Europe—will stay united with us and with our neighbors to the north in Canada and say, "We would like the 21st century to be different for our children. We would like to nip this conflict in the bud before it destabilizes all of Europe. We would like to see us make a statement that we don't want the 21st century to be defined, and we don't want American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, to die on distant battlefields in large numbers because we walked away from these ethnic, religious, and racial atrocities." And that's what's going on.

Now, I wanted to come here to Barksdale today for two reasons. One is, you're involved with the B-52's and what we're trying to achieve there. The other is, Barksdale has a rich heritage of being part of an allied effort, where America does not act alone but with others who love freedom and are prepared to defend it.

This base was named for Lieutenant Eugene Barksdale of the U.S. Army Air Corps, who flew combat missions alongside British pilots in World War I with enormous skill and bravery. This base was where Jimmy Doolittle's famed bomber unit and so many others, including French pilots, trained to fight for freedom in World War II. It was from this base, during the very large coalition effort in the Gulf war, that crews launched the longest strike mission in the history of aerial combat, 35 nonstop hours in the air, when B-52's left Barksdale to strike at Saddam Hussein's war machine and returned safely here.

Now you have this new mission, one that echoes the allied achievements of the past and embodies our determination to create a better future. As I said, I met earlier with aircrews who have returned from Kosovo, where with the aircraft from other NATO countries, they struck at the Serbian forces who have so brutally attacked the civilian population of Kosovo.

The forces are working to save innocent lives, to protect the peace and freedom and stability of Europe, to stand against the notion that it's

okay to uproot, destroy, and murder people because of their race, ethnic background, or religion.

I am grateful for your service and grateful for the sacrifice of your families. We are all—those of us in positions of responsibility—committed to support you. I listened very, very carefully today when the crewmembers talked to me about the challenges of maintaining a long-term career in the military today, about the challenges they face, the challenges their families face, the challenges that relate to income, the challenges that relate to health care, the challenges that relate to housing, the challenges that relate to operations tempo.

We are working on that. We know that, now that we have downsized the military and the economy in the civilian sector has picked up, we're going to have to work harder to get and keep good people. Our new budget provides for an increase in pay and more money for housing and other quality-of-life supports, for more support for training and equipment. It is the first sustained increase in overall defense spending since 1985.

There's something else that, since it is now April 12th, I think I ought to do. Our tax laws give the President the authority to issue an Executive order granting tax benefits to Americans serving in a combat zone or supporting combat efforts. I want you to know that I will issue that Executive order for our forces who are working to save Kosovo. This will mean that for military personnel serving in the combat zone, most or all pay for each month served will be tax-free, not withheld from paychecks, not subject to IRS claims later. They will also be eligible for some additional pay for service.

There's another advantage to the Executive order that will apply not only to personnel in the combat zone and others deployed overseas but also for some civilian personnel as well, including accredited journalists and relief workers. It will suspend the time for filing tax returns and related obligations to the IRS. With our citizens working so hard to protect the people of Kosovo, they shouldn't have to worry about their taxes.

Now, Secretary Cohen will work out all the details with the Treasury Department as soon as possible. [Laughter] He's got 72 hours. [Laughter] You all have to have quicker turnaround than that. So he's going to fight with the tax person for you.

Let me say again, I know I speak for all of the Members of Congress here in saying they support this. We have had remarkable bipartisan support from the leadership in Congress for this—Congressmen Archer and Rangel, Senators Roth and Moynihan, who have made it quite clear that they support what we are doing.

Let me just say one other word or two about this mission, because more of you will be going in the days ahead. Hundreds of thousands of these Kosovars are now refugees. There have been thousands of innocent victims. Many are just dying because they're stuck in these refugee camps and can't get adequate health care or support; some of them from severe dehydration. There is also the possibility that Albania, Macedonia, and other countries around there receiving these refugees will be destabilized because they have ethnic problems of their own. There are also countries, believe it or not, in the Balkans that have worked hard to resolve their ethnic differences, and they have things going pretty well. Pretty soon, their malcontents may wonder whether they could have gotten a better deal by behaving in a more destructive way.

We've learned the hard way through two World Wars and through what we saw in Bosnia that with these kinds of conflicts, if you don't halt them, they spread, to be stopped later at greater cost and greater risk.

I have worked hard for the last 6 years to build in the aftermath of the cold war a Europe that is united, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. The two great World Wars of the 20th century started in Europe. We have learned that so much of our liberty, our safety, our prosperity depends upon an alliance with a democratic Europe. That's what NATO has been all about.

We know in the years ahead, when we're going to have to fight terrorism, when we're going to have to fight organized crime and drug trafficking, when we're going to have to fight the spread of weapons of mass destruction, when we're going to have to join together with countries to fight the spread of disease and environmental problems across national boundaries, that we will have to work with Europe.

That is why we have taken new members into NATO. That is why we've established new partnerships with many other countries across the whole expanse of Europe. That's why we are adopting new missions, to be ready when somewhere, someone again challenges the peace

and stability of Europe. That is what Mr. Milosevic has done.

Keep in mind, before Kosovo, he started wars of ethnic hatred in Croatia and in Bosnia, with a quarter of a million killed and more than 2 million refugees. And the fighting there did not end until we and our allies acted.

Now, we did everything we could possibly do to avoid the conflict which is now occurring. We worked and worked and worked for a peaceful solution. Last year we stopped the threatened assault in October. We had a peace agreement. The Kosovar Albanians agreed to sign it, even though it didn't give them everything they wanted. Mr. Milosevic rejected it because he had 40,000 troops and nearly 300 tanks on the border and already in Kosovo, and he knew that he could move his troops and his tanks at will and do to the Kosovars what he had supported being done to the other ethnic minorities in the former Yugoslavia.

The stories we are hearing now are truly chilling: Serb security forces herding Albanian villagers together, gunning them down with automatic weapons, and setting them on fire; telling villagers, "Leave or we will kill you;" separating family members; loading up buses and trains, carrying some to the borders and some to be slaughtered; confiscating identity papers and property records, seeking, literally, to erase the presence of these people in their own land forever.

We must not let that happen. We must stand against that. As I speak, Secretary Albright and the other NATO foreign ministers are in Brussels, reaffirming our common commitment to do what is necessary to prevail.

There are a lot of people who didn't think that an alliance of 19 countries could do what we have done and could stay together as we have stayed together, would have the patience to endure the inevitable progress that the tanks and the pre-positioned troops would make and the patience to deal with the bad weather and the patience to deal with all the questions to stay the course. But when American B-52's like the ones here at Barksdale take to the skies, they're joined by British Harrier jets, German and Italian Tornados, French Mirages, Canadian and Spanish F-18's, Dutch, Danish, Belgian, Norwegian, Portuguese, and Turkish F-16's. We are united in this effort.

And we are united in our humanitarian effort. And I say to all of you: I am very proud of

you. I hope you are proud of your mission. This is America at its best. We seek no territorial gain; we seek no political advantage. We have promised, if we are a part of a multinational force in Kosovo, we will protect the Serb minority with exactly the same vigilance as we stand up for the Kosovar Albanian majority. This is America trying to get the world to live on human terms, so we can have peace and freedom in Europe, and our people will not be called to fight a wider war for someone else's madness. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. [*Applause*]

I also want to thank the American people for their work in the humanitarian relief effort, and I thank our forces for their support. Thousands and thousands of Americans have called the number I announced a week ago, the 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. It's hard to believe; it's an 11-digit 1-800 number, but it works.

A pastor friend of mine called me the other day to say, just spontaneously, his church had taken up a donation for the relief in Kosovo and had collected \$15,000 last Sunday. This kind of thing is happening all over America, and I am very grateful for that.

As I said, our Government is doing its part there. And when I introduced Mr. Witt, I said that we are trying to do our part in helping Louisiana deal with its disaster, as well, expanding aid and individual assistance for families in affected parishes. It's ironic but I think it's appropriate that under the leadership of Mr. Witt, our Federal Emergency Management Agency is playing a vital role in both the Kosovo relief efforts and the work here in Louisiana today.

Let me say one final word: Mr. Milosevic can end this tragedy tomorrow. What has to be done is clear: Withdraw the forces, as he himself promised to do last October; have the refugees come home freely and in security; establish an international force to protect all the people of Kosovo, of whatever ethnic or religious group; and let the people begin to work toward the self-government that they were promised and then robbed of years ago.

This is not complicated. The United States seeks no territorial advantage. I will say again: Europe seeks only stability, security, freedom, and democracy for those people. He can end it tomorrow. But until he does, he should be under no illusions that we will end it from weariness. We are determined to continue on this

mission. And we will prevail because of you and people like you.

The last thing I want to say is something you know very well here at Barksdale. You are the proud heirs of a great tradition, a tradition of serving the United States and a tradition, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, of doing it in cooperation with freedom-loving allies from other nations. You are doing it again. Make no mistake about it. You are doing two things: You are trying to save the lives of innocent people, and you are trying to do it in a way that creates a 21st century world that you can be proud to have your children live in.

Thank you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m., in an outdoor area at Hogan Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Ronald C. Marcotte, USAF, Commander, 8th Air Force; Brig. Gen. Andrew W. Smoak, USAF, Commander, 2d Bomb Wing; Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, USA, adjutant general, Louisiana National Guard; Gov. Mike Foster of Louisiana; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, senior minister, Foundry United Methodist Church. The Executive order of April 13 on designation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia/Montenegro) and Albania as a combat zone is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Seventh Millennium Evening at the White House April 12, 1999

[*The First Lady made brief opening remarks and introduced Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, who then gave the evening's featured lecture entitled "The Perils of Indifference: Lessons Learned From a Violent Century."*]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, we have all been moved by one more profound example of Elie Wiesel's lifetime of bearing witness.

Before we open the floor for questions, and especially because of the current events in Kosovo, I would like to ask you to think about what he has just said in terms of what it means to the United States, in particular, and to the world in which we would like our children to live in the new century.

How do we avoid indifference to human suffering? How do we muster both the wisdom and the strength to know when to act and whether there are circumstances in which we should not? Why are we in Kosovo?

The history of our country for quite a long while had been dominated by a principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other nations. Indeed, for most of our history we have worn that principle as a badge of honor, for our Founders knew intervention as a fundamentally destructive force. George Washington warned us against those "entangling alliances."

The 20th century, with its two World Wars, the cold war, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm,

Panama, Lebanon, Grenada, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, it changed all that. For good or ill, it changed all that. Our steadily increasing involvement in the rest of the world, not for territorial gain but for peace and freedom and security, is a fact of recent history.

In the cold war, it might be argued that on occasion we made a wrong judgment, because we saw the world through communist and non-communist lenses. But no one doubts that we never sought territorial advantage. No one doubts that when we did get involved, we were doing what at least we thought was right for humanity.

Now, at the end of the 20th century, it seems to me we face a great battle of the forces of integration against the forces of disintegration, of globalism versus tribalism, of oppression against empowerment. And this phenomenal explosion of technology might be the servant of either side or both.

The central irony of our time, it seems to me, is this: Most of us have this vision of a 21st century world with the triumph of peace and prosperity and personal freedom; with the respect for the integrity of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities within a framework of shared values, shared power, shared plenty; making common cause against disease and environmental degradation across national lines,

against terror, organized crime, weapons of mass destruction. This vision, ironically, is threatened by the oldest demon of human society, our vulnerability to hatred of the other. In the face of that, we cannot be indifferent, at home or abroad. That is why we are in Kosovo.

We first have to set an example, as best we can, standing against hate crimes against racial minorities or gays, standing for respect, for diversity. Second, we have to act responsibly, recognizing this unique and, if history is any guide, fleeting position the United States now enjoys of remarkable military, political, and economic influence. We have to do what we can to protect the circle of humanity against those who would divide it by dehumanizing the other. Lord knows we have had enough of that in this century, and Elie talked about it.

I think it is well to point out that Henry Luce coined the term "the American Century" way back in 1941. A lot of terrible things have happened since then, but a lot of good things have happened as well. And we should be grateful that, for most of the time since, our Nation has had both the power and the willingness to stand up against the horrors of the century, not every time, not every place, not even always with success, but we've done enough good to say that America has made a positive difference.

From our successes and from our failures, we know there are hard questions that have to be asked when you move beyond the values and the principles to the murky circumstances of daily life. We can't, perhaps, intervene everywhere, but we must always be alive to the possibility of preventing death and oppression and forging and strengthening institutions and alliances to make a good outcome more likely.

Elie has said that Kosovo is not the Holocaust but that the distinction should not deter us from doing what is right. I agree on both counts. When we see people forced from their homes at gunpoint, loaded onto train cars, their identity papers confiscated, their very presence blotted from the historical record, it is only natural that we would think of the events which Elie has chronicled tonight in his own life.

We must always remain awake to the warning signs of evil. And now, we know that it is possible to act before it is too late.

The efforts of Holocaust survivors to make us remember and help us understand, therefore, have not been in vain. The people who fought those battles and lived those tragedies, however,

will not be around forever. More than 1,000 World War II veterans pass away every day. But they can live on in our determination to preserve what they gave us and to stand against the modern incarnations of the evil they defeated.

Some say—and perhaps there will be some discussion about it tonight—that evil is an active presence, always seeking new opportunities to manifest itself. As a boy growing up in my Baptist church, I heard quite a lot of sermons about that. Other theologians, like Niebuhr, Martin Luther King, argued that evil was more the absence of something, a lack of knowledge, a failure of will, a poverty of the imagination, or a condition of indifference.

None of this answers any of the difficult questions that a Kosovo, a Bosnia, a Rwanda present. But Kosovo is at the doorstep or the underbelly of NATO and its wide number of allies. We have military assets and allies willing to do their part. President Milosevic clearly has established a pattern of perfidy, earlier in Bosnia and elsewhere. And so we act.

I would say there are two caveats that we ought to observe. First of all, any military action, any subsequent peacekeeping force cannot cause ancient grudges and freshly opened wounds to heal overnight. But we can make it more likely that people will resolve their differences by force of argument rather than force of arms and, in so doing, learn to live together. That is what Romania and Hungary have done recently, with their differences. It is what many Bosnian Croats, Serbs, and Muslims are struggling to do every day.

Second, we should not fall victim to the easy tendency to demonize the Serbian people. They were our allies in World War II; they have their own legitimate concerns. Any international force going into Kosovo to maintain the peace must be dedicated also to protecting the Serbian minority from those who may wish to take their vengeance.

But we cannot be indifferent to the fact that the Serbian leader has defined destiny as a license to kill. Destiny, instead, is what people make for themselves, with a decent respect for the legitimate interests and rights of others.

In his first lecture here, the first Millennium Lecture, the distinguished historian Bernard Bailyn argued how much we are still shaped by the ideals of our Founding Fathers and by

their realism, their deeply practical understanding of human nature, their understanding of the possibility of evil. They understood difficult moral judgments. They understood that to be indifferent is to be numb. They knew, too, that our people would never be immune to those who seek power by playing on our own hatreds and fears and that we had more to learn about the true meaning of liberty, equality, and the pursuit of happiness.

Here in this house, we have tried to advance those ideals with our initiative against hate crime, the race initiative, AmeriCorps, the stand against the hatred that brought us Oklahoma City and paramilitary groups, the efforts to forge peace from Northern Ireland to the Middle East.

But our challenge now, and the world's, is to harmonize diversity and integration, to build a richly textured fabric of civilization that will make the most of God's various gifts, and that will resist those who would tear that fabric apart by appealing to the dark recesses that often seem to lurk in even the strongest souls.

To succeed, we must heed the wisdom of our Founders about power and ambition. We must have the compassion and determination of Abraham Lincoln to always give birth to new freedom. We must have the vision of President Roosevelt, who proclaimed four freedoms for all human beings and invited the United States to defend them at home and around the world.

Now, we close out this chapter of our history determined not to turn away from the horrors we leave behind but to act on their lessons with principle and purpose. If that is what we are, in fact, doing, Kosovo could be a very good place to begin a new century.

Thank you very much. [Applause] Thank you.

We have hundreds of questions, I know. Ellen, do you want to describe what we're going to do?

White House Millennium Council Director Ellen Lovell. Well, I think, Mr. President, you have a question for Mr. Wiesel. And then I'm going to begin the questioning from the room, and Mrs. Clinton will take the questions from the Internet.

The President. I would like to ask you a question about what you think the impact of the modern media and sort of instantaneous news coverage will be. It is obvious to me that we built a consensus in the United States and throughout Europe for action in Bosnia in no

small measure because of what people saw was going on there. It is obvious to me that the support in the United States and Europe for our actions in Kosovo have increased because of what people see going on.

And I think I worry about two things, and I just would like to hear your thoughts on it. Number one, is there a chance that people will become inured to this level of human suffering by constant exposure to it? And number two, is there a chance that even though people's interest in humanity can be quickened almost overnight, that we're so used to having a new story every day that we may not have the patience to pay the price of time to deal with this and other challenges? A lot of these things require weeks and months, indeed, years of effort. And that seems to be inconsistent with, kind of, rapid-fire new news we are used to seeing.

Mr. Wiesel. Mr. President, usually, in this room, people ask you questions. [Laughter]

The President. That's why I like this. [Laughter]

Mr. Wiesel. What you said is correct. The numbness is a danger. I remember during the Vietnam war, the first time we saw on television, live, the war in Vietnam—usually, of course, the networks broadcasted during dinner. So we stopped eating. How can you eat when people kill each other and people die? After 2 weeks, people went on eating. They were numb. And it's a danger.

But nevertheless, I don't see the alternative. Except I hope that in the next millennium, the next century, those who are responsible for the TV programs, for the news programs, will find enough talent, enough fervor, enough imagination to present the news in such a way that the news will appeal to all of us day after day. I do not see an alternative. We must know what is happening.

And today we can know it instantly. If the American people now are behind you, it is because they see it on television and they see it in newspapers. They see the images. They see the pictures of children in the trains, as you said, in the trains. So how can they remain indifferent? And therefore, I am—the risks are there, but I have faith that we shall overcome the risks. But we must know.

[At this point, Ms. Lovell and the First Lady led the question-and-answer portion of the

evening. Ms. Lovell called on Chief Joyce Dugan of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation, who briefly described atrocities in her people's history and asked Mr. Wiesel how to overcome indifference to suffering, in order to avoid having to resort to military action. Mr. Wiesel responded that those who listened to the beauty in another culture's past would not be indifferent. The First Lady cited Bernard Bailyn's remarks at the first Millennium Evening, that people too often overlook or ignore painful segments of history.]

The President. I'd just like to say one thing specifically, Chief. First of all I'm glad you're here, and I'm glad you're here for this. I think that Hillary and I have spent more time on Native American issues and with Native American leaders than any previous administration, at least that I know anything about. And with all respect, one of the things that I think is killing us in this country—still is a big problem—is a phenomenal amount of ignorance, on the part not just of schoolchildren but of people in very important positions of decisionmaking, about the real, factual history of the Native Americans in the United States.

And you can almost find no one who understands the difference in any one tribe or another. And you can almost find no one who understands that, yes, a few tribes are wealthy because of gaming, because of the sovereignty relationship, but also the poorest Americans are still in Native American communities. And I think this disempowerment, this stripping of autonomy and self-respect and self-reliance and the ability to do things that started over a century ago, still in subtle ways continues today.

And from my perspective, I've been terribly impressed with a lot of the elected leaders of the tribes all across the country. And I think that we really have a huge job to do to not have kind of a benign neglect or not benign, a malign neglect, under the guise of preserving this sovereignty relationship. And we need to recognize what we did and what is still there that's a legacy of the past, so that we can give the children of the Native American tribes all over this country the future they deserve.

I think it's a huge issue, and I still think ignorance is bearing down on us something fierce. And I thank you for being here.

[The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. Dr. Odette Nyiramilimo of Rwanda,

a Tutsi survivor of the 1994 genocide, asked how governments and individuals could now demonstrate that they were not still indifferent to the fate of Rwanda. Mr. Wiesel responded that nations might be intervening in Kosovo because they had not prevented the massacre in Rwanda.]

The President. I think we could have prevented a significant amount of it. You know, it takes—the thing about the Rwanda massacre that was so stunning is it was done mostly with very primitive weapons, not modern mass-killing instruments, and yet it happened in a matter of just a few weeks, as you know.

And I want to give time for others to ask their questions, but let me say I have thought about this a great deal, more than you might imagine. And we went to Kigali when we were in Africa, and we talked to a number of the survivors, including a woman who woke up to find her husband and six children all hatcheted to death, hacked to death. And she, by a miracle, lived and was devoting herself to the work of helping people like you put your lives back together.

One of the things that made it, I think, more likely that we would act in Kosovo, and eventually in Bosnia, is that we had a mechanism through which we could act, where people could join together in a hurry, like with NATO. And one of the things that we are trying to do is to work with other African countries now on something called the Africa Crisis Response Initiative, where we send American soldiers to work with African countries to develop the ability to work with other militaries to try to head these kinds of things off and to do it in a hurry.

I can only tell you that I will do my best to make sure that nothing like this happens again in Africa. I do not think the United States can take the position that we only care about these sorts of things if they happen in Europe. I don't feel that way. And I think that we will, next time, be far more likely to have the means to act in Africa than we had last time, in a quicker way.

[An Internet questioner asked about the definition of human rights, and the First Lady pointed out that the United Nations had adopted a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Mr. Wiesel commented that human rights organizations had proliferated because people had lost confidence in the ability of government to ensure those

rights. He then suggested that the worst violation of human rights was humiliation, such as by poverty, disease, or injustice.]

The President. Let me just say—there was another part to that question. The young man asked a very good question. The only thing I would say is you should get a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. You should read it. You will find that it also says, in addition to what Mr. Wiesel says, that all people should have certain rights against government. They should have the right to speak their mind. They should have the right to dissent. They should have the right to organize. They should have the right to chart their own course.

And then the last question you ask is a very important one. He said, “Is human rights—are they different from country to country?” And the truth is that to some extent they are, but that’s not because people can use their own cultures or religion as an excuse to repress women and young girls, for example, the way the Taliban does in Afghanistan. It’s because countries should be free to go beyond the baseline definition if they choose.

For example, we have an Americans with Disabilities Act, which we believe is sort of a further manifestation of the basic human rights. So we don’t want—when you say, are they the same in all countries?—no, countries normally, when they have more wealth or a more advanced democracy, find new ways to manifest those rights. And to that extent, they can be different from country to country.

Countries do have different religious and cultural institutions, but the whole purpose of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was so that no country could get away with oppressing the basic humanity of any person on the grounds that they were somehow different from some other country. That’s the most important point to be made. That’s why there needed to be a Universal Declaration.

[The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. Professor Azizah al-Hibri, University of Richmond School of Law, founder of Karamah: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights, pointed out that Islam, Christianity, and Judaism all preach love, kindness, and compassion, but that each had been used as a tool of oppression and suffering. Mr. Wiesel responded that this was due to fanaticism and that part of the solution had to be education.]

The President. I would like to just offer a couple of observations, if I might.

First of all, I think one of the most hopeful signs I have seen to deal with this whole issue of religious fanaticism in the last few years is the enormous support of Jews in America and throughout the world for the Muslim populations of Bosnia and Kosovo. I think it doesn’t answer all the questions of what should be the details of the resolution between the Israelis and the Palestinians. It doesn’t solve all the problems, but everybody should see that this is a good thing. I think that the American Jewish community was maybe the most ardent community, earliest, for the United States stepping forward in Kosovo. And I think we have to see that as a good thing.

Secondly, I think this whole question of the treatment of women and children by the Taliban has aroused a vocal opposition among members of the Muslim community around the world who feel that they can say this and not be betraying their faith. I think this is a good thing.

Now, I would just like to make two other points, one of which is to agree with Elie on this one point. I agree on education, but education for what? There are a lot of geniuses that are tyrants. What is it that we’re going to educate?

I believe that every good Jew, every good Christian, and every good Muslim, if you believe that love is the central value of the religion, you have to ask yourself, why is that? The reason is, we are not God; we might be wrong. Every one of us—I might be wrong about what I’ve been advocating here tonight. It’s only when you recognize the possibility that you might be wrong or, to use the language of Saint Paul, that we see through the glass darkly, that we know only in part, that you can give the other person some elbow room.

And somehow, one or two central scriptural tenets from Judaism, from Islam, from the Koran, and from Christianity, need to be put in one little place and need to be propagated throughout the world—to preach a little humility, if you please. Otherwise, we’ll never get there.

The second point I wanted to make is this: A lot of these people that are saying this in the name of religion, they’re kidding. They know perfectly well that religion has nothing to do with it. It’s about power and control, and they’re manipulating other people. And when it is, if

it's someone who practices our faith, we've got to have the guts to stand up and say that. And it's hard, but we have to.

[*The First Lady agreed, saying that the new century offered an opportunity for Jews, Christians, and Muslims to work together against fanaticism.*]

The President. I would like to make one more point which I think is very important in the dealings between the West and the Islamic countries, generally, and I will use Iran as an example.

It may be that the Iranian people have been taught to hate or distrust the United States or the West on the grounds that we are infidels and outside the faith. And therefore, it is easy for us to be angry and to respond in kind. I think it is important to recognize, however, that Iran, because of its enormous geopolitical importance over time, has been the subject of quite a lot of abuse from various Western nations. And I think sometimes it's quite important to tell people, "Look, you have a right to be angry at something my country or my culture or others that are generally allied with us today did to you 50 or 60 or 100 or 150 years ago. But that is different from saying that I am outside the faith, and you are God's chosen."

So sometimes people will listen to you if you tell them, "You're right, but your underlying reason is wrong." So we have to find some way to get dialog, and going into total denial when you're in a conversation with somebody who's been your adversary, in a country like Iran that is often worried about its independence and its integrity, is not exactly the way to begin.

So I think while we speak out against religious intolerance, we have to listen for possible ways we can give people the legitimacy of some of their fears or some of their angers or some of their historic grievances, and then say they rest on other grounds; now, can we build a common future? I think that's very important. Sometimes I think we in the United States, and Western culture generally, we hate to do that. But we're going to have to if we want to have an ultimate accommodation.

[*The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. Atiba de Souza, a University of Maryland student who emigrated from Trinidad as a child, suggested that in the next few years the Nation's minorities would become the major-*

ity, and asked if and how a global society could be achieved. Mr. Wiesel emphasized the importance of education, in schools and through the media.]

The President. I would just make two points, I think. First of all, I think given the fact that we're living in an age of globalization, where, whether we like it or not, more and more of our economic and cultural and other contacts will cross national lines, it is, in fact, a very good thing that sometime in the next century there will be no single majority racial group.

But I should also tell you that before we had large numbers of African-Americans coming, who were not here or direct descendants from slaves but others coming, like you did, from the Caribbean, and before we had large numbers of Hispanics, 100 years ago, Irish immigrants to this country were treated as if they were of a different racial group. So we've always had these tensions.

But I think if we can learn to live together across our racial and religious lines, in a way that not just respects but actually celebrates our diversity, that does it within the framework, as I said, of a common fabric of shared values and shared opportunity, I think that will be quite a good thing for the 21st century. I think it will make America stronger, not weaker. So I look forward to that.

The second thing I want to say is I think that to get there we're going to have to more broadly find a way to have more economic and educational balance in the share of wealth, in the share of knowledge, across all of our racial and ethnic groups. There is no easy way to achieve that. But I am convinced that—and I see your colleague, Mr. Silber, out here, who's thought about this a great deal in his life—I'm convinced that lowering standards for people who come from poor backgrounds is not the answer.

I think we should raise standards and invest more resources in helping people achieve them. And then I think we need to provide the incentives in every neighborhood, in every Native American reservation, in every rural area, that have made the economy work elsewhere. It will never be perfectly done, but we can do a much, much better job of it. And unless we do a much better job educationally and economically, then we won't have all the benefits from our racial diversity that we could otherwise enjoy.

[The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. Ms. Lovell then thanked the participants and invited the President's closing remarks.]

The President. I don't think there's much more to say, except to thank you again for once again giving us your witness and for the powerful example of your life. We thank your family for joining us. And I thank all of you for caring about this.

I believe there's grounds for hope. I think the history of this country is evidence. I think the civil rights movement is evidence. I think the life and triumph of Nelson Mandela is evidence. I think evidence abounds.

What we all have to remember is somehow how to strike the proper balance of passion and

humility. I think our guest tonight has done it magnificently, and I thank him.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The White House Millennium Evening began at 7:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); John Silber, chancellor, Boston University; and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady and Elie Wiesel and the question-and-answer portion of the evening. The discussion was cybercast on the Internet.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

April 13, 1999

Situation in the Balkans

The President. Good afternoon. I have just had a long and very good meeting with a large number of Members of Congress to discuss America's effort, along with our NATO Allies, to stand against ethnic cleansing, save lives, and bring peace in Kosovo. I'm grateful for the support we have received from Members of Congress from both parties and also very grateful for the questions, the comments, the advice that came out of this and previous meetings.

Our objectives here are clear, but I want to restate them. We want the Serb forces out of Kosovo. We want the refugees to be able to go home, protected by an international security force, as they work toward self-government.

This is Holocaust Remembrance Day. On this day, let us resolve not to let this ethnic cleansing and killing by Mr. Milosevic go unanswered.

You know, yesterday I had the privilege of meeting at Barksdale Air Force Base with aircrews participating in the allied campaign. They and all our forces are performing with extraordinary courage and skill. They are very well prepared, and their morale is high. They know they and our allies are fighting to end human suf-

fering, and for a Europe that is united, democratic, and at peace.

Our campaign is diminishing and grinding down Mr. Milosevic's military capabilities. We have weakened Serbia's air defenses and command and control. We have reduced his ability to move, sustain, and supply the war machine in Kosovo. We have damaged his refineries and diminished his capacity to produce ammunition. We are striking now at his tanks and at his artillery, and have destroyed half his advanced MiG-29 aircraft.

Now we are taking our allied air campaign to the next level, with more aircraft in the region, with a British carrier joining our U.S.S. *Roosevelt* and a French carrier in the area. Our humanitarian effort is also increasing to meet the daunting challenge of providing food and shelter for the hundreds of thousands of refugees.

All of us would like the conflict to end, especially for the suffering people of Kosovo. We would also like to end the trials for the people of Serbia, who have been forced into confrontation by a cynical leader who has no regard for their welfare and who, I am absolutely convinced, has not even told them the truth about what he has done to the people of Kosovo.

We and our allies did everything possible to end this crisis peacefully, but now we are at arms. We and our allies are united on this point: We must stay the course and persist until we prevail.

Again I say, Mr. Milosevic can end this crisis right now by withdrawing his forces, permitting deployment of an international security force, and allowing the unconditional return of all displaced persons.

As I told the Members of Congress today I will shortly submit to them an emergency supplemental budget request to fund our military operations and munitions needs while maintaining our military readiness, to provide urgently needed assistance to the frontline states, nations bordering Kosovo, that are struggling to preserve their own stability as they cope with refugees and turmoil in the region, and of course, to fund our portion of caring for the hundreds of thousands of refugees.

These expenses are an immediate and urgent emergency. They are necessary so that we and our NATO Allies can continue to pursue this mission. I look forward to working with Members of both parties in both Houses to pass this appropriation soon and to continuing our mission to free the people of Kosovo of the oppression to which they have been subject and meet the conditions which I have outlined.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, the lawmakers said that you haven't taken ground troops off the table.

Q. Mr. President, can you reach the refugees in Kosovo, Mr. President—inside Kosovo—can you reach those refugees, and does it have to be done by land?

The President. Let me answer that. Well, the real answer to that question is that it is a very hard one, and we are working on it. We are quite concerned about the hundreds of thousands of refugees in Kosovo. The ones that are out of Kosovo, there is a big problem in providing food and housing and medical care, dealing with the ones that are just dehydrated. But at least we are now organized, and we're moving on that.

There is a much bigger problem with the people within Kosovo, and there are any number of problems with providing aid from the air. First of all, there is the possibility that if we airdrop supplies, they won't actually get to the refugees, that the Serbian forces will take them up. Secondly, there is the problem of risk to our aircraft of going into Kosovo airspace to try to airdrop the supplies. So we are looking at both of those problems and what can be done about them and what other options we have. It is a huge problem.

For the last couple of days, we've been working very hard on it. As soon as we have more to say on it, I'll be glad to make the appropriate announcements, and our people will be at work on it. It is a very large problem. We're aware of it. We know what the obstacles are, and we're doing our best to overcome them.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Joint United States-China Statement on World Trade Organization Accession Negotiations

April 13, 1999

President Clinton and Premier Zhu spoke this afternoon on the telephone. During the conversation, they agreed that both sides should move intensively on negotiations toward resolution of the remaining issues in their talks on China's accession to the WTO. They have

agreed to have negotiations continue by the end of the month in Beijing.

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

Remarks on the Universal Savings Accounts Initiative April 14, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Andrew and Theresa and I were walking down here, and they were mildly nervous because they don't do this every day. But I think you did a very fine job. I want to thank them and their three sons for coming. I'd also like to thank Felicia Harris and her daughter, Alexis, who came because they're another representative family who will be benefited by the USA account proposal.

I thank Senator Barbara Boxer, who is here and has had to stand up here alone because all of the House Members who were supposed to be with her are back at the House voting, and I appreciate her being here. I want to thank Secretary Rubin for his leadership on this issue, along with Deputy Secretary Larry Summers and Secretary Shalala and Gene Sperling, my national economic counselor.

You know that we want to talk to you about a major issue relating to retirement security in the 21st century. I think it's important to start out by saying that this will be a very big deal to a lot more people. We all know that the number of people over 65 will double by the year 2030. By the year 2050, the average American will live to be 82 years old.

Now, keep in mind that in 1900, life expectancy was only 47½ years. It took 4,000 years, the majority of all recorded history, to make a leap in longevity like the one we have seen in just one century. Now, as I get older, I remind everyone that this is a very high-class problem, and I like it better as the years go by. They are a precious gift.

President Roosevelt said, "There is no tragedy in growing old, but there is tragedy in growing old without means of support." Historically, our people have relied upon three basic means of support. First, Social Security: It became the basic means of support and still alone is responsible for lifting almost half of our senior population out of poverty. But it was never supposed to be seniors' only means of support. And we see by the fact that the poverty rate among elderly single women is twice that of seniors in general what happens when Social Security is the only means of support. Pensions are the second, and private savings are the third. Retirement,

to be truly secure, needs a mix of all three.

Well, how strong are these building blocks for most Americans? First, Social Security: It's a rock-solid guarantee, and it has been for generations. But for the 18 percent of the seniors, as I said, for whom Social Security is their only source of retirement income, life is still pretty tough.

The first thing we have to do is to make sure that Social Security will be there for the baby boomers. As I said in my State of the Union Address, that's why we ought to set aside 62 percent of the surplus to save Social Security and at the same time, as Secretary Rubin said, to pay down our national debt.

We also need to be very mindful that Medicare is quite important not only to Social Security recipients who have that as their only source of income but a lot of other seniors, as well. And we need to set aside enough money from the surplus to secure Medicare well into the next century.

Our budget plan pays down the debt and saves Social Security and Medicare. I look forward to working with Congress over the coming months to make some changes that are necessary to lengthen the life of both the Social Security and the Medicare Trust Funds, to maintain our fiscal discipline and secure the health of our economy into the 21st century.

Now, what about the second building block, private pensions? Half of all American workers, 73 million of them, have no employer-provided pensions whatever. IRA's and 401(k)'s are something they hear and read more and more about but don't have for themselves. Currently, only one-third—listen to this—only one-third of the tax benefits for pensions and retirement savings go to families who earn less than \$100,000, even though they represent the vast majority of working people in the United States today.

The third building block is personal savings. Americans living longer than ever and moving from job to job, who may have defined contribution rather than defined benefit pension plans,

more and more will need to increase their personal savings. Our national savings rate has doubled over the last 6 years because we're saving more in the Government and not having deficits.

But personal savings has gone down over the last 6 years. Too few Americans are saving for their own retirement. For too many Americans, the hard work they do to provide for their families today, as you've just heard, makes it difficult for them to save for tomorrow. The typical family, headed by someone between the ages of 55 and 64, has financial assets worth just \$32,000. That won't support them very long in their retirement. For many Americans, as their lives stretch longer, their resources are stretched thinner.

I believe Americans who work hard their entire lives and raise their children should not have to have their retirement poised precariously on the edge of poverty. I believe that Americans, however, have to do more to save for their own future, but that Americans deserve the chance to do that.

Now, that's what this USA account proposal is all about. It is a complete and comprehensive new plan to help Americans with retirement savings for the 21st century. It is the right way to provide tax relief for the American people, and it is the right way to increase savings and strengthen our economy, even as we help families like the ones we honor today.

Now, I proposed in the State of the Union Address setting aside 12 percent of the surplus to establish these accounts. Let me say specifically what I think we ought to do. I propose that Americans be given the chance to open, voluntarily, Universal Savings Accounts. I propose that workers receive a refundable tax credit if their incomes are up to \$80,000 a year, deposited directly into their USA accounts, and as they save, that the Government help them save further, matching their contributions on a sliding scale, depending on income, giving extra help to those least able to save.

Further, I propose that aid be given to people with incomes between the incomes of \$80,000 and \$100,000 a year, but on a reduced basis. And even for people with incomes over \$100,000 a year, if they have no other personal retirement savings or pensions, they should also be eligible for this help.

This would give many, many millions of Americans a new opportunity to invest in the growing American economy, to have some

wealth and security in retirement. It will revolutionize savings not simply for older Americans, but especially, perhaps, for younger Americans, from their very first days in the work force. With USA accounts, everyone in the USA will be able to save——

[At this point, several Members of Congress arrived.]

The President. ——especially if we get more and more congressional support as we go along. [Laughter]

Now, let me go through the reasons that I believe that this is the right way to provide tax relief with the surplus, and I would like to go through some very specific things.

First of all, Universal Savings Accounts do just what the name says, they make savings universal. It would be many workers' first, or certainly their best, opportunity ever to save. And by rewarding responsibility, USA accounts would help set them on the road to further savings.

Second, USA accounts make investment universal. Savings, of course, is about more than protecting what you have; it's about creating and building greater wealth for a better future. With these accounts, working families will have a chance to invest just as wealthier families do today. They can choose to invest in an interest-bearing account or a stock market mutual fund or a bond fund, just as they would with a Government or private pension.

Third, they make real retirement security universal, extending it even to workers with low and moderate incomes who are least likely to be offered pensions by their employers and least likely to be able to save on their own. As I said earlier—I want to emphasize this again—today, only a third of all the tax benefits provided under all the laws of Congress of existing retirement plans go to families earning less than \$100,000.

You heard what our distinguished speaker said. Listen to this. I mean, does this family—these look like the people you want to help, right? I mean, they're making America great. Only 7 percent of existing tax benefits for retirement go to families with incomes of \$50,000 a year or less—only 7 percent.

Our plan more than doubles that. More than 80 percent of the tax benefits of USA accounts will go to people making incomes of \$100,000 a year or less. It's the vast majority of the American people, and it's the right thing to do. It

is the kind of tax cut America needs, targeted toward working families, toward savings, and toward the future.

USA accounts will add up. For example, if a couple earning \$40,000 saved just \$700 a year, matched by the Government, a USA account invested conservatively would be worth a quarter of a million dollars after 40 years. How many people making \$40,000 a year in this country today have a quarter of a million dollars in wealth? Think what this could do for America.

That means—let me just say what it means practically—it means that a person could retire and, just from this account, living over 80 years, have well over \$15,000 a year in income during retirement. That's the power of savings and compound interest.

But USA accounts involve more than compound interest. They also add up to a larger stake in our society and its future. Families who own very few financial assets would now own a share of our Nation's prosperity and in the remarkable economic growth they have done so much to create. People like Andrew and Theresa, people like Felicia Harris, people working hard, raising their children, thinking about their children's future, would have their first real chance to save for tomorrow while they are working today.

With USA accounts, we can say to a 25-year-old just starting a family, "You can start to save." With these accounts, we can say to someone who has made a transition from welfare to work

and is watching the stock market surge in value, "You actually can have a stake in this wealth you are helping to create." We can say to working families, "Now you can think about your children's future and your own."

So, as I stand here at the end of one century and the dawn of the next, and I think about what I would like family life to be like 10, 20, 30, 40 years from now, one of the things that I want very badly to do is to see our wealth more fairly shared by those who create it and to see it shared in a way that makes sure that, as we live longer and longer, those of us who retire will not pose unconscionable financial burdens for our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren.

Saving Social Security and Medicare is a part of that. Having the right sort of tax cut is a part of that. The USA accounts increase savings, increase retirement security, and will give millions and millions and millions of families who are a big part of this remarkable recovery we have enjoyed for the last 6 years—for the first time, those people will have a chance to actually own a piece of the American recovery they have done so much to create.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:09 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Andrew J. Goldschmidt, owner, Goldschmidt Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning, and his wife, Theresa.

Radio Remarks on Kick Butts Day *April 14, 1999*

Today, on Kick Butts Day, young people all across America are speaking out against teen tobacco use. These kids are right. It's tragic—and it's wrong—that every day 3,000 kids become regular smokers. So I urge Congress to stand with our kids and stand up to the tobacco companies who are targeting our children. I urge you to make sure the tobacco settlement funds are used to reduce youth smoking. It's time all of us worked together to give our children the healthy future they deserve.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 12:30 p.m. on April 9 in the administrative offices of Memorial Hall in Philadelphia, PA, for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 14. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on House Action on the Republican Budget Proposal *April 14, 1999*

The budget passed by House Republicans falls short of what the American people need for meeting the challenges of the 21st century. It fails to lock away the surplus to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, and it fails to meet many of America's other critical needs for the future. The fiscal discipline of the past 6 years has given us a historic opportunity to meet our

Nation's most serious long-term challenges. I will continue to work with the Congress to use the surplus to pay down our national debt, to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, to encourage our people to save for the future, and to meet our defense, education, and other long-term needs.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the American Society of Newspaper Editors in San Francisco, California *April 15, 1999*

The President. Thank you very much, Mr. Seaton, distinguished officers, and members of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the crisis in Kosovo, why we're there, what our objectives are, how this fits in with our larger vision of the future.

Since I'm here I can't help noting that one of the truly striking aspects of this moment is the stark contrast it illuminates between a free society with a free press, and a closed society where the press is used to manipulate people by suppressing or distorting the truth.

In Belgrade today, independent journalists are being persecuted. This week, one brave editor was murdered in cold blood. Meanwhile, the Government-run press has constructed an alternative reality for the Serbian people in which the atrocities their soldiers are committing in Kosovo simply don't exist. Under those conditions, decent people can remain in denial, supporting policies that lead them to political and economic ruin.

Thank goodness our press and free press throughout the world have tried to get at and get out the truth, to ensure that words like refugees, displacement, ethnic cleansing don't become stale and lifeless but remain causes for action.

The tragedy in Kosovo is the result of a meticulously planned and long-premeditated attack on an entire people simply on the basis of their ethnicity and religion, an attack grounded in a

philosophy that teaches people to dearly love a piece of land while utterly dismissing the humanity of those who occupy it.

That is what Mr. Milosevic has been doing ever since Yugoslavia started breaking up in 1989. For a decade, he has been trying to build a Greater Serbia by using military force to rearrange the ethnic character of the nations which emerged from Yugoslavia. That is what he did for years in Croatia and, horribly, in Bosnia—what he is doing in Kosovo now.

Last year he drove hundreds of thousands of people from their homes into the frigid mountains and let them back only after NATO threatened to use force. He is now determined to crush all resistance to his rule even if it means turning Kosovo into a lifeless wasteland.

As these difficult days proceed, it is important to remember that we have no quarrel with the Serbian people. They were our allies in World War II; they have often been our allies. In a sense, they are victims of this tragedy, too. And we must understand the anguish of Serbian-Americans who, like Albanian-Americans, are worried about their loved ones back home. Americans should not blame Serbs or look down on Serbian-Americans because we disagree with the Milosevic government. We must not let his ethnic cleansing provoke us to ethnic bias.

We and our 18 NATO Allies are in Kosovo today because we want to stop the slaughter and the ethnic cleansing; because we want to build a stable, united, prosperous Europe that

includes the Balkans and its neighbors; and because we don't want the 21st century to be dominated by the dark marriage of modern weapons and ancient ethnic, racial, and religious hatred. We cannot simply watch as hundreds of thousands of people are brutalized, murdered, raped, forced from their homes, their family histories erased, all in the name of ethnic pride and purity.

NATO was pivotal to ending the killing and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. We can do so again, and this time we have responded more quickly.

Were we to stand aside, the atrocities in Kosovo would go on and on. Neighboring democracies, as you see, would be overwhelmed by permanent refugees and demoralized by the failure of democracy's alliance. The Kosovar Albanians would become a people without a homeland, a burden to host countries, a magnet for radical ideologies, a breeding ground for unending warfare in the Balkans. NATO would be discredited, yes, because it made promises not kept but, more important, because its values and vision of Europe would be profoundly damaged. Ultimately, the conflict in Kosovo would spread anyway, and we would have to act anyway.

Now, when we decided to launch the air campaign, after Mr. Milosevic rejected peace, we believed there was at least a possibility that our readiness to act would deter him from moving forward as it had in the past. But we also understood clearly that with 40,000 troops and over 250 tanks massed in and around Kosovo he might intensify his repression and go on with his planned attack, as I made clear in my address to the Nation the night the airstrikes began.

There was only one possibility that we and our NATO Allies were not willing to entertain, that the international community would look the other way in the face of this brutality.

Now the NATO air campaign has been underway for 3 weeks, often interrupted or limited by bad weather. This is, however, a good time to assess what has been accomplished and where we're going.

Mr. Milosevic's strategy has been to complete the ethnic cleansing, then break the unity of NATO by taking the bombs and offering phony concessions. But NATO is more united today than when the operation began. Whether they are Conservatives in Spain, Socialists in France, New Labor in Britain, or Greens in Germany,

the leaders of Europe and the people they represent are determined to maintain and intensify our attacks until Mr. Milosevic's forces leave Kosovo and the refugees return under the protection of an international force or until his military is weakened to the point when he can no longer keep his vise-like grip on Kosovo.

At the beginning of the operation, we focused, properly, on Serbia's highly developed air defenses, to reduce the risks to our pilots. There are still significant air defenses up, and therefore, there is still risk with every mission. But we have degraded the system to the point that now NATO can fly 24 hours a day, not simply at night. We've struck at Serbia's machinery of repression, at the infrastructure that supports it. We've destroyed all of Serbia's refineries, half of its capacity to produce ammunition. We've attacked its bridges and rail lines and communications networks to diminish its ability to supply, reinforce, and control its forces in Kosovo. Increasingly now, we are striking the forces themselves, hitting tanks, artillery, armored personnel carriers, radar missiles, and aircraft.

As the allies have said, all of us, repeatedly, Mr. Milosevic can stop NATO's bombing by meeting these conditions: One, Serbian security forces must leave Kosovo; two, the displaced Kosovars must be able to return; three, there must be an international security force to protect all Kosovars, including the Serb minority there, as they work towards self-government.

If he refuses, our military campaign will continue to destroy as much of his military capability as we can so that each day his capacity for repression will diminish.

Meanwhile, his actions, though absolutely devastating to the civilian population and horribly burdensome to the frontline states of Macedonia and Albania, have not destroyed the armed opposition among Kosovars. Indeed, their numbers and determination are growing. Ultimately, Mr. Milosevic will have to choose, either to cut his mounting losses or lose his ability to maintain his grip on Kosovo.

As for NATO, we are prepared to continue this effort as long as necessary to achieve our objectives. Our timetable will be determined by our goals, not the other way around.

In the meantime, we must do more to aid the refugees. They are pouring out of Kosovo. We must help to preserve their lives and health and their hope of return. This week, NATO approved Operation Allied Harbor, under which

8,000 troops will work with relief agencies in Albania to establish camps, provide logistical support, deliver aid, and ensure security. Thus far, we have contributed in the United States \$150 million to this effort.

Conditions at the borders are beginning to improve. Now we are most concerned about the fate of the refugees, hundreds of thousands of them, trapped inside Kosovo. They are unable to leave but afraid to go home. Mr. Milosevic apparently wants to use them as hostages and human shields, and he's preventing relief groups from getting to them. People of good will all around the world today are trying to find ways to overcome this cruel and cynical manipulation of innocent human beings.

Mr. Milosevic also continues to hold on to the three American servicemen his forces seized in Macedonia. He continues to flout his obligation to allow the Red Cross to visit them. I want to say again as clearly as I can: The United States will hold him personally responsible for their welfare.

Now, the stand we have taken, first in Bosnia, now in Kosovo, against organized ethnic hatred is a moral imperative. But it is also a strategic imperative. And I'd like to talk with you a little about that and ask all of you to ask yourselves how you view the history of the last 50 years and how you imagine the next 50 years unfolding.

The history of the United States, for a very long time, was dominated by a principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other countries, even when we strongly disagreed. Indeed, for most of our history, we have worn the principle of nonintervention as a badge of honor, beginning with George Washington's warning against entangling alliances.

The 20th century changed all that, with two World Wars, the cold war, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Panama, Lebanon, Grenada, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and others. Our steadily increasing involvement with the rest of the world, not for territorial gain but for peace and freedom and security, is a fact of recent history.

During the cold war, it can be argued that on occasion we made a wrong judgment because we tended to see the world solely through the lenses of communism or anti-communism. But no one suggests that we ever sought territorial advantage. No one doubts that when America

did get involved, we were doing what at least we thought was right for humanity.

Now, at the end of the 20th century, we face a great battle between the forces of integration and the forces of disintegration, the forces of globalism versus tribalism, of oppression against empowerment. And the phenomenal explosion of technology, including that of advanced weaponry, might be the servant of either side or both.

The central irony of our time, it seems to me, is this: Most of us have a vision of the 21st century world with the triumph of peace and prosperity and personal freedom; with respect for the integrity of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities within a framework of shared values, shared power, and shared plenty; making common cause against disease and environmental degradation, against terror, organized crime, and weapons of mass destruction.

This grand vision, ironically, is threatened by the oldest demon of human society, our vulnerability to hatred of the other, those who are not like us. In the face of that, we cannot be indifferent at home or abroad. That is why we are in Kosovo.

Kosovo is a very small place on a very large fault line, on the borderlands of Central and Eastern Europe, at the meeting place of the Islamic world and the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity, where people have settled in a complex patchwork of ethnic and religious groups and where countless wars have been fought over faith, land, and power.

Kosovo is far from unique in its region. It is surrounded by nations with similar challenges of history and diversity. The only difference today is that they—think of them, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Bosnia—are now at least struggling to realize the vision of multi-ethnic democracy that Mr. Milosevic is struggling to kill.

Much of the former Soviet Union faces a similar challenge, including Ukraine and Moldova, southern Russia, the Caucasus nations of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, the new nations of central Asia. These nations spent most of the last half century under Communist rule. In the years when Western Europe was overcoming its old animosities by integrating its economies and embracing democracy, in the years when Americans began confronting our own legacy of racial hatred through open debate and political activism, these nations saw their

problems frozen in time, kept in place by a rigid system that allowed no talk of change.

They projected to the world a picture of stability, but it was a false picture, a stability imposed by rulers whose answer to ethnic tensions was not to resolve them but to suppress and deny them. When the weight of Communist repression was lifted, these tensions naturally rose to the surface, to be resolved by statesmen or exploited by demagogues.

The potential for ethnic conflict became, perhaps, the greatest threat to what is among our most critical interests: the transition of the former Communist countries toward stability, prosperity, and freedom. We are in Kosovo because we care about saving lives and we care about the character of the multiethnic post-cold-war world.

We don't want young democracies that have made the right choices to be overwhelmed by the flight of refugees and the victories of ethnic hatred. We don't want to see Europe re-fight with tanks and artillery the same battles they fought centuries ago with axes and arrows. And because stability in Europe is important to our own security, we want to build a Europe that is peaceful, undivided, and free, a Europe where young Americans do not have to fight and die again to deal with the consequences of other people's madness and greed.

Who is going to define the future of this part of the world? Who will provide the model for how the people who have emerged from communism resolve their own legitimate problems? Will it be Mr. Milosevic, with his propaganda machine and his paramilitary thugs, who tell people to leave their country, their history, and their land behind, or die? Or will it be a nation like Romania, which is building democracy and respecting the rights of its ethnic minorities, or Hungary, which has accepted that ethnic Hungarians can live beyond its borders with security and freedom, or Macedonia, which is struggling to maintain a tolerant, multiethnic society under the unimaginable pressures of the human and economic costs imposed by Mr. Milosevic's policies?

Now, after our recent experience in Bosnia and Kosovo, it's easy to forget that despite all the violence and turmoil they have experienced, the people of this region have, in fact, found ways to live together through the years. If the nations of the Balkans had truly experienced a thousand years of unceasing ethnic cleansing,

their ethnic makeup wouldn't be anything like what it is. They would be utterly homogeneous, not so diverse. Today, most of those countries are democracies. Most are trying to resolve their problems by force of argument, not force of arms.

We cannot allow the Milosevic vision, rooted as it is in hatred and violence and cynicism, to prevail. But if we truly want a more tolerant, inclusive future for the Balkans and all of south-east Europe, we will have to both oppose his efforts and offer a better vision of the future, one that we are willing to help build.

Now, what does all this mean for the future of Kosovo and the region as a whole, starting from where we are right now? What many Kosovars want is independence. That is certainly understandable. After what they've been through, it's only natural that they should equate sovereignty with survival. But I continue to think it is not the best answer. Kosovo lacks the resources and infrastructure to be viable on its own. Moreover, Yugoslavia's long-suffering neighbors fear that an independent Kosovo would be unstable and that the instability itself would be contagious.

Finally, we must remember the principle we and our allies have been fighting for in the Balkans is the principle of multiethnic, tolerant, inclusive democracy. We have been fighting against the idea that statehood must be based entirely on ethnicity.

Some people think the best way to solve Kosovo's problems, and Serbia's and Bosnia's, is to withdraw their borders and re arrange their people to reflect their ethnic distinctions. Well, first of all, a lot of people who say that haven't looked very closely at the maps. It is a problem of staggering complexity. Once it starts, it would never end. For every grievance resolved, a new one would be created. For every community moved to a new place, another community would, by definition, be displaced.

If we were to choose this course, we would see the continuous fissioning of smaller and smaller ethnically based, inviable states, creating pressures for more war, more ethnic cleansing, more of the politics of repression and revenge. I believe the last thing we need in the Balkans is greater Balkanization.

The real question today is not whether Kosovo will be part of Serbia. The real question is whether Kosovo and Serbia and the other states in the region will be part of the new

Europe. The best solution for Kosovo, for Serbia, for Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, and all the countries of southeast Europe is not the endless re-jiggering of the borders but greater integration into a Europe in which sovereignty matters but in which borders are becoming more and more open and less important in a negative sense. It is to affirm the principle that Mr. Milosevic has done so very much to undermine, that successful modern states make a virtue, not a blood feud, out of ethnic and religious diversity.

That is the solution that Western Europe accepted—not too long ago, really, when you think of it—after Europe had been consumed by two of the bloodiest wars in all of human history, after the Holocaust almost erased an entire people from the face of the Earth.

It is hard to visualize today, hard to remember, when you drive across Belgium and Holland, across the border between France and Germany, that twice in this century millions of people spilled blood fighting over every inch of that land. It is hard to imagine the immediate postwar Europe Winston Churchill described as a rubble heap, a charnel house, a breeding ground of pestilence and hate. But because of the changes which have occurred, it is not unimaginable today that the nations of southeastern Europe will choose integration and peace, just as their Western neighbors have.

To achieve that future, we must follow the example of the World War II generation by standing up to aggression and hate and then by following through with a postconflict strategy for reconstruction and renewal. If we don't want people to remain mired in the miseries of yesterday, we must give them a better tomorrow to dream of and work for.

Even as we fight this conflict, we must look beyond it to what the Balkans, southeastern Europe, indeed, the whole continent of Europe should look like in 10 or 20 years. We should try to do for southeastern Europe what we helped to do for Western Europe after World War II, and for Central Europe after the cold war, to help its people build a region of multi-ethnic democracies, a community that upholds common standards of human rights, a community in which borders are open to people in trade, where nations cooperate to make war unthinkable.

That is why my request to Congress for supplemental funding for our military and humani-

tarian operation in Kosovo will also support emergency assistance to Yugoslavia's neighbors, which do not want their dreams of democracy and integration undermined by a flood of refugees and the fear of violence. That is why we've been working to help the countries of the region consolidate democratic reform and build professional armed forces under civilian control.

We need to intensify these efforts and to work with the European Union and the international financial institutions to mobilize more support for these countries. And we need to condition this help, just as we did with Western Europe 50 years ago, on closer cooperation among the beneficiaries and a new understanding of their sovereignty.

This will take constant, steady American engagement, together with our European allies, old and new. It will demand keeping institutions, including NATO and the European Union, open to new nations who make the right choices. It will take money in the form of investment and aid. It will require a willingness to provide material and moral support to people and leaders across the region who are standing up for multi-ethnic democracy.

Realistically, it will require a democratic transition in Serbia, for the region's democracies will never be safe with a belligerent tyranny in their midst. It will demand from us a recognition that there is no easy way out of the region's troubles, but there is a solution that advances our interests and keeps faith with our values if we are ready to make a long-term commitment.

Of course, all of this will take time and effort. In the meantime, the people of Kosovo should have protection, security, and self-government. That can only be assured by an international security force with NATO at the core.

As in Bosnia, this force should also include members of NATO's Partnership For Peace that represent the whole range of ethnic groups in Europe. This is precisely the kind of mission we envisioned for the Partnership For Peace when it was created 5 years ago, and the kind of mission I very much hope Russia could join as well, just as it did so constructively in Bosnia.

In the long run, our goal for Kosovo should not be independence but interdependence. Our watchword for the region should be integration, not disintegration. The ultimate answer for Kosovo, for Serbia, for Bosnia, Croatia, all the Balkans is not to withdraw behind barriers of

mistrust and insecurity but to join a Europe where borders unite rather than divide, to build a richly textured fabric of civilization that lifts all God's children and resists those who would tear it apart by appealing to the dark recesses of the soul that lead only to dead ends.

The Balkan war that began in Kosovo 10 years ago must end in Kosovo. It should be the last conflict of the 20th century. It should not be the defining conflict of the 21st century.

The United States has the opportunity and the responsibility to make that decision come out right for our children and our grandchildren. We can help to lead to a new day for the people of this long-suffering region, a more peaceful time for Europe, and a better future for the United States.

Thank you very much.

Edward Seaton. The President has kindly agreed to take questions. You must be an ASNE member to ask a question. I would invite you to go to the floor mikes, as I see you're doing. Please identify yourself and your newspaper. We'll start over here with Rich Oppel.

April 14 Attack on Kosovar Albanians

Q. Mr. President, Rich Oppel, Austin American-Statesman. Would you help us sort out what happened yesterday on the road from Prizren to Kukes? According to press accounts—you had your choices, I guess—NATO aircraft either bombed a convoy that includes refugees or the Serbs attacked the Albanians in response to our bombing.

Did we screw up? Can the prosecution of this war be sustained—can it sustain the support of Americans if the newspapers of this country are publishing front-page stories showing dead civilians? And what word went out from you and Sandy Berger today to the Pentagon and to the NATO High Command about yesterday's events?

The President. Well, first of all, what we believe happened is that the pilot thought it was a military convoy and that there were apparently civilians in the convoy who were killed. That is regrettable. It is also inevitable in a conflict of this kind, with planes traveling at high speeds, doing their best to fulfill their mission.

And if the requirement is that nothing like this can ever happen, then we're saying it's okay with us if Mr. Milosevic displaces over a million Kosovars, kills and rapes thousands upon thousands of them. And keep in mind, in Bosnia

there were more than 2 million refugees and a quarter of a million people killed.

You cannot have this kind of conflict without some errors like this occurring. This is not a business of perfection. I ask you to think about the hundreds and hundreds of sorties which have been flown in the last 3 weeks and the small number of civilian casualties. It should be obvious to everybody in the world that we are bending over backwards to hit military targets, to hit security targets, even to hit a lot of targets late at night where the losses in human life will be minimized. These efforts have been made, and they have been remarkably successful.

So, certain regrettable things will happen. We will do our best. The military will evaluate this incident, as it does every other one; so will the NATO command. But I have to tell you, if anyone thinks that this is a reason for changing our mission, then the United States will never be able to bring military power to bear again, because there is no such thing as flying airplanes this fast, dropping weapons this powerful, dealing with an enemy this pervasive who is willing to use people as human shields, and never have this sort of tragic thing happen. It cannot be done.

I believe when the scales are weighed, it will be obvious that this is a result of Mr. Milosevic's policies. If he doesn't want this to happen, he ought to get out of Kosovo, let the Kosovars come home, and let people come in there who can protect them. That is the answer to this.

Effectiveness of NATO Strategy

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for coming to speak to us. I'm Dave Seaton of the Winfield Daily Courier in Kansas. If the people, the hundreds of thousands of people hiding in the hills in Kosovo, the Albanian Kosovars, perish from natural causes or as a result of this slaughter of paramilitary forces, won't NATO's hoped-for victory from bombing be hollow? And won't we have failed to prevent the kind of repeat of the Holocaust that you've said is what we don't want to enter the 21st century with?

The President. Well, first of all, I believe that our strategy will prevail. We do have, as I said, a very difficult problem here, to figure out what to do about the refugees within Kosovo. We are working at it. The international relief agencies are working at it. A lot of countries that have some relationship with Serbia are working

at it. And we are doing our best to try to figure out how to resolve it.

I think the answer is, what is the alternative? So far, we still don't have as many refugees and nowhere near as many people dead as we did in Bosnia. And I think it's because we have moved more quickly. I think we have a chance to put this back together without having as much wreckage as we had there. And we are working as hard as we can to do it. It is a difficult situation, but we are working as hard as we can. And we are doing it while keeping this NATO Alliance together.

And keep in mind, that is also very important, I think, that this is not an action by the United States alone. This is not one we engineered or dominated. This is a decision we made as partners with the 18 other NATO Allies, and we are doing our best to deal with it. And I assure you that we're trying to deal with all the contingencies. I do not think it is—including trying to figure out what's the worst thing that can happen and how to avoid it. But we're doing our best to deal with that.

It's not possible to fly helpless cargo planes over and do airdrops to people, for example, if we know there is a better than 50 percent chance they won't get the supplies in the first place and a much better than 50 percent chance that the planes would be shot out of the air, even though they are not warplanes at all. So we're struggling to come to grips with this. But I think we moved very quickly, and we've made a lot of progress in a short time in dealing with the massive refugee problem on the borders in the other countries, and I hope in the next few days we'll have some progress to report on this.

President's Response to Criticism

Q. Mr. President, Ken Bunting with the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. I haven't listened to any talk radio today, but, I apologize, I do often. And I'm often reminded of your wife's comment about the rightwing conspiracy, the critics who want to get at you for anything and undermine your Presidency and discredit you, personally. But there is a common drumbeat on the airwaves now, and it is that you personally lack the moral authority to be Commander in Chief.

And certainly, I guess there is a powerful inclination to ignore those criticisms. But if you had to address it to an Air Force pilot, who had listened to the same radio shows and per-

haps been persuaded to that point of view, how would you address that?

The President. Well, I don't have to address it to the Air Force pilot. I am his Commander in Chief, and they swore an oath to the Constitution, and they have performed admirably. And they don't deserve to hear that.

I just have seen a lot of our Air Force pilots. I just went down to Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana. I spent endless amounts—I spent hours talking to the families, the friends, the people that were there, encouraging people to say what they think. One person said something critical. Several hundred said, "We believe in what we're doing. It is the right thing to do. Thank you for doing it. We are proud to do it. This is what we signed on for."

This is a democracy, and people can say whatever they want to say. But I have found that the American people, vast majorities of them, at least, appreciate it when I don't spend my time responding to them, and instead I spend my time working for the American people and trying to do what I think is right. I let other people be their judge about whether they think I should or shouldn't do something. But I have no response, except to get up every day and try to do my job.

And I think that this country is in a better place than it was 6 years and 3 months ago because we have followed that policy, instead of being totally consumed with spending all of our time answering our critics. I'd rather work on what I can control, and the opinion of some of the talk show people is something that's way beyond my control and happily so. [Laughter]

Mr. Seaton. We have time for only one more question, and if I could, I'd like to break the line over here.

Q. I really have an important question, if I may.

Mr. Seaton. Okay, but if Len Downey would get his question right afterward.

Serb Weapons of Mass Destruction

Q. Chris Waddle, executive editor of the Aniston Star. Mr. President, we're a center for chemical warfare training and storage in Anniston, Alabama, and Pentagon officials confirm to us the chemical weapons capability of the former Yugoslav forces. How does that availability of weapons of mass destruction among the Serbs impact American and NATO operations in the Kosovo conflict? And what is your

administration's policy of response or retribution in the however unlikely event of enemy use of such weapons of mass destruction against insurgents or refugees or even the NATO Alliance?

The President. My response would be swift and overwhelming. And we have, obviously, intelligence about the capabilities of the Serbs in a number of areas militarily, just as we do with other countries. But I think they are quite well aware of the dangers of overly escalating this. And I think that's all I should say about it right now.

Mr. Seaton. Mr. President, I'm told we have to—you can take one from Len.

Q. I'm the only woman in line, so I'd like—*[laughter]*—

The President. I'll take a couple more.

You know what's going on, don't you? The people that help me don't trust you not to write a story that's about something other than Kosovo, and they think the longer I stay up here, the greater my chances of screwing up. *[Laughter]* That's really what's going on here. And it's wonderful when you're not running for anything, you can say just exactly what's on your mind. *[Laughter]*

But—have at it, go ahead. *[Laughter]*

Human Rights in Afghanistan

Q. Okay, great. Thank you. I'm Narda Zacchino with the Los Angeles Times. Knowing your interest in human rights and having had you refer to all God's children, I'd like you to focus some attention for just a moment on some of God's children in Afghanistan. And what I'm speaking about is, this is a country that's under the harsh rule of the Taliban, some of whose leaders we helped finance and arm in their fight against the Soviet Union.

In Afghanistan today, there are 11½ million women and children, women and girls, who are virtually under house arrest. Male doctors are not permitted to treat women and girls, and female doctors are not allowed to practice. Women are kept in their homes and may only leave if they're in the company of a brother, a father, or a husband. Windows of homes where women live are painted black so that no man may, per chance, see them without their burkha. When they go outside, they're totally shrouded. A 70-year-old woman was beaten severely because her ankles showed to a man. A teenage girl was almost stoned to death be-

cause her ankles showed when she was riding her bicycle. Women in this country are not permitted to do anything except stay in their homes, unless they leave in the company of a man.

It's a terribly repressive regime. And a number of people think that we have some obligation to these 11½ million women and girls, because of our relationship—former relationship to these people who are in power. What do you think?

The President. Well, I absolutely do, and I think we would even if we hadn't supported the Taliban on "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" principle years ago. I think, independent of that, we do. I think that what has happened to the women and children of Afghanistan is atrocious.

The First Lady and I had an event at the White House to highlight that on Human Rights Day, including having two Afghan women there who talked to the press about what was going on. I met with a group of leaders from the Feminist Majority the other day and talked about how we could do more to bring more to the United States, what other things we could do to put pressure on Taliban and on other states, other countries, to try to help us to change conditions.

And I think it is very, very important to do. I think it is one of the worst examples of systematic human rights abuses in the world today, and a terrible perversion of Islam.

Mr. Seaton. We asked Len Downey to raise a question that was of concern to ASNE, so I invite him to do so if he could.

Availability of Information

Q. Len Downey of the Washington Post. Mr. President, a growing number of newspaper editors and broadcast news executives are very concerned about the relatively little reliable information and specific information that has been released so far by the Defense Department about the bombings and the other military activities so far during Operation Allied Force—much less information, for instance, than was provided daily during the Persian Gulf war or Operation Desert Fox. In view of the need, Mr. President, that you discussed today to have the American people support this military action, will you instruct the Defense Department to provide us and the American people with more specific information about the bombing?

The President. Well, Mr. Downey, you know, late last week the Defense Department had a big, long briefing. And there are basically two issues here, and we're trying to resolve them. I actually had a rather extended conversation yesterday with two of the other leaders of the NATO alliance about this because I think it's important, not just in the United States but throughout Europe, to get more information out more quickly.

There have been two problems from the point of view of the Pentagon: One is trying to work through the NATO command structure and let them do the daily briefings and try to determine by consensus, if you will, what should be gotten out and how; and then to have the Pentagon play a supporting role in that.

The other problem is a practical one, which is sometimes it takes—in the Gulf, when we fought in Iraq in Desert Storm and later when we had our actions there, neither the weather nor the terrain presented the barriers to actually assessing quickly what the impact of the action was that is presented in the Balkans. So sometimes there is just an inevitable delay, which is one of the reasons that—last week I talked to Secretary Cohen and General Shelton about having the Pentagon do a big briefing to be much more detailed about what, in fact, had happened and what conclusions we drew from it.

So all I can tell you is, I'm aware that this is a difficulty. I agree that we should try to do more, more simultaneous with the actions. And I am working on it and trying to get NATO to do more as well. Unless there is some specific security-related reason that some issue shouldn't be talked about, I think the more information we can get out there the more quickly, the better off we are.

Q. Thank you.

The President. But I know that whenever there's a conflict between any Government and the press, there's always the assumption that there is some deliberate scheme at work here. And I don't think that's the case here. I think really, we're trying to work through—NATO has never done this kind of operation before, in this way, and there are a lot of things that have to be worked through. But I am working on it, and I hope that most of you will be generally satisfied within the next few days.

Do you want to take a couple more?

Mr. Seaton. We could; it's up to you.

The President. He's been standing there a long time. [Laughter]

President's Legacy

Q. I have. And I'm the only resident from Vancouver, Washington, standing here, so—[laughter]—Tom Koenninger, the Columbian, Vancouver, Washington. Mr. President, my question has two parts. The first is, as you near the end of your second term in office and deal with such issues as the Balkans, what legacy do you believe you are leaving to the American public? Secondly, would you be specific, sir, in telling us ways in which America is better off for your Presidency?

The President. Well, I think, first of all—let me answer the first question first. I think others will determine the legacy of this administration, and most of it will have to be done when all the records are there and time passes and people without an axe to grind one way or the other have a chance to have their say.

I can only tell you what I have tried to do. I have tried to lead America into a new century and into a whole new era in the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. And I have tried to help build a world that was more peaceful, more prosperous, and more secure.

I think that among the things that people will say this administration did and made progress on was, we gave the United States a modern economic policy and got out of 12 years of horrible deficit spending during which we quadrupled the debt. I think that the work we did to support the solution of social problems, in reducing the welfare rolls by half and reducing the crime rate and putting 100,000 police on the street, would be important. I think the work we did in education will be important.

I think the systematic effort we made to promote reconciliation among people of different racial groups will be important. I think the work we have done in the Middle East to Northern Ireland in promoting peace will be important. I think the work we've done in Latin America through the Summit of the Americas and the work we've done with our allies in Central America will be important. I think there are a lot of things that will altogether add up to preparing America for the 21st century, building a stronger American community, and repairing the social fabric.

And let me just say one thing. When I got off the airplane today there were a bunch of young people who are AmeriCorps volunteers. That's a program we started back in the second year of my Presidency. And one young woman said to me, "I'm 30 years old. You're the first President I ever voted for. I've kept up. You did what you said you'd do, and it's worked." And her saying that to me meant more than just about anything any American could say.

When I was in New Hampshire for the seventh anniversary of the New Hampshire primary, there were schoolchildren along the highway waiting in the cold rain. And person after person said to me, "You had to come to these little town meetings in 1991, and we listened to you, and you've done what you said."

So what I think will also happen is people will see Americans can solve their problems. Government has a role to play, and it can produce. So I think there's a sense of possibility, a sense of optimism, a sense of eagerness about the future that the present difficulties in Kosovo cannot begin to overshadow. And I think the country is clearly better off than it was 6 years ago.

Q. Thank you.

Success of Post-Cold-War Policies

Q. Mr. President, my name is Dave Zeeck. I'm the editor at the newspaper in Tacoma, Washington, the News Tribune. And part of a little known function of this convention is to help train young journalists. There are some journalists here who produce the AS&E report. I'd like to ask them to stand because they gave me this question. If you all would stand, please.

Their question was—and you made an indirect reference to this in your speech—you didn't mention the Marshall plan by name, but that seemed to be what you were talking about as a way to resolve this later. And their question was, could a greater effort have been made after the fall of the Berlin Wall to do more along the lines of a Marshall plan, particularly in the Balkans, and might that have prevented something like we're facing today?

The President. Perhaps. I wasn't President then, and I don't know. I don't say that in a blameworthy sense; I just wasn't. And I don't think it's fair for me to make judgments where I don't have all the facts, and I can't say. I don't mind saying that I missed the boat somewhere if I know it, or if I know enough about

somebody else to say that, but I don't know the answer to that.

Let me say it in another way. I am convinced that after communism fell, that the work that—we had a chance after the Berlin Wall fell, after the end of communism, to build a Europe that was united, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. You go back; since the rise of nation-states on the continent of Europe, that had never been true before. There had always been some conflict; there had always been some division; there had always been some absence of democracy—never before possible.

At that moment there were three great challenges, I would argue, to that vision. One is, what happens to Russia? Does Russia become a democracy? Does it become stable? Can it be prosperous enough in the painful transition? The other was, what happens to all the states around that were Communist, non-Russian states, basically the Balkans and Central Europe and southeastern Europe—second question. Third question is, would there be a conflict between Islam and the Orthodox branch of Christianity, manifest most obviously in the tension between Greece and Turkey but also up in the Balkans? If those three things could be resolved in a satisfactory way, then we could build a Europe that was united, democratic, and at peace.

Now, what happened? The Germans took on East Germany, in an act of patriotism and generosity and costliness of staggering proportions. They're still paying the economic price today, but it was a brave and good and generous thing to do.

The major countries in Europe supported the European Union. NATO took in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. There was a massive effort made to try to deal with Russia. The United States put a lot of money into the denuclearization program and other things.

After all is said and done, where are we? And we dealt with the Balkans in a more halting way. I think everyone would have to admit that. And we've continued without great success to resolve the difficulties between Greece and Turkey, but they haven't gotten worse, either. And we may have some Americans of both heritages here today that could have some ideas about that.

So where are we today? Today, we're concerned that Russia has maintained its democracy, but its economy has been so burdened,

it's caused all kinds of other problems, and that takes a lot of time for us. We're working on that. We're trying to maintain our strategic partnership with them even as we disagree about the conflict in the Balkans.

Central Europe is in very good shape, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Romania, Bulgaria, a lot of other countries—Slovenia—are doing better than most people would have imagined they would do. But the Balkans are in trouble, and the trouble in the Balkans has exacerbated the tensions with Russia, at least in the short run.

And all I can tell you is, I don't know whether we could have done more before. I always prefer to look to tomorrow. I'm not blaming anybody for what happened before. I can't do that. I don't know enough to know. Everybody had their hands full, and there were so many changes going on at once, I'm not sure anyone could have figured out more to do.

But I can tell you that if you want to think about what you want your children to live like, you imagine what do you want to happen in Asia; how are we going to work out our relationships with China and deal with the remaining security threat in North Korea and try to help Japan and the other countries come back? How are we going to have the strongest possible alliance in Latin America? What kind of new partnership can we have with Africa? But it all could come a cropper unless we have a united, democratic, and free Europe. And the three things are what I said: our relationship with Russia; what happens in the Balkans and southeastern Europe; and will Islam and Christianity be able

to coexist in a positive way in the underbelly of Europe.

And so I would say, maybe more could have been done; I don't know. I just know now, right now, all those people are fighting over smaller and smaller pieces of land. It's like life is a zero-sum game. You kick me out of my village; I'll kick you out of your village.

The Bible says, wisely, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." We need to have an alternative vision. They need to be brought into the vision of a prosperous Europe. They need to have more to gain by working together than they do by having constant fights with one another. They need to have—and we need to reach out and lift up, there.

So, however this conflict ends, or whenever it ends—I think I know how it's going to end—but whenever it ends, we have some building to do. They have to have something to live for. You just can't tell people what they can't do; they've got to have something to be for, something to dream of, a future to build. And we ought to be a part of it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Fairmont Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Edward Seaton, president, American Society of Newspaper Editors; assassinated Serbian publisher Slavko Curuvija; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen in custody in Serbia.

Memorandum on Carbon Dioxide Emissions Reporting *April 15, 1999*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Energy,
Administrator of the Environmental Protection
Agency*

Subject: Report on Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)
Emissions

My Administration's proposal to promote retail competition in the electric power industry, if enacted, will help to deliver economic savings, cleaner air, and a significant down payment on

greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The proposal exemplifies my Administration's commitment to pursue both economic growth and environmental progress simultaneously.

As action to advance retail competition proceeds at both the State and Federal levels, the Administration and the Congress share an interest in tracking environmental indicators in this vital sector. We must have accurate and frequently updated data.

Under current law, electric power generators report various types of data relating to generation and air emissions to the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). To ensure that this data collection is coordinated and provides for timely consideration by both the Administration and the Congress, you are directed to take the following actions:

1. On an annual basis, you shall provide me with a report summarizing CO₂ emissions data collected during the previous year from all utility and nonutility electricity generators providing power to the grid, beginning with 1998 data. This information shall be provided to me no more than 6 months after the end of the previous year, and for 1998, within 6 months of the date of this directive.

2. The report, which may be submitted jointly, shall present CO₂ emissions information on both a national and regional basis, stratified by the type of fuel used for electricity generation, and shall indicate the percentage of electricity generated by each type of fuel or energy resource. The CO₂ emissions shall be reported both on the basis of total mass (tons) and output rate (e.g., pounds per megawatt-hour).

3. The report shall present the amount of CO₂ reduction and other available information

from voluntary carbon-reducing and carbon-sequestration projects undertaken, both domestically and internationally, by the electric utility sector.

4. The report shall identify the main factors contributing to any change in CO₂ emissions or CO₂ emission rates relative to the previous year on a national, and if relevant, regional basis. In addition, the report shall identify deviations from the actual CO₂ emissions, generation, and fuel mix of their most recent projections developed by the Department of Energy and the Energy Information Administration, pursuant to their existing authorities and missions.

5. In the event that Federal restructuring legislation has not been enacted prior to your submission of the report, the report shall also include any necessary updates to estimates of the environmental effects of my Administration's restructuring legislation.

6. Neither the DOE nor the EPA may collect new information from electricity generators or other parties in order to prepare the report.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Statement on Congressional Action on Proposed Child Care Legislation

April 15, 1999

I am pleased that Congress has made important progress this week to address the pressing child care needs of America's working families.

Significant new investments are needed to make child care better, safer, and more affordable for working families. My budget request includes substantial new resources to help working families pay for child care, increase the supply of good after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning.

Today Senator Jeffords and Representative Gilman introduced, with bipartisan cosponsors, the "Caring for America's Children Act," which

calls for significant new investments to make child care more affordable and improve child care quality. Other important legislation has been introduced in the House and the Senate during this congressional session, as well. And most important, this week the Congress demonstrated through votes on the budget resolution that there is strong bipartisan support for taking action on child care. I want to thank Senators Dodd and Jeffords for their strong leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working over the coming months with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to strengthen child care for America's working families.

Remarks at a Majority 2000 Luncheon in Dearborn, Michigan April 16, 1999

Thank you so much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your warm welcome. I want to thank all of those who have spoken and been introduced. This is, because of the operation going on in Kosovo—and I know that all Americans are proud of what our young people in uniform are doing there—it is an unusual moment for me to be here, but a very important moment for Americans to reexamine what it means to be a good citizen on the edge of the new century.

There are a lot of things I'd like to say, but the first thing I want you to do is to hear me. I am here—you know, I won't be a candidate in 2000. I wish I could be, but I can't. [*Laughter*] And I'm here because I care about my country's future. I am profoundly grateful to the people of Michigan for having given Al Gore and me a chance to serve twice by their votes in the elections of 1992 and 1996, profoundly grateful to the Members of this delegation who have all been introduced, Mr. Dingell and Mr. Bonior and Debbie—thank you for running for the Senate.

You can't beat anybody with no one; people have to show up and run. And Debbie could stay in Congress and have a good time and enjoy this and be a part of a majority, and she's taken a significant personal risk because she has a significant personal commitment to the future of this State and this Nation. And I appreciate it, and I know you do. And I think she has more than a significant chance to be victorious because of that.

I was talking to the people at our table—it seemed like every time somebody from the Michigan delegation was introduced, I had some new or different thing to say, but it is an unusual House delegation, really unusually remarkable people, each with their own strengths. And I cannot say enough about Senator Carl Levin, who is off on our common mission of securing a just resolution to the problem in Kosovo.

I also want to thank Senator Riegle and Frank Kelley and my good friend Jim Blanchard, my former colleagues in different ways over the years. I've been at this so long, Frank Kelley and I served together in the 1970's. [*Laughter*] I want to congratulate your new attorney gen-

eral. I know she's doing a wonderful job. And Mayor Stanley, I'm glad to see you. And I can't say enough about Dennis Archer, and I want to say that I admire the effort you are making to reform your schools. And I believe you will succeed. Let me tell you something: One thing I've learned in this business over a long period of time, having spent countless hours in our Nation's schools: All of our kids can learn, and all of our schools can succeed, but someone has to be in charge. Change has to be possible; expectations have to be high. There have to be clear standards, and then there has to be support. And I want the rest of you to support it.

I've heard a lot of people say today, "I'm so glad that we're making these changes in our school systems." If you want the kids to be held to higher standards, then you have to support them. And if you have to raise the funds for more after-school programs or summer school programs or whatever it takes, you have to support them. So you have made a commitment now to change the way you're going to run your schools. Nothing is more important. I want you to support the mayor and make sure he has what he needs to get the job done for the children.

I want to thank the leaders of the Michigan House and Senate for being here. I have enjoyed my opportunities to be with the legislature and to speak to the legislature recently.

And I want to thank Patrick Kennedy for going around the country and trying to make sure we can run a race. Last time, in 1998, when the party of the President gained seats in the House of Representatives in a midterm election, in the sixth year of a Presidency, for the first time since 1822—1822—when we lost no seats in the Senate, and it was projected that we would lose five or six, we were outspent by over \$100 million. And still these fine people, with a lot of your help, achieved that result. Thanks to the efforts of Dick Gephardt and Patrick Kennedy and a lot of other people, that won't happen this time, I don't believe, and I'm really grateful to them.

And finally let me say, I think you could see from what has been said by all these people

about each other, we have a real commitment to each other personally and a commitment to our shared agenda, and I think that is a very good thing.

I admire Dick Gephardt and David Bonior enormously, not only because of the positions they take, not only because they stuck up for me when I was down as well as when I was up, but because they are truly good human beings. They're the kind of people you would be proud to live next door to, the kind of people you'd be proud to have raise your children if something terrible happened to you, the kind of people you would trust with your life's possessions if you had to turn your back and go away and do something else for an extended period of time. And they're the kind of people that ought to be directing the Congress into the 21st century.

And I want to say something to all of you today in the midst of what is a difficult period. I want to tell you how this business in Kosovo fits with all the other things that we'd rather be here talking about today, with Social Security or education of our children or all the rest of it, and why it is an appropriate thing for us to be here today to talk about our responsibilities as citizens, which includes making choices about candidates, supporting them, and showing up and being counted.

Now, in 1992 when I ran for President, I spent a great deal of time in Michigan, partly because one of my secrets was that an enormous number of people who live in Michigan came from Arkansas. [Laughter] It's one of the benefits of a depressed southern economy after World War II, is that I got elected President 40 years later because Michigan and Illinois were full of people from my home State.

But I knew that this State, with all of its diversity, with its traditional industrial economy, its emerging high-tech economy, its magnificent agricultural economy, its big cities and small towns, really carried the future of America in its life. And I came here, and I said to the people, "Look, here's the deal. Things aren't going very well, and if we keep doing the same thing over and over again, we're going to keep getting the same results. And I believe that we need to imagine what we want America to look like in the 21st century. I know what I want it to look like. I want a country where there is opportunity for every responsible citizen. I want a country where we're part of one commu-

nity across all the lines that divide us. And I want us to build a world where there is more peace and freedom, more security, and more harmony. And we're going to have to change some things to do that. We're going to have to stop talking about how terrible the deficit is and do something about it. We're going to have to stop talking about how we wish our schools were better and invest not only money but the right kind of policies. We're going to have to stop talking about how we wish people weren't trapped in a lifetime of welfare dependency and say that able-bodied people have to move off, but we're not going to punish their children, and we're going to give them the education and training and support they need," and on and on and on. I said, "You know, we're going to take a different policy."

And a lot of it was controversial. And frankly, one of the reasons I'm here today is that the Democrats might not be in the minority today if we hadn't had to go all alone to reduce the deficit while we increased our investment in education. But it led to the balanced budget; it led to lower interest rates, which was a huge, huge income increase to people who benefited from those lower interest rates; it's given us record high homeownership in America. Millions of people have refinanced their homes and saved a lot of money.

There have been more businesses, more jobs, and for the last 2 years, finally, for the first time in over two decades, incomes are rising for all economic groups in the country. We have the lowest African-American, the lowest Hispanic poverty ever recorded since we have been keeping statistics and the lowest unemployment rate among African-Americans and Hispanics recorded since we have been keeping statistics, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years.

And this is important. This is important. Now, we also have the first balanced budget in a generation, 2 years of surpluses now, the lowest crime rate in 30 years. We've genuinely opened the doors of college to everybody with tax credits and better loans and work-study programs and scholarships, the Pell grants. We've got 90 percent of our children immunized for the first time in our history against basic childhood illnesses. The air and the water are cleaner. We've increased—we've tripled the number of toxic waste dumps we've cleaned up. All these things have flowed from a few very tough decisions. Welfare rolls cut nearly in half.

Our country has been a force for peace and freedom from Northern Ireland to the Middle East. We have reached out in partnership to democracies all over the world. We are joining in an international fight against terrorism and the spread of chemical and biological weapons. We have tried to hope for the best and work for the best in the new century and prepare for any eventuality.

And this country is in a better place than it was 6 years ago. And because of our success, we have heavier responsibilities to ourselves and to others. But none of that would have happened—none of it—if it hadn't been for the people in this room that I came here to support today.

There are very few things that a President can do that the Congress does not either have to support on the front end or that the Congress cannot stop on the back end. And Dick talked about playing offense and defense. It isn't right that we have to play defense all the time; we ought to be working together from the beginning. But when we work together at the end of every budget year, we get to play a little offense, because if the President says, "I'm not going to sign this budget, and I'm not going to sign these laws," and they say, "I'll stick with him," then we get to play offense.

But it would be so much better—the point I want to make to the American people is these folks were right. We now have evidence; we have 6 years of evidence. We were right to put 100,000 police on the street. We were right to drive the deficit down and give us a surplus. We were right to do these things.

And I ask the American people, when these Democrats go back into the field for the 2000 election for the House races and the Senate races, to look at the record of the last 6 years. And I will always accord the Republicans the credit they deserve when we have done things together. But the driving force—the driving force—and the way we came out with the economy, with our crime policy, with our education policy, so many other policies, and the foreign policy we have pursued, came out of these Democrats in the Congress who stayed with me and supported my ideas. And I think they deserve the support of the American people because they're doing the right thing.

And let me be quite specific here and, again, keep the pledge I made at the beginning of the talk. What's all this got to do with what

we're doing in Kosovo? The country is working again. And we have now, I would say, both the opportunity and the obligation to say, "Okay, we've got things going right again. Now what do we have to do to have the kind of America and the kind of world we want for our children in this new century? What are the big challenges?" You might ask yourself that when you leave here. What do you think they are?

Here are what I consider to be the big five, if you will, and what I hope the 2000 elections will be about, unless we can resolve more of them between now and then, which we're working to do.

Number one, we must deal with the aging of America. The number of folks over 65 will double by 2030. There will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The older I get, the better that problem looks. *[Laughter]* This is a very high-class problem faced by all wealthy societies. But unless you deal with it in a responsible way, you run the risk that when all of us baby boomers retire, we impose big burdens on our kids and their ability to raise our grandkids. And instead, there is an enormous opportunity here for those of us—anybody that lives to be 65 now has already got a life expectancy of about 82 years, if you get to be 65 in decent health. So this is an enormous opportunity, but we have to re-think our whole way of dealing with these things.

Number two, we have to do more to balance work and family, both because there are more single-parent households and there are far more households in which both parents are working, where there are two parents. But there is no more important job in the world than raising children right.

And we have to admit that while America has done a lot of things better than other countries—we have generated more jobs; we've got lower unemployment; we've done great—we have not done enough to balance work and family. And too many parents, every day in this country, have to make decisions about health care, about child care, about time off work, all kinds of challenges that, in my judgment, we could alleviate and still have a very strong economy, indeed, strengthen our economy if we did it in the right way.

Number three, we need to have an economy that leaves no one behind, nobody responsible enough to work. I am encouraged that finally

all income groups have their incomes rising. I'm encouraged that there are cities like Detroit where the unemployment rate has gone down. But you know as well as I do that in most of the big urban areas of this country there are still huge parts of the cities where there has been no new investment and where unemployment is still high. There are many medium-sized industrial cities that have had more trouble changing their economy than the larger cities have. There are many small towns and rural areas in my home State and many other places, from Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta to south Texas, where there are problems.

You want to know how we're going to keep the economy growing with low inflation? Get more investment in the underdeveloped areas of America. That's our biggest untapped market.

Number four, we have to have a way of continuing to improve the environment and continuing to grow the economy. Our administration has spent, I think, probably more time and effort trying to pursue both these goals and reconcile them, not always to the satisfaction of everybody in this room or this country, but we have really made an effort. Why? Because I think if the country ever gets in a position where we really are making a choice between whether we're going to preserve the global environment or have our kids breathe clean air or drink safe water and seeing our economy grow, we're going to be in a terrible position.

The developments in technology have given us more and more opportunities to find ways to both improve the economy and the environment. But I think—I predict to you that it will be a huge challenge for our country and our world for the next 20 to 30 years.

And the fifth thing is that we have to learn how to reconcile unity and diversity at home and around the world.

Now, what does that mean in practical terms? On the aging in America, we've got a plan. We, the Democrats, have a plan. Set aside 62 percent of the surplus to make sure Social Security will be all right until 2055. And make some other modest changes in the Social Security program that will enable us to lift the earnings limit on people on Social Security, so those who want to work will be able to do so and contribute to our country, and that will enable us to do something for the elderly women who are living alone. Their poverty rate is twice the regular poverty rate.

On Medicare, set aside 15 percent of the surplus, run the Medicare Trust Fund out at least 20 years, and finally begin to provide a prescription drug benefit to seniors on Medicare. It will cost money in the short run. It will save lives and save money in the long run because it will keep more people out of hospitals, more people out of procedures, and it will improve the quality of life. It will keep more people well. So that's our program. We also have a tax credit for long-term care. I think this is very, very important.

Finally, we have what I think is the right sort of tax cut. Our USA accounts would basically give tax credits and matching funds for about 12 percent of the surplus to working families to set up their own pensions.

When Social Security was started, it was always assumed that you would have Social Security, and then people would get a pension at work, and then they would have some private savings. Well, today, a lot of people live on just Social Security. More and more pensions are shifting from defined benefit plans to defined contribution plans. And the personal savings rate in America is way down.

So what we propose to do is to say to people: Families with incomes up to \$80,000, you can get a tax credit and some matching funds from the Government to set up a private savings plan for your retirement; up to \$100,000, you can get tax credits but not matching funds; over \$100,000, if you have no present private pension fund, you can still qualify.

We haven't tried to start a class war here, but you should know that fewer than one-third of the tax benefits associated with retirement in America go to people with incomes of under \$100,000. Fewer than 7 percent of the tax benefits of retirement savings go to people with incomes of \$50,000 a year or less.

So wouldn't it be good, with the stock market having done what it's done, gone from 3,200 to 10,000 in the last 6 years—I think it would be better if more Americans owned a share of our national wealth. I think it would be better if more working families had some personal savings to go along with their retirement savings and Social Security and whatever they get from a pension plan. And this would be a good thing. That's our program for the aging of America.

When it comes to balancing work and family, we want to do more for child care. We want to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights and do more

for health care access. We want to broaden the family and medical leave law some, so that more people are covered by it. It's been immensely successful. I think still today more ordinary citizens come up to me on the street, after all this time, and mention an experience they had, a positive experience because of the family and medical leave law, than any other thing we have done, and that's the first bill I signed as President in early 1993.

In terms of leaving no one behind, what's the most important thing we can do? Build 21st century schools everywhere, as you're trying to do here in Detroit; smaller class sizes with our 100,000 new teachers; modernize school buildings; hook up all the classrooms to the Internet and help all the schools take advantage of it; give more school districts the ability to have after-school and summer school programs.

I believe we should have a national change in our policy and end social promotion and require States to turn around failing schools, as Detroit has now taken on the responsibility of doing. But I do not believe children should be branded failures when the system fails them. I do not believe that.

What else can we do to leave no one behind? We can recognize what I just said: A lot of places still haven't really fully participated in the economy. And I have asked the Congress to adopt what I call a 21st century markets initiative to provide for loan guarantees and tax credits to people who will invest in high unemployment areas in America. The same sort of benefits we now give people to invest in low income countries overseas. All I say—I'm for that, by the way. I want us to be good neighbors to Central America. I want them to be good democracies. I don't want us to have problems in the future. They should have a good life. They should be good markets. They can buy our products.

But I say, why shouldn't we have the same incentives for people to invest in the low income areas of America where people are dying to go to work, dying to start businesses and capable of contributing to our future. We should be for that.

We have a whole livability agenda that the Vice President and I worked up that I think has enormous support, grassroots support among communities in the country to help balance the environment and the economy.

But finally, let me say what I started to say. I've worked hard, as Dick Gephardt said, on this whole issue of race in America. And you remember after the Oklahoma City bombings and there was all this talk about paramilitary operations in America, and I came to Michigan and gave a speech about it, talked about it. I grew up in the segregated South. I grew up with people who were taught not to like people who were different from them.

And if you think about it, it is the oldest negative force in human society. You go back to prehistorical times; people fought each other because they were in different tribes and they were afraid of difference. And sometimes there is a rational basis for it. But in the world we live in, the forces of global economy bringing us closer together, the technological opportunities to share the future with people beyond our immediate reach increasing, our diversity—the diversity you have just here in Detroit in Wayne County—I remember the first time, I think, when Ed McNamara had me out to the airport dedication—I think it's the first time Dennis or Ed, one told me you had over 140 languages spoken in this county. This is an incredible gift for the future. But it is a gift only if we make a virtue of it.

Now, how do you make a virtue of it? Let's take what's going on in Kosovo. We have Albanian-Americans here, and we have some Serbian-Americans outside demonstrating against us, right? It's okay. That's America. We don't tell people they have to shut up in this country. They can speak their piece and do their thing and be there. But what we have to find is a way to respect our diversity and lift it up and still say what unites us underneath is more important.

And that's what they have to find a way to do in the Balkans, too. And our quarrel there is not with the people of Serbia. Because of the state-run media, most of them don't have any idea what their people did in Kosovo. Most of them don't have a clue about the ethnic cleansing. I mean, people walking around on the street in Belgrade—they don't know, because they have a state-run media, they don't have a free press. So they think it's some political disagreement, and we're just trying to keep their country down.

I have no quarrel with them. The Serbs were our allies in World War II. My quarrel is with Mr. Milosevic and his policies. He has sought

to establish the principle that the most important thing in the Balkans is having a Greater Serbia. And if you have to kill the Bosnian Muslims and the Croats in Bosnia and the Croats in the Krajina, and then if you have to clean out all of Kosovo and run all the Albanians into Albania and Macedonia and crush them, most of them Muslim but not all of them, that's okay. I don't think it's okay. I don't think it's okay.

What I want you to think about is, look what we've tried to do in the Middle East. We have tried to be a fair and honest interlocutor in bringing the Palestinians and the Israelis together. We have worked hard, and we have a bill before the Congress now to try to help our friends in Jordan to stabilize their economy and keep being a force for peace.

In Northern Ireland, we've tried to help the Catholics and the Protestants put aside three decades of conflict. Why? Because in a global economy—and Lord knows that if the American people hadn't learned anything in the 20th century, it's that sooner or later, if the world goes haywire, we get pulled into it—World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam. So, increasingly, we have done things to try to get involved to stop things from happening.

Now, this war in Bosnia went a long along time. It went on nearly 3 years before we really got the coalition together among the allies to try to go in and stop it. And by that time, there were over 2 million refugees and about 250,000 people had been killed, lost their lives.

Now, we've had a few thousand people killed and a million-plus refugees in Kosovo. And what I have tried to say to the American people is, this is not some crusade America went off on its own. We've got all of our NATO Allies, 19 countries, all believing that this is something that needs to be contained and reversed—not because we have a quarrel with the Serbian people. And I want to point out, I said, I made it absolutely clear that we would not go in there even in a peaceful environment unless it was absolutely clear that our charge in Kosovo was to return all the refugees to their rightful homes and their neighborhoods and their communities, under conditions of peace, and then have a secure environment that would also protect the Serb minority within Kosovo.

What I'm trying to do is to establish a principle here that we have to resolve our differences by force of argument, not by force

of arms. And you cannot tell somebody you love the land but you hate the people that inhabit it because of their ethnic, their racial, or their religious affiliation.

And if you think about the world we want our kids to live in, and if you think about how we want it to be free of war, free of conflict, there is no way to get there—no way—unless our historic alliance with Europe includes a Europe that is undivided, democratic, and at peace, and unless we are standing for the principle that we're not afraid of people that are different, not just in terms of racial or religious or ethnic differences but in terms of political opinions.

We don't have to be afraid. All we need is a system that gives people a legitimate way to express their grievances, to fight their political battles, and limits the ability of people to oppress each other. And I believe we've done the right thing there.

I cannot tell you how strongly I think that we would feel, no matter what apprehensions you may have in the moment—and I'm quite confident of the ultimate success of our mission—but no matter how many apprehensions you have, ask yourself how you would feel today if I were up here giving this speech, after what we did in Bosnia, after what we stood for in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, after all the work we've done in America to get people to live together across racial and religious lines, after the work we've done to end employment discrimination and to stand against hate crimes, and all the things this administration has stood for and this party has stood for and our people have stood for—how would you feel if I had come here to give this speech today and the headlines were full of all those people being killed and all those people being thrown out of the country, and we were having to explain to people why we couldn't lift a finger to do anything about it?

So life is full of hard decisions, and sometimes the most important things in life are difficult. This has been a difficult period for Dick Gephardt and for Dave Bonior and for John Dingell. For all of us it's been so frustrating these last 6 years, going through this position where we've had to fight so many rearguard actions. But they have grown stronger and deeper and wiser and more determined.

And this is what I want for our country in this moment. We must always keep our hearts and our ears open. We must always be open

to the possibility of constructive resolution. But I think that we ought to say, "Look, the 21st century world we want to be a place where people live free of this sort of madness, of hating each other because of their differences." And we have to be free of it in America because we will be the most diverse democracy in the world.

That is what is at stake. And that's why it's good that we're all here today. Because, in the end, the political leadership of the country cannot go where the people will not travel. That's what a democracy is. So it matters what you believe. It matters whether you will support candidates. It matters which candidates you support.

And all I can say to you is, I am profoundly grateful to you because you and the people of Michigan have been good to me and to my family and to my Vice President, to our administration. You have been good to the Members of Congress that are here. And we have tried in turn to do things that were good for America and good for Michigan.

We face big challenges. But if you look at the record of the last 6 years, two things should

come forth: Number one, you should be very optimistic about the future; but number two, you should be willing to make tough decisions and be firmly in the camp of those who are committed to what is truly in the best interest of the children of this State and this country. They I have come to stand with today, and I'm very proud to be here with them and with you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the ballroom at the Fairlane Club. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Debbie Stabenow; former Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr.; former State Attorney General Frank J. Kelley; former Gov. James J. Blanchard; State Attorney General Jennifer M. Granholm; Mayor Stanley Woodrow of Flint, MI; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; Representative Patrick J. Kennedy, chairman, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks to Humanitarian Relief Organizations in Roseville, Michigan *April 16, 1999*

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, Dean, for your work and your introduction. Mr. Mayor, thank you for making us feel welcome. I'd like to thank Hattie Babbitt and James Lee Witt, Eric Schwartz, and the other members of our humanitarian team at the Federal Government level for being here with me today.

I thought the youth choir was magnificent. I think we should give them another hand. [*Applause*] Thank you. I'd like to thank the Members of the Michigan delegation who are here, Congressman Dingell—we just left his district—Congressman Levin, Congressman Kildee, Congresswoman Stabenow. I thank Congressman Patrick Kennedy from Rhode Island, who has joined us today; and a special word of thanks to our leader, Dick Gephardt, and to your Congressman, Dave Bonior, for their leadership and support in this important endeavor.

I know many people here have very strong feelings about the conflict in Kosovo. In a moment I will meet with a few families who have relatives there. Later tonight, 50 reservists from the area will go to France to support Allied Force. I'm going from here to Selfridge Air National Guard Base to thank the people there for their service to America and the cause of peace.

The Detroit area has a large number of Albanian-Americans, roughly 40,000. Many here today are from here, in Roseville, from Armada, from other communities in the region. Many of you have loved ones in Kosovo, relatives, friends, kicked out of their homes under pain of death. Our hearts and our prayers, our aid and our arms are with you today.

But I also want to point out, so as to make the larger point of my remarks, that America is proud to be the home to a large community

of Serbian-Americans, many of them living in the Midwest, Michigan, Ohio, other places. I believe overwhelmingly they want a democratic Serbia that is a part of Europe, not apart from it. I say that because I think it is very important that the American people not develop some negative feeling or bias against Serbian-Americans, or even the Serbian people themselves, because most of them don't even know what has been done in their name in Kosovo, because the state-run media has covered it up.

I say that to make the larger point. We just came, as I said, from a meeting in Representative Dingell's district where we had Albanian-Americans who were inside meeting with me, and Serbian-Americans who were outside demonstrating against me. And I said that was good because that was the American way. That is not Mr. Milosevic's way. And that's the point I want to make. Our quarrel is not with the Serbs in Serbia; it is not with the Serbs in Kosovo; it is not with Serbian-Americans. It is with the leadership of a person who believes it is all right to kill people and to uproot them and to destroy their family records and to erase any record of their presence in a land simply because of their ethnic heritage. Most, but not all, are Muslims. So there is an element of religious conflict here as well. But it is not entirely that.

And as I have said repeatedly and I'd like to say one more time, the battle we see in Kosovo today is the harshest example at the moment of what we have seen in Bosnia, what we saw in the slaughter, the tribal slaughter in Rwanda, what we see in the still-unresolved but hopefully about to be resolved conflict in Northern Ireland, what we see in the Middle East. We have come to the end of the cold war. People, by and large, have rejected communism. And we now see the prospect of a bright new future for the world in which we can resolve our differences in an orderly way and build a common future—that future threatened by the oldest problem of human society, our tendency to fear and dehumanize people who are different from ourselves.

And that is why the United States is in Kosovo; that and the fact that the practical significance of that war there could spread across all the Balkans, all of Southeast Europe, and threaten everything we want for our children in the 21st century world.

I have been very moved by the response of the American people to this crisis. Our men and women in uniform have performed superbly. So many thousands of Americans have donated money and supplies. I was telling our folks before we came in, right after Easter Sunday the minister of the church that Hillary and I attend in Washington called and said, just on the spur of the moment he had called for an Easter offering for the refugees. And without any prior announcement in a church that is largely quite a middle class church, he raised \$15,000. And he was so proud of that.

Mr. Witt just told me about a person calling in to our 1-800 number and pledging \$1,000 and then calling the next day and said that he'd wrestled with it all night long, and he realized he hadn't given enough, and he wanted to give another \$1,000. So the heart of America has been engaged by this.

Many hardworking Americans have lent their time and energy to provide food and shelter. Some work for international organizations, like the Red Cross; some work for small NGO's and local charities, including some of the Albanian-American groups represented here today. Some are affiliated with the United States military or NATO, who are also working very hard on the humanitarian issues now. We in the United States, through our Government, have contributed \$150 million to humanitarian relief since last year. We've sent more troops to Albania and Macedonia to distribute supplies. We provide now over a million daily rations, over 50,000 blankets, 1,000 tents, tens of thousands of water jugs because dehydration is a terrible, terrible problem now.

I have directed our Defense Department to build a new refugee facility in Albania for up to 20,000 people, to help preserve lives, health, in hope of return. We will do the most we can also to make sure that the innocent families trapped within Kosovo do not go hungry, unprotected, or forgotten.

You know, this is a sad chapter, as was Bosnia, in an otherwise remarkable period of Europe in the last decade of this century: the fall of the Berlin Wall; the peaceful reunification of Germany; the enlargement of NATO to include Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic; our partnerships with Russia, Ukraine, and two dozen other countries; the increasing unification of Western Europe economically and politically. It all gave us the chance, on the continent

where the two World Wars began, to build a Europe that was peaceful, undivided, and at peace for the first time in history.

And as I said, it is truly ironic that as we look toward a future where we want every classroom connected to the Internet, all the peoples of the world drawing closer together culturally and economically, that this entire vision is threatened by the most primitive of all human weaknesses, the fear and the tendency to hate those who are different from ourselves.

Now, this is a challenge we still face within the United States. The mayor of Detroit said at our previous meeting that in Wayne County there are over 150 different languages spoken—140 different languages and ethnic groups. Michigan looks very different than it did when Mr. Dingell first went to Congress over 40 years ago. Macomb County looks different than it did when people said in the 1980's that it was the mirror image of emerging America. It probably is, but in a very different way today. Mr. Bonior, himself, has Ukrainian and Polish roots. In this congressional district, you have not only those who are here, you have Italian-Americans, Belgian-Americans, Asian-Americans, African-Americans, Latinos.

We have to say to ourselves as well as to the rest of the world, that there will be a great contest for the next several years between the forces bringing us together and the forces tearing us apart, between our commitment to empower people and those who would suppress them, between the idea that we can only find unity with people who are just like us and the idea that life is richer in every way, not just materially, when people can celebrate their own convictions and their own ethnic heritage and their own religious faiths and still reaffirm their common humanity and draw up a set of rules which permit us all to live together, to pursue our faith, and pursue our humanity.

That is why we are in Kosovo, and that is why we must work here at home.

Now, I just want to make one other point. I tried to make it yesterday to the newspaper editors in San Francisco, and I want you here who have roots in the region to support our elected officials and to remind us of this. For the moment, we are caught up in a conflict in which we have clear objectives: We want the refugees back in; we want the Serbian forces out; we want an international security force to protect the people, including the Serb minority

in Kosovo, as they work toward self-determination. Our objectives are clear, and for the moment we must focus on that.

But we must be thinking about tomorrow, the tomorrow when the conflict is over, the tomorrow when the Kosovars are home. Now, what kind of future do we want? Do we want a future where every ethnic group is confined in smaller and smaller and denser and denser pieces of land, and then, just to be secure, they must be a separate country? Or do we want a future in the Balkans and in southeastern Europe where they can do what we are struggling to do here in America, where, yes, people can have their own heritage and their own faith and their own traditions, but they are a part of a larger effort to share a bigger future?

I think the answer is clear. If you want people to give up the misery of yesterday, you must give them the hope of a better tomorrow. And that is what we have to focus on. After World War II, that's what we did for Germany, our adversary, as well as France and Great Britain, our allies. After the cold war, we reached out to Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic with economic and other aid. We reached out to Ukraine and to Russia to try to help to deal with the nuclear problems, to try to help them get started again. And if you look at the success of Central Europe, it's hard to say that it wasn't the right decision.

But if you look at the Balkans and Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, if you look at all these countries in southeastern Europe, we have to say when the fighting is over and the Kosovars go home, what will Albanians, Serbs, Bosnians, Macedonians—how will they live? What will they do? What happens the next day? Will we have another decade where people carry around all this hatred in their heart, and every time they turn a corner in every little village, they look to see who lives on this corner and what they did to them? Or will we challenge them and help them to be involved in a bigger, brighter future?

So I ask you, all of you here today who have been so involved in this: We must do for southeastern Europe, including the Balkans, what was done for Central Europe after the cold war, and for the battleground nations of Europe after World War II.

This is our competing vision. Mr. Milosevic's vision: Greater Serbia, enforced by paramilitary thugs and propaganda, denying the humanity of

people who do not fall within his ethnic group. But our version is democracy, messy sometimes, yes—votes and arguments and disagreements and demonstrations and religious differences and ethnic differences—but recognizing that it is better to work together for a brighter tomorrow because, underneath, our common humanity is more important than anything that divides us; that we are all the children of God. And it is hard to imagine that God would have ordained the construction of any religion or political philosophy which would justify the extinction of another of God's children simply because of their religious, racial, or ethnic background. It is a very simple statement.

So I thank you for being here. I thank you for your loyalty to your loved ones back home. I ask you to help me in making sure that in this difficult period we do not diminish the humanity of any group of Americans, including

the Serbian-Americans, that we go out there and tell the world what we're trying to fight for is the fundamental dignity and integrity of all people and a system of democracy and cooperation which gives all of our children a better tomorrow.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:11 p.m. in the gymnasium at the Roseville Recreation Center. In his remarks, he referred to Albanian-Islamic Center spokesman Dean Shaska, who introduced the President; Mayor Gerald K. Alsip of Roseville; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, senior minister, Foundry United Methodist Church. The President also referred to the Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit choir.

Remarks at a Majority 2000 Dinner in Weston, Massachusetts April 16, 1999

Well, first of all, I would like to thank Senator Kennedy and Senator Daschle for their introductions. [Laughter] I don't want Senator Kennedy to be upset at Senator Daschle. I told Senator Daschle I did not want Kennedy to introduce me. [Laughter] And he drew the wrong conclusion—I just didn't want Patrick up here making those gestures introducing me. [Laughter]

I tell you, Patrick, I have never heard you so funny; you've got a second career. [Laughter]

Like everyone else, I want to thank Alan and Susan and all of the others who helped to raise the funds tonight. I'd also like to thank the people who provided our meal and those who served it. And I want to thank our wonderful, wonderful musicians, Gary Burton and his pianist. They were terrific. Thank you very much. You guys were great. Thank you.

As Senator Kennedy said, I am profoundly indebted to the people of Massachusetts. Massachusetts has been wonderful to me and to Hillary, to Al and to Tipper Gore, to give our administration the support that we need and to send such remarkable people to the Congress. A majority of all of the Congress people from

Massachusetts, all the Democrats, are here tonight. And I thank Congressman Moakley, Congressman Delahunt, Congressman Meehan, Congressman Markey, and Congressman Tierney, along with Congressman Kennedy.

We're also glad to be joined tonight by Congressman Earl Blumenauer, who is from Oregon. He's a long way from home, and we're glad he's here. Thank you very much. And our wonderful Democratic whip, Dave Bonior, who took me to his district in Michigan today to meet with the Albanian-Americans and to hear their stories, along with Congressman Gephardt. I, too, want to say how profoundly grateful I am for what Senator Kerry said, how much it means, and for what he does for you, and for Senator Kennedy.

And as others have said, we could not have better leaders in the United States Congress than Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt. I could give you 1,000 examples. But suffice it to say that I do not believe that we would be here tonight in the position we're in, with the country in the position it is in, had it not been for their leadership and their support for me, and their always willingness to come

in and have these fascinating discussions and, even when they think I'm wrong, to tell me they think I'm wrong. And we try to work it out, work together, and go forward together. And it's been a remarkable partnership.

I also would say, to echo something Dick Gephardt said—and I want all of you to know—you know, most of you have been to enough of these political fundraisers that you're used to politicians getting up and blowing smoke over one another, you know, and saying that they think this one is the greatest person since the redwoods began to grow in California and all of that—[laughter]—the other one was born in a log cabin he built himself—all of those. [Laughter] You're used to hearing all that sort of stuff. I know that. And you think that we all leave, we go back to telling bad stories on one another and cutting each other down.

I'm telling you, the team of leaders we have now and the people that represent you in Massachusetts—there is a profound mutual respect born of shared goals and shared dreams for the American people.

I told all my folks when I became President, I said, "I didn't work in Washington before, and I'm going to make my fair share of mistakes. But one of the great advantages that I have is that I lived in a little State where I was expected to show up for work every day, and where I didn't have to spend half my time worrying about what was in the newspaper that day and who was up and who was down and who was leaking and who was not." And my theory is, if we stay together and work together and we're loyal to each other and we air our differences honestly and we show up for work every day, eventually something good will happen for the American people.

Now, I think the evidence is that that happened. But what you need to know is, that's the sort of leadership we have in our party. Dick and David and Tom and the rest of our crowd, they're like what you expect from the Massachusetts delegation. They show up for work every day. They do not get paralyzed by this story or that story or spending all their time trying to manipulate who's up and who's down in Washington today. They have an agenda rooted in their concerns for you and our children's future, and they show up.

And it's just like any other job. I know we'd like for you to believe that you've got to be just one step short of Albert Einstein to do

all these jobs we do. But a lot of it is deciding what the right thing to do is, clearly laying it out, and going at it day-in and day-out, year-in and year-out.

So I want to thank you for investing in the future of the Democratic majority in the Congress, because they have proved for 6 long years that they have good ideas, good values, and great work habits, and they will deliver for the United States of America, thanks to your help. And I thank you very much.

I also want to say, Alan, thank you very much for collecting the money for the relief effort in Kosovo. Let me just briefly say, the camps in Albania are teeming. Tiny Macedonia, with its own ethnic difficulties to deal with, trying to preserve its democracy, it's deeply strained. We need all the help we can get. And frankly, the relief agencies are very, very good; they are very efficient; they don't waste the money. And cash is better than in-kind contributions, because the needs shift daily. And anything you can do to help that, I hope you will.

Now, I'm not going to put you through another speech of any length, but I want to take 5 minutes and ask you to think about why you should want these people in the majority in 2000. And when it happens, I'm going to miss it. [Laughter] But I just want to tell you for 5 minutes, I want you to think about this.

Yes, our economy is going well, and I'm grateful for it. And the welfare rolls are about half what they were, and I'm grateful for it. And the crime rate is at a 30-year low, and I'm grateful for it. America is working again. And we've been a force for peace from Northern Ireland to the Middle East and to Bosnia, and I'm grateful for it. We've asked the world to join with us in fighting the more modern threats of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and global warming. And we've got a direction that we're on that's good, and I'm grateful for it.

But I want to ask you to just take a couple of minutes and think about why you should want these people in the majority. Because in the year 2000, when the voters are asked to vote, there will be those who come forward and basically say, "Well, things are rocking along, and I'll tell you what you want to hear, and I'll give you what you want to get, and let's just go back to business as usual."

The worst thing we could do is to forget what got us here over the last 6 years. What

got us here was taking on the hard problems and working like crazy, day-in and day-out, week-in and week-out, and challenging the American people and challenging the elite leaders of all the major sectors of our society to think about unmet problems and unseized opportunities.

And as I look ahead to the 21st century, I am grateful America is working again. I'm grateful that the economy is benefiting ordinary people more than ever before. We have the lowest unemployment rate we've ever recorded among minorities in this country, since we started keeping separate statistics almost 30 years ago. I'm grateful for that. But we have some big unmet challenges, and I won't go through our whole agenda, but we've got an agenda to deal with every one.

The aging of America is a huge challenge. And if we don't deal with Social Security and Medicare and long-term care, and do it in a responsible way, then when all of us baby boomers retire, we will put an unconscionable burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. We have a strategy that will deal with it.

We have more and more families who work and raise children at the same time, both single-parent and two-parent households. We have not done enough in the United States to help people balance work and family. We are better than any other major country at creating jobs. We have many strengths that other countries would give anything to have. But we have not done as well as we should, and as well as we can without in any way hurting economic growth, in helping our families to balance their childrearing responsibilities and their work responsibilities. We have to do more in health care, more in child care, more in providing leave time from work without losing jobs. We must do it. There is no more important work than raising our children, and we can do better.

The third thing we have to do is to make sure—we're Democrats; this is our job—we have to make sure everybody gets a chance to be a part of the new economy. As low as unemployment is, there are still places where it's high. There are places where there has been no new investment.

We have a strategy to keep the economy growing and to spread the benefits of it. For one thing, if our plan prevails over the Republican plan, we're going to pay the debt of this

country down to its lowest point since before World War I, over the next 15 years. That means low interest rates, high investment, and more jobs everywhere. And we're going to give the same incentives for people to invest in poor parts of America we give them today to invest in poor countries in the rest of the world. I think that is nothing but right. Don't take it away from the rest of the world; just give the poor parts of America a chance to get their piece of the American dream, as well. And I think that is terribly important, and Democrats ought to be for that.

We have to keep working to prove we can clean up the environment and grow the economy, and we have an agenda to do that.

The most important thing I want to say to you tonight is that we have a job to do at home that mirrors the job we are trying to do in Kosovo today.

Isn't it ironic that, on the verge of a new century and a new millennium, where most of us—most of the people in this room have this great dream of a 21st century world that is more peaceful, more prosperous, and more free than any time in all of human history; where people work together across national lines to lift each other up and solve problems together, whether they're the spread of disease or climate change or the threat of terrorism or narcotrafficking or weapons of mass destruction. We're working together to make good things happen and to press bad things down. And this whole vision, with this explosion of modern technology and science, is threatened by the prospect that we will marry modern technology with the most ancient hatreds known to human society, rooted in the fear of people who are different from us.

Now, we are in Kosovo—I think Dick referred to this, to the E-mails we were reading coming out of Albania. We're in Kosovo, first of all, because innocent people are being driven from their homes, having their villages burned down, having their family records destroyed, with their children being raped, and people being murdered; because we think we can help to stop it; and because we have learned the hard way in the 20th century, if something like that's going on and you think you can help to stop it and you don't, in that part of the world, it's just going to get worse. So it's a humanitarian thing.

But it's also a part of what we want the 21st century to be like. Doesn't it seem bizarre to you that on the one hand, we talk about the Internet being the fastest growing human communications instrument in all of human history. We talk about having our kids study halfway around the world. We relish in the ethnic and racial and religious diversity of Boston. Detroit, we used to think of Detroit as being diverse because—and I can say this because I'm from the South—because Southern blacks and Southern whites couldn't make a living in the South after the Second World War, so they went to Detroit to get a job in the auto plant. That was our definition of diversity. Wayne County now has people from 150 different national and ethnic groups—not Chicago, not New York, not Los Angeles—Detroit.

And we're sitting here worried about people who still want to kill each other over 600-year-old grievances. They want to fight over smaller and smaller and smaller pieces of land instead of thinking bigger and bigger and bigger about how, if they all got together, what a future they could make for their children.

And so I tell you that we're there for humanitarian reasons. We're there for strategic reasons. And we're there because we do not want our children to live in a 21st century world where very smart people filled with very narrow hatreds can access technology, weaponry, missile technology, and torment the world because they're growing smaller in spirit, when they should be growing larger in vision—especially in the heart of Europe, which is so critical to our security.

And we have to keep working against it here, which is why the Democrats are for stronger hate crimes legislation and for the "Employment and Non-Discrimination Act," and why we have supported national service.

Alan Khazei is here; he founded City Year. I'm the biggest flack he's got. I go all over the world talking about City Year. I knew when I ran for President in 1991 and 1992 that one

of the things that we needed to do was to build a stronger sense of community in America, across racial and cultural and religious and economic lines. And I had this vision that we could get young people involved in service and help them go to college. And I went to City Year in Boston, and I knew what it was I wanted America to do. I'm very proud of the fact that in its first 4 years the national service program, AmeriCorps, has had as many volunteers as the Peace Corps did in its first 20 years. And you owe that to them.

Now, I want to close with this thought. One of my favorite lines that President Kennedy ever spoke was the speech he made about Germany and the cold war in Berlin. Most people remember, "*Ich bin ein Berliner*," and all that. But he said this—I want you to think about this in terms of Kosovo—in the middle of the cold war, John Kennedy said, "Freedom has many difficulties, and our democracy is far from perfect, but we never had to put up a wall to keep our people in."

Now the Berlin Wall is down. The barriers of communism have fallen. But all over the world today, there are places where people are building walls in their hearts because they feel that they only count if they can look down on somebody who is different from them. And those walls are every bit as powerful as the Berlin Wall was, and in a profound way, harder to tear down.

America must both do good and be good on this issue of community and our common humanity. It is our great challenge and perhaps the most compelling reason that the Democratic Party should be America's majority party in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Alan D. Solomont, former national finance chair, Democratic National Committee, and his wife, Susan; and pianist Makoto Ozone.

The President's Radio Address *April 17, 1999*

Good morning. Of all the duties we owe to one another, our duty to our parents and grandparents is among the most sacred. Today I want to talk about what we must do to strengthen the safety net for America's seniors, by cracking down on elder crime, fraud, and abuse.

For more than 6 years, we've worked hard to keep our families and our communities safe. And we've made remarkable progress, with violent crime dropping to its lowest levels in 25 years. For elderly Americans who once locked themselves into their homes in fear, the falling crime rate is a godsend.

But the greatest threat many older Americans face is not a criminal armed with a gun but a telemarketer armed with a deceptive rap. And our most defenseless seniors, those who are sick or disabled and living in nursing homes, cannot lock the door against abuse and neglect by people paid to care for them. So America's seniors are especially vulnerable to fraud and abuse. Therefore, we must make special efforts to protect them.

That is why the 21st century crime bill I'll send to Congress next month includes tough measures to target people who prey on elderly Americans. First, we must fight telemarketing fraud that robs people of their life savings and endangers their well-being. Every single year illegal telemarketing operations bilk the American people of an estimated \$40 billion. More than half the victims are over 50. That's like a fraud tax aimed directly at senior citizens.

Last year we toughened penalties for telemarketing fraud, but we should stop scam artists before they have a chance to harm America's seniors. My crime bill will give the Justice Department authority to terminate telephone service when agents find evidence of an illegal telemarketing operation or a plan to start one. This new law will send a message to telemarketers: If you prey on older Americans, we will cut off your phone lines and shut you down.

Second, we must fight nursing home neglect and abuse. Nursing homes can be a safe haven for senior citizens and families in need. To make sure they are, we've issued the toughest nursing home rules in history and stepped up investigations at facilities suspected of neglect and abuse.

But when one out of four nursing homes in America does not provide quality care to their residents, and when people living in substandard nursing homes have as much fear from abuse and neglect as they do from the diseases of old age, we must do more.

My crime bill gives the Justice Department authority to investigate, prosecute, and punish nursing home operators who repeatedly neglect and abuse their residents. With prison sentences of up to 10 years and fines of up to \$2 million, these new provisions make clear we will settle for nothing less than the highest quality care in America's nursing homes.

Third, we must fight health care fraud. Every year health care fraud costs American taxpayers billions of dollars, draining resources from programs that benefit our seniors. As Vice President Gore announced last month, my crime bill will allow the Justice Department to take immediate action to stop false claims and illegal kickbacks and give Federal prosecutors new tools to tackle fraud cases.

Finally, we must fight retirement plan ripoffs. My crime bill will toughen penalties for people who steal from pension and retirement funds. To borrow a line from Senator Leahy, who is working closely with us to strengthen the safety net for our seniors, the only people who should benefit from pensions are the people who worked for a lifetime to build them.

I look forward to working with Congress in the coming days to give our senior citizens the security they deserve. That is an important part of our efforts to protect our parents and our grandparents, to advance our values, and build a stronger America for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:45 p.m. on April 16 in the Roseville Recreation Center in Roseville, MI, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Message to the Citizens of Oklahoma City Commemorating the Fourth Anniversary of the Bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building *April 14, 1999*

Greetings to everyone gathered in Oklahoma City to remember those who died in the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

The bombing on April 19, 1995, stole the lives of 168 people and brought grief to the victim's families and to our entire nation. This cowardly act of terrorism outraged not only the people of the United States, but also civilized men and women everywhere.

As you gather to mark the fourth anniversary of that tragedy, I know that your memories of the loved ones you lost are undiminished by the passing of time. I know, too, that all Americans still share your sorrow.

Four years ago, you were brought together by your devastating loss. In the years since, you have reached out to forge new ties of community, turning your shared sadness into a source of strength for all Americans. As you prepare to dedicate the national memorial at next year's observance, I commend you for your courage and your dedication in creating a lasting tribute to the memory of your loved ones.

Hillary and I are keeping all of you in our thoughts and prayers.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 19.

Remarks at the Award Ceremony for the National Teacher of the Year *April 19, 1999*

Thank you very much. Thank you, Terry. I also want to acknowledge and welcome Congresswoman Patsy Mink from Hawaii, who is here with her husband, John. We're very delighted to see them. I'd like to thank the Chief State School Officers for sponsoring this award along with Scholastic, and I believe Gordon Ambach and Ernie Fleishman are both here.

Terry said I'd given 131 speeches on education. I didn't know that until I just came in here. *[Laughter]* I wasn't keeping count. It is true that a few years ago I started reeling off all my teachers, beginning at kindergarten. And when I started running for office a long time ago now, I remember I asked—the fellow who was helping me put my first campaign together said, “People don't know much about you; we've got to do a little biographical film, and we ought to put one of your teachers in it.” And I said, “Well, I still carry on a correspondence with my sixth grade teacher, Kathleen Scher.” I did until she died at about 91 years of age. And I used to see her about once a year.

“But you can't use her,” I said. And they said, “Well, why? That sounds like a wonderful

story.” I said, “It is, but she's liable to tell you what she told me the day I finished my elementary school career.” *[Laughter]* True story. My sainted sixth grade teacher, who is one of these wonderful—she lived with her first cousin, and they lived until their late eighties or early nineties, and they taught school for a gazillion years. And she looked at me when I left elementary school for the last day and she said, “Bill, I just don't know about you.” *[Laughter]* She said, “You know, if you ever learn when to talk and when to keep quiet, there is nothing you can't achieve. But if you don't learn the difference, I'm not sure whether you're going to be Governor or wind up in the penitentiary.” *[Laughter]* So we found someone else to do the film. *[Laughter]* But Kathleen Scher continued to write me for the rest of her days, including a letter I have that I received just a week before she passed away.

So I want to thank all of you for being here today. I also would like to thank Terry for the magnificent perspective she's provided to us for years now, in the Department of Education, on education and on teachers. And I'd like to thank

her for mentioning Kosovo today. I know a lot of you—probably in every school in the country, now, children are looking at maps and learning about the world we live in. And I think that's very important because it is such a small world, growing smaller.

I went out to San Francisco a couple of days ago to speak to the newspaper editors, and I said that it is truly ironic that here we stand on the verge of a new century and a new millennium, where education is more important than ever before, because we have this explosion in technology, drawing us closer to different people of different cultures, and our own country is becoming more diverse; we can imagine a future that is more prosperous and more peaceful and more interconnected, in a very human way, than ever before; we got by the cold war—thank goodness—without any nuclear weapons falling; and now we've found that that future was threatened by the oldest demon of human society, which is our fear of people who are different from us.

I'm sure at one point it was rational when tribes roamed around in isolated ways in pre-historical times and fought over limited resources and saw people in different tribes who were different from them, and they were maybe afraid for rational reasons. But today we have an opportunity to sort of celebrate our differences and enjoy them, as long as we understand they have to operate within a framework that says, underneath, the common humanity we all share as children of God is more important than those things which distinguish us one from another. That's really what's at stake there.

And it would be ironic, indeed, if after two World Wars and a cold war being fought on the continent of Europe, and all the lessons we have learned over this century, that it would be in southeastern Europe and the Balkans where our vision of the 21st century would come apart.

So this conflict in Kosovo, in a fundamental way, is either the last conflict of the 20th century or the first conflict of the 21st century. And it's very important that our children understand that.

I just want to say one word about it, and then I will come back to the task at hand. But I do have to announce today that I intend to send to Congress an emergency funding package to pay for our military and humanitarian needs for the operation in Kosovo; to ensure that we

have the resources to sustain the air campaign until we achieve our goals, while maintaining our high level of general military readiness; to provide critical humanitarian assistance and relief to the hundreds of thousands of refugees; and to provide for resources for the nations in the region, the neighbors of Kosovo, who have suffered so much from the effects of this conflict.

One of the things that a lot of people don't understand is that this is putting an enormous burden on Albania, the poorest country in the region, taking all those refugees, struggling to maintain a democracy. It's putting enormous burdens on Macedonia, a very small country trying to manage its own ethnic differences, now having these refugees loaded on top of them. It causes real problems for Bulgaria and Romania. This is a difficult thing for the neighborhood.

So I hope that the Congress will act on this. The need for this funding is urgent, immediate, clearly in the national interest. There are literally lives hanging in the balance. And so I hope, in the spirit of genuine bipartisanship, the Congress will move the package right away.

Now, let's talk about why we're here. The first Teacher of the Year Award was presented in 1952 by a man who was one of my heroes as a child growing up, Harry Truman. He did it right here on the White House grounds. The recipient was a Miss Geraldine Jones, who taught first grade in Santa Barbara, California, in a school whose name I rather like, the Hope School. [Laughter] Harry Truman said on that occasion that next to one's mother, a teacher had the greatest influence on what kind of a citizen a child grew up to be.

Every year since, Presidents or members of their families have personally handed out this award, as Terry said, to recognize not only the awardee and all of you, but, through you, all teachers in our country.

Eight hours a day, 5 days a week, 9 months a year, teachers hold the future of America in their hands. They teach our children to read, to write, to calculate, to sing, to play, to paint, to listen, to question, hopefully to work with others, and think for themselves. They excite our children's imaginations, lift their aspirations, open their hearts, and strengthen their values.

Everyone probably can recall a story like the one I told you at the opening of my remarks today. Many of us can remember our teachers

in stunning detail, their faces, their expressions, their voices, their favorite admonitions, the way their hands gripped the chalk at the blackboard. We can still, most of us, summon the pride we felt when they praised us and the absolute chill we felt when we were scolded. [Laughter]

The role of teachers, while hard to exaggerate, unfortunately, is too often easy to overlook. Teachers do their jobs, quietly, largely isolated from other adults. Their work, therefore, is seldom glorified by Hollywood and rarely sufficiently rewarded by society.

Andy Baumgartner is our Teacher of the Year. He spent 2 years in the United States Marines. He gained inner confidence, self-motivation, physical stamina at Parris Island and Camp Lejeune. I imagine they have been useful to him in dealing with young children. [Laughter]

Since he is a former marine, I think it's worth pointing out that today we rightly honor the men and women serving in and around the Balkans as patriots. We should also honor our teachers as patriots.

Andy's colleagues marvel at the way he rivets the attention of his kindergarten students by keeping himself in constant creative motion. That's the first impression I had of him. [Laughter] I have met a person who has even more energy than I do. [Laughter] One minute he's using popcorn and M&M's to teach counting. The next, he's conducting a sing-a-long to "This Land Is Your Land." A few minutes later, he's marching the class up the hill behind the school to conduct a solemn funeral for a departed pet tarantula named "Legs." [Laughter]

As the father of a son with a learning disability, he knows firsthand the struggle many parents go through to get the individual attention their children need. He works hard to give that kind of attention to all his students.

When he's not teaching, he can be found directing a school play, teaching other educators, writing guidebooks for parents, working in community theater, participating actively in his church. He is an example of the kind of vital, active American that Alexis de Tocqueville marveled at when he came here so long ago and talked about the unique quality of our citizenship.

If he were alive today, de Tocqueville, I think, would agree that America could do more to honor classroom teachers like Andy Baumgartner. Perhaps more of our best and brightest young people would choose teaching

as a career if we did more to lift our teachers up and honor them. Even though I am one, we don't need many more lawyers; we have plenty of financial analysts on Wall Street, but we desperately need more teachers.

When our finest young people pass up teaching, they're missing out on rewarding careers, and we're missing out on a chance to put our talent where we need it the most today. With 53 million children in our public schools, the greatest number ever, from more diverse backgrounds than at any time in our history, certainly since the turn of the century, with enrollments growing and a wave of teacher retirements about to hit, our schools will have to hire 2 million more teachers in the next decade.

At the same time, we're trying to bring down class size, and that requires more teachers. And the new teachers must be better trained. A quarter of all secondary school teachers today do not have majors or even minors in the subjects they are teaching. And of course, the deficit is worse in low-income neighborhoods where the need is greatest.

Now, these are enormous challenges. I believe we can meet them if we act now, when our economy is the strongest it has been in a very long time. But we have to act now. There are things the Federal Government can do, to be sure, and I want to talk a little about them. But I'd like to point out that we provide only about 7 percent of the funding of total public school funding in America. That's a higher percentage than it was when I became President. When we were cutting the deficit and cutting programs, we doubled our investment in education in about 5 years. But it's still important to remember that a lot of this has to be done at the State and local level.

And so as the Governors of our various States enjoy great prosperity, and as the crime rate comes down and presumably, therefore, they don't have to keep spending all their new money on building prisons—as was the case when I was a Governor, too often—I certainly hope that as much money as possible will be put into our public school systems to hire those teachers and to raise teacher pay. That has to be done at the State level, primarily, and it is absolutely imperative.

At the national level, we're going to do what we can to pass a bill to build or modernize thousands of schools, to help to hire 100,000 highly trained new teachers to reduce class size

in the early grades. The studies, of course, confirm what a lot of our teachers have been saying for a long time, that smaller classes means more individual attention, more discipline, and more learning. Last fall Congress reached across party lines to put down a downpayment. They paid for about a third of these 100,000 teachers. I certainly hope we can finish the job this year.

We have to redouble our efforts to recruit more of the best and brightest young Americans into teaching. A lot of our young people in the AmeriCorps program are getting some of their college education paid so they can go and become teachers. Our budget now calls for an investment to provide 7,000 college scholarships for students who will commit to teach in the poorest inner-city and rural schools. It calls on an investment to get 1,000 Native American young people to teach on Indian reservations and in other public schools with large Native American populations.

It calls for more money to recruit and train members of the United States military when they retire to become teachers through our Troops for Teachers program, something that has really been very, very successful. Our 25 million veterans represent a vast pool of potential teachers. Many of them, because they're drawing military retirement, can actually afford to be teachers. *[Laughter]* And most of them have their kids grown. So it's a pool that we need to look at and draw on. Our Teacher of the Year, here, is pretty good evidence that soldiers can be quite good teachers. We ought to make it easier for others to do the same thing.

Third, in our budget we provide more funds for teacher training. I think it's quite important that teachers, our new teachers especially, demonstrate that they know what they're supposed to teach. But we cannot expect the schools out there, who have to teach the kids, to be able to do what they're supposed to do unless we provide—we in the public sector—provide the resources we need not only to recruit but to properly train the teachers in the subjects they have to teach.

Fourth, we should do more to make our schools attractive places where people want to work. In our "Educational Accountability Act," we have a lot of funds for better schools and for turning around schools that aren't performing and for after-school and summer school

programs to help the children who need extra help.

Now, last thing I'd like to say is something I've already said. I know I've given 131 speeches on education—I now know that—so I've learned a new fact today, and I love facts. But the larger truth is this: Everybody is for education in general, but not enough people are for it in particular. It's easy to give a talk and harder to foot the bill. And I think it is very important that we not only remain committed to substantive reforms—you know, I believe that every school district should have a "no social promotion" policy, but I don't think the kids should be branded failures. I think if they're not making it, then they should get the extra help they need. And that's why we have moved on from \$1 million, and \$20 million, to \$200 million, to \$600 million this year in Federal support for after-school programs and summer school programs. We're working at this. But America needs to focus on this.

We're going to honor Andy. I'm going to bring him up here to give him his award, and he's going to give a speech, and we're all going to practically laugh or cry. And it will be a wonderful thing. But I want America to hear this when they see you tonight on television. We have 2 million teachers to hire in the next few years. And in the best of all worlds, they would, every one of them, be just as committed and just as knowledgeable and just as effective as you are. And it isn't going to happen unless we make the necessary decisions and put the necessary priorities in place, not only in Washington but in every State capital and every local school district in the country.

So I say today, the best way we can honor America's teachers is for the rest of us to give them the tools to succeed with our children in the 21st century. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 1999 Teacher of the Year, Mr. Andy Baumgartner.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Therese Knecht Dozier, Special Adviser on Teaching to the Secretary of Education; Gordon M. Ambach, executive director, Council of Chief State School Officers; and Ernest Fleishman, senior vice president, Scholastic, Inc. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also

included the remarks of Mr. Baumgartner, kindergarten teacher at A. Brian Merry Elementary School in Augusta, GA.

Statement Commemorating the Deportation and Massacre of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire *April 19, 1999*

This week marks the commemoration of one of the saddest chapters of this century: the deportations and massacres of one and a half million Armenians in the closing years of the Ottoman Empire.

We join with Armenian-Americans across the Nation and with the Armenian community abroad to mourn the loss of so many innocent lives. Today, against the background of events in Kosovo, all Americans should recommit themselves to building a world where such events never occur again.

As we learn from the past, we also build for the future. In this country, Armenian-Americans have made great contributions to every field, from science to commerce to culture. Mean-

while, the people of Armenia, who suffered not only from the massacres but the ravages of two World Wars and the pain of 70 years of Soviet rule, at last have obtained their independence and their freedom. Armenia is pursuing democratic and market reforms, assuming its rightful place among the members of the Euro-Atlantic community of nations. We wish the people of Armenia—and all of their neighbors in the Caucasus region—success in their efforts to bring about the lasting peace and prosperity that they deserve. America will continue to support these efforts.

On behalf of the American people, I extend my best wishes to all Armenians at this time of remembrance.

Statement on the Deaths of David and Penny McCall *April 19, 1999*

Hillary and I are saddened to learn of the deaths of David and Penny McCall, two Americans who dedicated their lives to helping people in need around the world. They were killed in an auto accident, along with a French colleague, Yvette Pierpaoli, and their Albanian driver, while engaged in their life's work.

They were in Albania on a mission for Refugees International to explore the possibilities of

setting up a region-wide radio network to help Kosovar-Albanian refugees locate lost family members.

By reaching out to help the Kosovar refugees and war-affected people throughout the world, they stood for the best of the American spirit. Our thoughts and prayers are with their loved ones.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Former Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany April 20, 1999

The President. Secretary Cohen, Mr. Berger, distinguished Ambassadors, Senator Roth, Congressman Pickett, other Members of the Congress, retired Members of Congress, present and former members of the diplomatic corps, and to our German and American exchange students who are here: Welcome to the White House.

Today it is my privilege to confer America's highest civilian honor on a great statesman of the 20th century, the Federal Republic of Germany's longest serving Chancellor, Helmut Kohl.

President Kennedy first saw the design for the Medal of Freedom on July 3, 1963, just a week after he had gone to Berlin and challenged a new generation of Germans to forge a future of freedom and unity, of European integration and American partnership. No one did more to fulfill the hopes that President Kennedy expressed on that trip than Helmut Kohl.

Very few non-Americans have received the Medal of Freedom. The last year a foreign leader was honored was 1991, when President Bush presented the award to Margaret Thatcher. That day we celebrated a partnership among nations and leaders that helped to end the cold war with a victory for freedom.

Today we honor a partnership dedicated to building a 21st century Europe that can preserve the freedom and peace and find genuine unity for the first time. Today we honor the leader whose values and vision have made that possible.

In 1991 the world was very different. The Berlin Wall had come down, but a profound gulf separated the eastern half of Europe from its more affluent neighbors to the West. Everyone agreed that something had to be done to bring Europe together, but not everyone had a clear idea of what that something should be.

Some people thought NATO should go the way of the Warsaw Pact, and that in its place we had to build something new, untested, unproven, a community that embraced everyone but imposed no true obligations on anyone. Others felt that our challenges in Eastern Germany and Eastern Europe consisted simply of sending assistance and plenty of advice. They were in no hurry to open our institutions to nations and people they thought of as distant and foreign.

But Helmut Kohl understood that we needed a bold vision, backed by a practical blueprint, grounded in the institutions that had served us so well for so long. He said, "We are all called upon to construct a new architecture for the European house, a permanent and just peace order for our continent."

Consider the splendid house that has risen since then. Germany is united. Europe has achieved economic and monetary union. NATO has three new members. The European Union soon will embrace nations from the Baltics to the Balkans. What a remarkable few years it has been.

The story of Helmut Kohl is the story of 20th century Germany. He was born in 1930 in Ludwigshafen, a small city on the Rhine. He saw firsthand the ravages of nazism. His brother, Walter, perished in the war that tore Europe apart. But the young man, then called "*der Lange*," "the tall one," was quick to see the possibilities of hope and rebirth in the postwar world.

Through the Marshall plan, he saw firsthand what Europeans and Americans could do together to spread good will and support for democracy among young people.

When he was only 16, he was one of the very first people to join the Christian Democratic Union. Indeed, his membership number was 00246. And 50 years ago, at the age of 19, he and his friends were actually briefly detained at the French border for causing what must be the friendliest border incident in history: they tried to remove some of the barriers between the countries and carried banners in support of Franco-German friendship and European unity. "*Der Lange*" was not your everyday teenager.

As Helmut Kohl's political star rose, he never wavered from those convictions. He believed young people were crucial to the future. He still believes that. And we thank him, and we thank the young Germans and Americans who are here to honor him.

He championed the Franco-German friendship as the linchpin of the new Europe, a

friendship crystallized in the unforgettable moment he and Francois Mitterrand clasped hands at Verdun. He always maintained that the new architecture of Europe must be built on the foundation of transatlantic partnership. And he reached out to Russia, to Ukraine, to the other former Communist countries, to make them a part of 21st century Europe.

He served as Chancellor for 16 years. Future historians will say Europe's 21st century began on his watch. In the months that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall, he conceived a generous vision for Germany's unification and for a new partnership between the West and a democratic Russia. He saw the imperative of Europe's unification, politically and economically. He saw the need to embrace other nations into Europe's family, putting Germany in the center, not on the edge any longer, of a united, democratic Europe, a Europe where borders do not limit possibilities and where nationhood is a source of pride, not a crucible of conflict.

It is to protect that vision that the NATO allies are in Kosovo today, to defeat the cynical vision embodied by Mr. Milosevic in which the most primitive hatreds and brutal oppression are more important than mutual respect and common progress.

Anyone who respects the legacy of Helmut Kohl knows that for peace to survive in Europe, our alliance of democracies must stand, and stand together, against dictators who exploit human differences to extend power. And we must stay true to our vision long after we achieve military goals. Germany was buoyed by hope through the Marshall plan; Greece and Turkey, rescued by the Truman doctrine; central Europe, helped by the West in this decade, after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Those were wise investments. We must be equally farsighted toward southeastern Europe.

Among all the success stories of the late 20th century, none is more dramatic or instructive than the rebirth of Germany as a free and democratic nation. Germany's story has taught the world two profound truths: first, that it is possible for a people who love light and laughter to descend into the blackest darkness; and second, that it is also possible for a people to return to the light and lead others by their example.

Germany is proof that war and ethnic hatred are not inevitable; that they do not represent a permanent aspect of the human condition; that

the unacceptable is not written by fate into our destiny. But we can and must remain willing to act, because the work of building a new world never ends. That is the lesson of America, the lesson of Germany, the lesson of the 20th century.

In 3 days the leaders of NATO and its partner nations will gather in Washington to mark the 50th anniversary of our alliance and to chart NATO's future path. The challenge we face in Kosovo has demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that America and Europe need an alliance that combines our strength to protect our values and project stability eastward in Europe; an alliance ready to meet new challenges to our security, with allies able to contribute to the effort; an alliance open to new democracies making the right choices; an alliance that continues to work with Russia despite tensions that arise when we disagree.

As Helmut understood so well, our vision of a Europe whole and free will not succeed unless it embraces a partnership with democratic Russia. And it will not succeed unless it is embraced by Russia. That is the kind of alliance that must and will emerge from the Washington summit.

I can think of no better way to begin this week of allied solidarity than by honoring Helmut Kohl. When I was elected President, Helmut had been Chancellor for a decade. Seven years later, I find myself the senior leader of the G-8. In countless ways, I learned from him. In Bonn, I once told an audience that my opinion on most issues could be summed up in four words, "I agree with Helmut." [Laughter] Those words have never failed me.

After our first meeting in 1993, he summed it up when he said, "The chemistry is right." Well, the chemistry was right every time we met, right when we planned NATO enlargement, right when we discussed our shared hopes for Russia, right when we talked about multilateral issues over a multicourse dinner at Helmut's favorite Washington restaurant, Filomena's—[laughter]—even right when he made me eat *saumagen*—[laughter]—and in spite of that—[laughter]—I hope our dinners continue far into the new century.

With the 21st century breaking over the horizon, we can look back on the 20th century, with its grave threats to our common humanity and its great leaders, Churchill, Roosevelt, de Gaulle. For unifying Germany and Europe, for

strengthening the Western alliance and extending the hand of friendship to Russia, Helmut Kohl ranks with them. His place in history is unassailable. And he has been a true friend of the United States.

In 1989, the year of Germany's rebirth, we heard Beethoven's ninth symphony as if for the first time, with Schiller's "Ode to Joy" capturing the feeling of a world coming together. In that same poem, ironically written just after the American Revolution, Schiller wrote that the circle of universal freedom begins very simply with the friendship linking two people.

Helmut, President Kennedy stirred the world at the Berlin Wall when he said, along with freedom-loving people everywhere, "*Ich bin ein Berliner*." Today a grateful United States says to you, "*Du bist ein Amerikaner*."

In countless ways you have been an American. It is my honor to award you the Medal of Freedom.

Commander, read the citation.

[At this point, Comdr. Michael M. Gilday, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal. Chancellor Kohl then made brief remarks.]

The President. I would like to invite all of you to join us in the State Dining Room for a reception in honor of Chancellor Kohl.

Thank you very much, and we're adjourned.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks Following a Meeting With the Economic Team

April 20, 1999

Attack in Littleton, Colorado

Thank you very much, please be seated. Ladies and gentlemen, let me begin by saying that we all know there has been a terrible shooting at a high school in Littleton, Colorado. Because the situation, as I left to come out here, apparently is ongoing, I think it would be inappropriate for me to say anything other than I hope the American people will be praying for the students, the parents, and the teachers. And we'll wait for events to unfold, and then there'll be more to say.

Domestic and International Economy

I have just met with my economic team to discuss the steps that we will be taking in the weeks and months ahead to continue to advance our prosperity at home and abroad. As you know, the economy continues to grow in ways that benefit ordinary citizens that are virtually unprecedented. This is happening thanks in no small measure to policies we instituted in 1993 to help to change America to meet the changing challenges of the new economy.

We recognized that the new economy demanded fiscal discipline, so we balanced the

budget. Now we're working to use the surpluses to strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The new economy requires and rewards greater skills, so even as we reduce spending in many areas, we have almost doubled the National Government's investment in education and training.

In the new economy, we are linked to all the nations of the world in a web of commerce and communications. So we have worked to expand and to build—to expand trade and to build a 21st century trading and financial system that will benefit ordinary citizens in our country and throughout the world.

The financial crisis that began in Asia in 1997 put our progress at risk and presented a very severe test to the global system that we have worked so hard to build. Though our economy has continued to grow, we have been affected by the Asian financial crisis, as you can see by the trade figures, by what has happened in steel, and by the loss of markets by our farmers.

It's clear to me that we had to do something to contain the crisis, to restore growth, to prevent such crises from happening in the future. In September I went to the Council on Foreign

Relations in New York and set out a strategy with concrete steps to speed the recovery. We joined with other major industrial nations to act to spur growth. Now, 7 months later, we see a growing number of signs that those steps have taken hold. Some economies once in crisis are beginning to turn the corner.

But substantial risks and challenges remain. This is not a moment for complacency. It's a moment to act to prevent financial crisis from reaching catastrophic stages in the future.

In a world of 24-hour markets, we will never be able to banish such crisis altogether, and no single proposal will solve all the problems we have seen over the last 2 years. But acting on the lessons we have learned from this experience, we can find a way to harness the benefits of an open global economy while taming the global cycles of boom and bust, just as we have found ways to moderate those swings in our own domestic economy. That is the central challenge we face on the financial front.

Working with the other industrial nations in the G-7, we have already taken several important steps, from developing a new contingent line of credit for countries with strong economic policies, to helping to restart the economies of Asia, to limiting the fallout of the crisis in Latin America.

Now the leading industrial nations must be prepared to take the next steps in the design of a strong financial architecture that can be a platform of prosperity for all of us in the next century. We have worked to shape an international consensus and to develop an agenda for long-term reform of the global financial system.

I know this is something that is very hard to grab headlines with, but if you think about what the world has been through in the last 2 years because of the problems in the global financial system, and if you account for the fact that 30 percent of our growth until last year has come from expanded trade, it is clear that for the United States, for ordinary citizens in the United States, and for their counterparts throughout the world, there are few more important things for leaders to be doing than working on building a stable financial architecture for the new century.

Tomorrow Secretary Rubin will outline in greater detail our proposals on a series of important initiatives. Starting with this weekend's gathering of financial officials in Washington, we

will work to build support for these proposals among our colleagues at the summit of the world's leading economies in Cologne later this year. And eventually, we want to bring in all nations who have a stake in the health of the global economy.

The emerging national economies need to be a part of this dialog, and all of them need to be convinced that we are trying to do things that will improve the lives of average working families everywhere.

Our approach includes the following key elements:

First, we industrial countries should take steps to reduce the entire financial system's vulnerability to rapid capital flows and excess leverage. For example, we should strengthen bank regulations so they actually take into account the real risks of lending.

Second, we should continue to develop a better way to respond to crises, including appropriate sharing of responsibility by the private sector.

Third, developing countries should take more responsibility as well, by strengthening financial regulation and bank supervision and developing sustainable debt management policies, thus avoiding excessive reliance on short-term debt. We will seek to reinforce these policies through the actions of the international financial institutions.

Fourth, the international financial institutions should focus their efforts on encouraging developing countries to adopt sustainable exchange rate regimes and the macroeconomic policies necessary to support them.

Fifth, we must ensure that the most vulnerable citizens do not bear the brunt of these crises. That means the IMF and the World Bank must pay more attention to social safety nets, working with countries to lay strong foundations during good times and to maintain adequate protections during bad times. In moments of crisis, budgets for core social programs should be preserved or at least should not bear the full brunt of necessary cuts.

Sixth, we must remember that the poorest countries, nations that private capital flows are bypassing altogether, need help because they are burdened with unsustainable levels of debt. Last month I asked the international community to take actions to forgive \$70 billion in global debt, at a meeting we had here with representatives

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of over 45 African countries. No nation committed to good governments and economic reform should be crushed by a debt burden that it is so heavy it will punish ordinary citizens and prevent growth, no matter what people do.

Now, if we take these steps, we can build an international marketplace that reflects our values. And we can achieve something that I think people in the United States want very badly: We can put a human face on the global

economy. We can show people, here and around the world, that there won't just be economic numbers showing growth, but their lives will be actually improved by the work we do to draw closer together.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:34 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Message to the Congress Transmitting an Account of Federal Agency Climate Change Programs and Activities

April 20, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 573 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1999, as contained in the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277), I transmit herewith an account of all Federal agency climate change programs

and activities. This report includes both domestic and international programs and activities related to climate change and contains data on both spending and performance goals.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 20, 1999.

Remarks on the Attack at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, and an Exchange With Reporters

April 20, 1999

The President. I want to begin by saying that Hillary and I are profoundly shocked and saddened by the tragedy today in Littleton, where two students opened fire on their classmates before apparently turning their guns on themselves.

I have spoken with Governor Bill Owens and County Commission Chair Patricia Holloway and expressed my profound concern for the people of Littleton. I have spoken to Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, who, along with Attorney General Reno, is closely monitoring the situation. I've asked the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education to stand ready to assist local law enforcement, the schools, the families, the entire community during this time of crisis and sorrow.

A crisis response team is ready now to travel to Colorado, and I strongly believe that we

should do whatever we can to get enough counselors to the families and the children as quickly as possible. I know the other communities that have been through this are also ready to do whatever they can to help.

I think that Patricia Holloway would not mind if I said that, amidst all the turmoil and grief that she and others are experiencing, she said to me just a moment ago that perhaps now America would wake up to the dimensions of this challenge if it could happen in a place like Littleton, and we could prevent anything like this from happening again. We pray that she is right.

We don't know yet all the hows or whys of this tragedy. Perhaps we may never fully understand it. Saint Paul reminds us that we all see things in this life through a glass darkly, that we only partly understand what is happening.

We do know that we must do more to reach out to our children and teach them to express their anger and to resolve their conflicts with words, not weapons. And we do know we have to do more to recognize the early warning signs that are sent before children act violently.

To the families who have lost their loved ones, to the parents who have lost their beloved children, to the wounded children and their families, to the people of the community of Littleton, I can only say tonight that the prayers of the American people are with you.

Thank you very much.

School Violence

Q. Mr. President, you tried to get this message out last fall. Is there anything additional that you can say or that the Federal Government can do to prevent things like this from happening?

The President. Well, I think on this case it's very, very important that we have the facts, insofar as we can find them out. You know, we had the conference here last fall. The Attorney General and the Secretary of Education prepared the handbook for all the schools that we asked to be widely used. And we do have, from bitter and sad experience, a great cadre of very good, effective grief counselors. My guess is that they will be needed in abundance there for the children.

I think after a little time has passed, we need to have a candid assessment about what more we can do to try to prevent these things from happening.

Q. Mr. President, there seems to be an epidemic of these kinds of incidents now. There was Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; Springfield, Oregon; and several others. Would you characterize this as an epidemic affecting the Nation's school system?

The President. I wouldn't want to use that word. What I would like to know is whether we can take—we can learn enough from this, which in its dimensions apparently is much greater than even the others were, and see what else we can do.

I had a very interesting conversation this afternoon with Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy, who, as all of you know, lost her own husband, and the son sustained a wound as a result of a shooting incident on a commuter train. And that's what we talked about.

I think tonight we owe it to the people of Littleton and to the families involved in this tragedy to let them go through the grieving and deal—and try to get the facts. And then the rest of us have a responsibility to do everything we can to make sure this doesn't make 1999 a year like last year, that we don't have another rash of this, that we really can be more effective in preventing it.

And I wish I could say more tonight, but I don't think I can.

Q. Mr. President, have you been told, sir, that the death toll is as high as the 25 figure that we've heard? And secondly, sir, every time one of these things happens, we go through this chorus of handwringing and say we've got to stop it from happening again. Is there anything specific and concrete that you'd like to see happen that hasn't happened yet?

The President. Well, I don't want to make—there are, but what I would like to do is take a couple of days, because we don't know what the facts are here. And keep in mind, the community is an open wound right now. They have suffered as much as anyone can suffer. This is the largest group of fatalities, whatever the numbers are—and I've heard various numbers, even as much as 5 minutes ago, right before I came out.

I'd like to answer that question, but I think anything I say tonight can only add to the pain of the people in Littleton and not serve to solve the problem. So I will answer that question when I have more facts and after we let a little time pass.

Q. Mr. President, you said America should wake up. Wake up to what, sir?

The President. Well, I think there are a lot of kids out there who have access to weapons—and apparently more than guns here—and who build up these grievances in their own mind and who are not being reached. And it's not just Littleton. We know that now. We've had lots and lots and lots of places. So it's—I don't know how many of you have been there. I've actually been there. I know the community, and it's a wonderful place.

And I think I can't do better than what Patricia Holloway said, the commission chair: If it can happen here, then surely people will recognize that they have to be alive to the possibility that it could occur in any community in America, and maybe that will help us to keep it from happening again.

But you know what we put out before. You know the efforts we've made. And I just think that tonight we need to focus on the families that lost their kids, on the children that are wounded, on the grieving of the community, give this thing a day or two for the facts to emerge. And then I'll try to have more to say to you.

Q. On just that point, Mr. President, at the time you had that conference last year, your administration said the students are still safer sitting in the classroom than they are walking down the street. Do you think Americans still think that's true? Do you think that's true?

The President. Well, statistically, for all the whole 53 million kids in our schools, it's true. But from the fact we're hearing about what happened at this school and the possibility that explosives were out there, that hand grenades were available, that other things were there, it obviously wasn't true there. That was obviously the most dangerous place in Colorado today.

So I don't want to—but that doesn't—that shouldn't make people believe that every school is in danger. What it should make every community do is to study this handbook we put out and see what lessons can be learned here.

But again, tonight I think the American people ought to be thinking about those folks in Littleton. Tomorrow and in the days ahead, we'll have a little more time to kind of gather ourselves and our determination and go back at this again.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:48 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Columbine High School gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold; Governor Bill Owens of Colorado; Patricia B. Holloway, chair, Jefferson County Board of Commissioners; and Representative Carolyn McCarthy's son, Kevin.

Remarks to the White House Volunteers

April 21, 1999

Thank you. You know, Hillary and I look forward to this day so much every year. We want to thank you for what you do. We want to say to America we could not run the White House without you.

It happens that this day was scheduled on what has turned out to be a very sad day for America. And since, in my mind, you represent the best of American citizenship by what you do here every day as volunteers, I think it is important that we take a little time to ponder how we, as American citizens, should respond to what has occurred in Colorado.

First of all, I think it is important that we remember that we must come together and pray together but also commit to act together. In Littleton, we saw and we continue to see horror and agony. We also see in that horror and agony the ties that bring us together as a national community: the police officers rushing toward the sound of gunfire with bravery and professionalism, the students risking their own lives for their friends, the doctors and paramedics summoning all their skills under astonishing

pressure, the parents and neighbors whose love and concern sustained their children through that last long night and who will be called upon to do much more in the days and weeks to come. We see, in a moment of agony, what is best in our community and in our country. I have been particularly struck by the story of Mrs. Miller, the teacher who heard the gunfire and led dozens of students to safety in the choir room, who worked to keep them calm and quiet for hours while students removed ceiling tiles to let in more air. Doubtless, we will learn more stories of quick thinking and grace under pressure as the details unfold. All of us are struggling to understand exactly what happened and why. There is a deep desire to comfort the grieving and counsel the children. We must also focus on what we are going to do.

In Littleton, agents from the ATF and the FBI already are on the ground, providing tactical assistance to local authorities. Highly trained crisis workers are ready to help people cope with their loss. Fortunately, one of the

most outstanding centers in the Nation for this sort of work is in Denver.

Perhaps the most important thing all of us can do right now is to reach out to each other and to families and their young children. It is very important to explain to children, all over America, what has happened, and to reassure our own children that they are safe.

We also have to take this moment, once again, to hammer home to all the children of America that violence is wrong. And parents should take this moment to ask what else they can do to shield our children from violent images and experiences that warp young perceptions and obscure the consequences of violence, to show our children, by the power of our own example, how to resolve conflicts peacefully.

And as we learned at the White House Conference on School Safety and as is reflected in the handbook that the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General sent to all of our schools, we must all do more to recognize and look for the early warning signals that deeply troubled young people send often before they explode into violence. Surely more of them can be saved, and more innocent victims and tragedies can be avoided.

In the days ahead, we will do all we can to see what else can be done. For now, when the school has apparently just been cleared of bombs and not all the children who were slain have been carried out, I think it is important on this day that we continue to offer the people of Colorado, the people of Littleton, the families involved, the sure knowledge that all of America cares for them and is praying for them.

So I ask you to now join me in a moment of silent prayer for those who lost their lives, for those who were wounded, for their families, and those who love them and care for their community.

[At this point, a moment of silence was observed.]

Amen.

Now let me say that on this sad day I also want America to know that I came here to be with you because, in many of the sad moments of this administration and many of the greatest moments of our happiness and achievements for the American people, the ability of the White House to connect to them rests solely in the hands of people who are not paid employees of the Federal Government. Most Americans still have utterly no idea how many hundreds and hundreds of people volunteer at the White House, without which we could not do our jobs.

I got a note the other day from a person thanking me because the child of a friend of his had received a letter from the White House. And he said, "I know you didn't sign that letter, but children expect to get their letters answered." That is just one example of things that would not happen, were it not for you. All over America, whenever someone comes up to me and tells me that they've had some contact from the White House that I know came because of a volunteer, I am once again grateful for what you do.

So I thank you for sharing this very profoundly sad moment with me and with our country. But I also thank you for making it possible for us to do our work, for the people of Littleton and the people of America. We are very, very grateful.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Columbine High School science teacher Theresa Miller.

Statement on the Nomination of General Eric K. Shinseki To Be Chief of Staff of the United States Army

April 21, 1999

I am pleased to nominate Gen. Eric K. Shinseki to be Chief of Staff of the United States Army. If confirmed by the Senate, General Shinseki will succeed Gen. Dennis J.

Reimer, who will be retiring later this year after 37 years of distinguished active duty service.

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General Shinseki currently serves as the Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. Immediately prior to assuming his present position, he served as Commander in Chief of United States Army Europe and concurrently as Commander of NATO's Stabilization Force in Bosnia. He brings to the position of Chief of Staff extensive operational and joint experience as well as proven leadership ability and a deep concern for the soldiers, civilians, and families of the United States Army.

During his distinguished career, General Shinseki served two combat tours in Vietnam and has commanded at every level from com-

pany through theater army. As Commander of the Stabilization Force, he directed the operations of the three Multinational Divisions in Bosnia, promoting implementation of the Dayton accords.

General Shinseki assumes the post of Chief of Staff as the U.S. Army proudly celebrates 224 years of dedicated service to our Nation in war and peace. With General Shinseki as Chief of Staff, I am confident that the total Army—active, Reserve, and National Guard—will continue its tradition of excellence, dedication, and professionalism as it enters the 21st century.

Statement on the Nomination of Lieutenant General James L. Jones, Jr., To Be Commandant of the United States Marine Corps

April 21, 1999

I am pleased to nominate Lt. Gen. James L. Jones, Jr., for appointment to the grade of general and assignment as Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. If confirmed by the Senate, General Jones will succeed Gen. Charles C. Krulak, who will be retiring later this year after 35 years of distinguished active duty service.

General Jones brings to the job of Commandant a wealth of operational experience, exceptional leadership skills, and strong strategic vision.

During his distinguished career, General Jones served a combat tour in Vietnam, commanded the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, served as Chief of Staff of Joint Task Force

Provide Promise in Bosnia and Macedonia, and was Commanding General of the 2d Marine Division. As Deputy Chief of Staff of the Marine Corps for Plans, Policy and Operations and, most recently, as Senior Military Assistant to Secretary of Defense, he has demonstrated keen insight into defense policy and the crucial role of the Marine Corps in protecting our national security.

General Jones assumes the post of Commandant as the Marine Corps takes on the challenges of the 21st century. With General Jones as Commandant, I am confident that the Marine Corps will continue its long and proud tradition of defending America's interests and values.

Statement on Congressional Action on Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

April 21, 1999

I am pleased that a little more than a year after I proposed national ed-flex legislation to the Nation's Governors, an overwhelming majority in Congress has passed a solid ed-flex bill. I look forward to signing it without delay. This bill will offer States more flexibility in their use

of Federal funding in exchange for demonstrated increases in student achievement.

I am particularly pleased that the conference report strengthens accountability measures and preserves our effort to reduce class size in the

early grades. The bipartisan work on this legislation shows we can and must work together to improve our Nation's schools.

Now Congress can move on to the most important aspects of the Nation's education agenda: finishing the job of hiring 100,000 well-pre-

pared teachers to reduce class size, passing my initiative to help build and modernize 6,000 public schools, and reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act with my plan to hold States and school districts accountable for results.

Statement on the Damage Assessment Concerning China's Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons Information and Development of Future Weapons *April 21, 1999*

I welcome the Intelligence Community's damage assessment on the "Implications of China's Acquisition of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Information and the Development of Future Chinese Weapons" and the review of the damage assessment by a panel of independent experts led by Admiral Jeremiah, as requested by the House Select Committee, chaired by Congressmen Cox and Dicks. I appreciate the careful analysis by the intelligence community and the independent panel, as well as their efforts to make as much information as possible available to the public on this crucial issue.

The findings of the damage assessment underscore the need to implement fully the Presidential Decision Directive I issued in February 1998 to strengthen security and protections at the U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories. I commend Secretary Richardson for his efforts in this regard and look forward to the review of

lab security I requested by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, chaired by Senator Warren Rudman.

Measures to protect sensitive nuclear weapons information must be constantly scrutinized, whether this information is at the national laboratories or at other U.S. Government institutions. Therefore, I am asking the National Counterintelligence Policy Board to assess potential vulnerabilities at other institutions associated with nuclear weapons besides the national laboratories and to propose any concrete steps that may be appropriate to strengthen protections against efforts by China and other countries to acquire sensitive nuclear weapons information.

I have also asked DCI George Tenet to review the recommendations made by Admiral Jeremiah on intelligence collection and resources and to act promptly on these recommendations.

Memorandum on Humanitarian Relief for Kosovar Refugees *April 21, 1999*

Memorandum for All Federal Government Employees

Subject: Humanitarian Relief for Kosovar Refugees

As you are no doubt aware, Slobodan Milosevic's ethnic cleansing of Kosovo has resulted in a grave humanitarian disaster, the displacement of almost 1.4 million Kosovar Albanians, and the slaughter of thousands. The refugees now in Macedonia and Albania, and those who continue to arrive each day, are in urgent

need of food, shelter, and clothing. Relief organizations are working around the clock to provide this assistance, but these organizations and the refugees they serve need support from all of us.

I have heard from many Federal employees who want to know what they can do to help in this time of crisis. We can best help alleviate the suffering in the Balkans by providing financial support to relief agencies on the front lines. The Federal Government has established a toll-free telephone hotline, 1-800-USAID-RELIEF,

that you may call to be referred to a number of private humanitarian organizations that are providing vital relief. The organizations are also located on the USAID Internet website, www.info.usaid.gov, under the listing for Kosovo. The organizations are on site, they know how to deliver the relief, and they need financial support.

Together we can provide the humanitarian assistance that the people so urgently need, while we work with our NATO allies to create the conditions that will allow them to return safely to their homes and rebuild their lives.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Students on Violence in Schools at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia

April 22, 1999

The President. Thank you, Mr. Porter. I think all of you know that we are being joined by several million students through various media outlets that are covering this, and so let me begin by saying I'm delighted to be here at T.C. Williams High School. Thank you, Mr. Porter. Our superintendent, Herb Berg, is here, and I'm glad to be back in this school district again that has hosted me for so many important educational announcements. Senator Robb and Congressman Jim Moran are both here with us, along with Mayor Kerry Donley. I thank them for joining us and our two teachers, Ellen Harmon and Barbara Finney.

I want to spend most of my time today listening to you. I have a few questions I want to ask, and I'm going to turn it over to the teachers as soon as I make a few opening remarks. But I got up this morning, and I made some notes and worked over them again, and I'd like to say just a few things.

First of all, we're here obviously because of the terrible tragedy in Littleton, Colorado, and because, even though it is the worst example of school violence we've seen, it is by no means the only one. And indeed, I think that some of the people joining us today are from Paducah, Kentucky, and Jonesboro, Arkansas—at least those two communities which had examples of school violence last year.

I think it's important that all over America students and teachers have a chance to discuss their feelings about this, their ideas about what we should do. And it's especially important for younger children, who might be quite traumatized and wonder whether they are, in fact, safe

at school. So I want to talk a little about all of that.

There is really nothing more important than keeping our schools safe. And we've tried to do a lot of things in that regard over the last few years, having a zero tolerance for guns and drugs policy, putting new community police officers in schools where they're needed, trying to support more counselors in schools, more after-school, more mentoring programs, more conflict resolution programs. We've tried to help school districts and students and teachers who wanted to do it to have—for younger children, elementary and junior high school—using school uniform policies or dress code policies where they wanted to implement those things. But we know that there are things which have to be done sort of beyond the Government and beyond anything Government can do.

I spent a lot of time thinking about this, but I want to say, last night and today I thought about the work that my wife has done on this for many years, and I went back and reread the chapters in her book that deal with the problems that children have in coping with violence and the responsibilities of parents and the larger society. I thought about the work that the Vice President's wife, Tipper Gore, started doing well over a decade ago on this whole issue. And I think we have to ask ourselves some pretty hard questions here. What are the responsibilities of students themselves? What are the responsibilities of schools? What are the responsibilities of parents? What is the role of the larger culture here? Is there a sense in which the fact that all of you are exposed to

much higher levels of violence through television, through video games, that you can actually figure out how to make bombs on the Internet—does that make a difference? Does it make these kinds of things more likely to happen? What are our responsibilities?

But before I open it to you, I'd just like to make one other comment. I think, particularly for young people who may be quite frightened as a result of this, or for parents who may wonder about the safety of schools, I think it's worth restating two or three basic things.

First of all, on balance, our schools are still the safest place our kids can be in most communities, under most or all circumstances.

Secondly, I think it's worth reminding everyone that in spite of these horrible instances, our country is still fundamentally a good and decent place, and our people are good and decent people. And we have seen the way the community of Littleton responded to this: people standing in line for hours to give blood, people showing up to volunteer their services as counselors and in other ways, with the way people have reached out to each other. We see a kind of microcosm of how America has reacted to this.

And I think it's important that the young people of our country know this and that the parents know this, that they should remember we—as horrible as this is, we have seen once again what is basically decent and good about America. And we should remember that most schools are more nearly represented by the kind of conversation we're having around here today than by the horrible incident we saw in Colorado.

So I think that's enough for me to say. But I'm interested in what you think about it, what your reactions are, what you've done here to try to avoid this, and what you think the responsibilities of the rest of us are, starting at home and going all the way up to the President, and also the cultural issues I mentioned.

You know, we have to acknowledge, as Hillary does in this book—and I went back and read some of the things we talked about over the last 20 years—that we do have more violence among younger people in America than other cultures do. And everyone has to take a hard look at what all the elements of our society are that contribute to that and what we can do to diminish it.

I also would like to say—let me just mention one other thing. I think it's important because

of the action in which we're involved in Kosovo today. We don't know all the facts about what happened in Littleton, but one of the things that's come out of this that's really made an impression on me is that the young men who were involved in this horrible act apparently felt that they were subject to ridicule and ostracism, and they were kind of social outcasts at the school. But their reaction to it was to find someone else to look down on. And apparently, they were very prejudiced against African-Americans and Hispanics, and observed Adolf Hitler's birthday, and otherwise reacted to that.

This is something that you see a lot around the world and throughout human history, that people who themselves feel disrespected, instead of developing an enormous sympathy for other people who have been subject to discrimination, instead look for someone else to look down on so they can always say, "Well, I may be dissed at school, or I may be subject to disrespect in some other environment, but at least I'm not them."

And I think that's a larger problem we really have to fight, because you look around this room—of course, we're in perhaps the most diverse school district in America today—but this is a great opportunity for us, as long as we lift other people up and recognize the inherent dignity and worth of all individuals and all ethnic, religious, and cultural groups.

And so I think that's another point that needs to be made here: They had the wrong reaction to the fact that they were dissed. Hey, look, everybody gets dissed sometime in life, even the President—[laughter]—sometimes, especially the President.

So these are some of the things that I was thinking about that I hope will spark your thoughts. And I think I'll turn it back to you and to the teachers to discuss this in any way you'd like.

[Teacher Ellen Harmon opened the floor to the students for discussion.]

The President. Yes, pass the mike.

[Teacher Barbara Finney, T.C. Williams peer mediator adviser, introduced a veteran student mediator, who suggested that the Littleton tragedy grew out of a buildup of anger or aggression that could have been addressed through peer mediation. Another student mediator described the mediation process at T.C. Williams.]

The President. I wanted to ask this question, because I honestly believe that young people can help each other, particularly at this age, maybe more than adults can, maybe in some cases more than their parents can, if things get out of hand.

But what I want to ask you is, how do they get there, if they're really angry? What if they're too embarrassed about what they think is being done to them to talk about it? Do they get there only when they come to you, or do other kids say, "Hey, these two people are having trouble," or "These two groups are having trouble. You need to go to them." Can you all talk to me about that?

[A participant said students could be referred to mediation or could approach the teacher in charge confidentially. She commented that letting students vent their anger in a monitored setting was often helpful.]

The President. Go ahead.

[A student said that T.C. Williams had instituted a confidential safety hotline so students could reach the peer mediation people and suggested that something similar in Littleton might have prevented the tragedy.]

The President. So you're saying if they had a hotline, as opposed to a peer mediation group, then someone who was afraid—

Student. No, they work together—they work together.

The President. That's what I mean, in addition to. So, if someone were afraid, they could call the hotline and say, "Here's what I think is going on."

Student. Yes. And it's confidential. You just—

The President. Okay. Suppose I call the hotline and say, "Listen, I just talked to one of these people, and they're talking about getting guns and shooting people." Then what happens? I called the hotline, here. What happens?

Student. Peer mediation can be contacted with that, because you have given us a name, or Mr. Porter can talk to them or something.

The President. I think this is good. That's wonderful.

Okay.

[A peer mediator said that students in mediation felt more confident and comfortable because they did not have to worry about punishment, and that the peer mediators gained a broader per-

spective on problems. Another student noted that T.C. Williams was a very diverse school, and perhaps part of the problem in Littleton was that school's lack of diversity. A student then said that probably Littleton students had felt their school was safe and its administration had been no less keen and connected than that at T.C. Williams.]

The President. First of all, I think that's a very brave thing for you to say. But there's no doubt that those people are very good people, that they have a good school, that they thought things were rocking along—which is why—that's why what you said, I think, is very important, that there needs to be some organized outlet that people can access privately. Because nearly everybody in America believes this couldn't happen in their school. So I think having this way to call and say, "This is going on"—we all need warning systems.

Go ahead.

Student. But, see, the problem is—what I feel is, I feel the administrators knew about this because a lot of people say, like, on the news and stuff, the students seemed to know about this crew already and seemed to not have done nothing about it. They didn't bother to prevent it, because they had a page in the yearbook for this crew and everything already.

The President. Yes, but the point I'm trying to make is that—a lot of people seemed to have known in general, but most people didn't—a lot of the people who knew, I think, didn't know that they might do what they did. And that's why it's important to feed all this stuff in someplace, because there are people who do know that—let me come back to the beginning here. I'd like for you all to talk about this.

Let me just say what I was going to say. One of the things that all kids are taught by their parents, you know, is this old "sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me." That ain't true—if you'll let me use bad grammar. [Laughter] That's not true, because a lot of this stuff starts with words, you know?

And even in what I do and the people I deal with, it's amazing how much energy is lost and how many things are not done for America because people in Washington, DC, at the highest levels of power and influence, get hurt by what other people say about them—mean, bad things other people say about them. And then

they get in the position where they try to bait each other to say mean, bad things, you know.

And I think that somehow maybe we all, particularly in a culture that desensitizes people to violence, if they're profoundly alienated—and I still think that's a big part of this—all of us have to do a better job of teaching young people not to let themselves be defined by the words other people use against them.

That's something that really struck me when I read these accounts, is how alienated these young people were because these athletes were saying bad things about them or who else was saying bad things about them. They were different, so then they had to look for somebody to feel bad about.

And that's why I like this peer mediation thing, because it tends to take the sting out of words at the earliest possible time. But people really still get hurt so badly by what is said about them. And somehow, we've got to make people more immune to that.

Go ahead.

[A student expressed concern that the Littleton attackers may have learned to make bombs with information from the Internet, and asked what the Government was doing to prevent the dissemination of such information.]

The President. You know, when the bomb blew up in Oklahoma City and the Federal building was destroyed and all those people were killed, we pointed out that the way the Internet is going with these webpages, people can learn how to build bombs like that on the Internet. And there is a limit to how much we can control it. And we're looking for ways to try to at least help parents deal with what their children can get off the Internet, and a way to use ordinary law enforcement tactics effectively against people who are trying to do illegal things over the Internet. But it's very difficult.

I mean, one of the things that's wonderful about the Internet is kind of its capacity for infinite expansion. And that's one of the great things about it. I don't know how many teachers here now get research papers where all the sources are off the Internet. But it's great. That's the good news. The bad news is, it's almost impossible to find this stuff, sort it out, and figure out whether it's illegal or not, and do something about it.

But I agree with you; it's going to be one of the big challenges we face, because there's been a lot of talk about—if you've seen in the last 3 or 4 days—about whether the Internet plus having very young people play very violent video games and where they learn to shoot people and stuff, that those two things have added an extra element to an otherwise already pretty violent culture. And I think we're going to have to take another look at it.

It's not easy. I don't want to pretend that it's easy. If you look at how many thousands and thousands of pages, webpages, are being added to the Internet every day, it's the fastest growing organism in human history for communications. And it presents us a great challenge.

[A student stated that it would be very hard for the Government to control information on the Internet in a society with a free press and free speech. He said that the responsibility rested with parents to monitor what their children could access on the Internet.]

The President. Well, I do think it's important that in all these discussions, we not take the focus away from the home. I agree with that. If you look at all the facts that we know from the incidents that happened last year, all the school violence incidents, it appears that there were some cases in which the parents were—to go back to what you said about how other kids knew and they didn't call in—there appears that there were some cases in which the parents knew that the kid had a problem, including an obsession with guns and bombs, and there were other cases where they didn't know and might not have been able to know. But I do think that we shouldn't minimize that.

The only thing I want to—to go back to what you said about the Internet—I agree with that. You don't want me to choke off the Internet. It's one of the greatest things that ever happened. But we've got to figure out a way to apply the ordinary restrictions of the criminal law in that context, just like you would any other. I think that's all you're saying, is we need to—if somebody's doing something illegal there, we should. But the problem is, how do you—how do parents limit their children's access to something they shouldn't be able to see? And I do think that the role of the Internet, and the way it's bringing everything into the home, has made a parent's job much more difficult. And it's harder to know what to do and how

to do it. It's much, much harder. And I think we ought to just fess up to that.

But I'm sympathetic with you. We don't want to destroy what's great about the Internet. It's revolutionizing the American economy. It's opening up opportunities for people, opening up educational opportunities, bringing whole libraries to homes of people who could never afford them. I mean, it's doing a lot of good. But we've got to figure out a way to deal with these downside risks.

[A student stated that it appeared administrators and students in Littleton knew there was a problem and that administrators should have contacted the parents. Ms. Finney commented that a Littleton student had said he heard the suspects planning the attack last year, and she believed he should have taken the initiative to tell someone.]

The President. I want to hear from the students, but that goes back to what you said. What I would like to—the message to go out across all the millions of students like you that are listening, and all of the schools, is that no matter how good your school is and no matter how good your programs are, we need a little humility here. And you're not doing something bad if you hear people talking about doing something or you see them becoming profoundly alienated in ways that could be destructive, if you tell someone who's in a position of responsibility to do something about it. They're not going to be punished if they hadn't done anything wrong, but we might be able to prevent more of these things.

I do think that one of the lessons that will come out of this incident, no matter what the facts turn out to be, is that there has to be a hotline, there has to be some sort of early warning system; there has to be a climate in which children feel, young people feel that they can ring the alarm bell when they see something like this.

[Another student introduced herself.]

The President. Oh, yes, you've been waiting a long time—she's been waiting longer than anybody else. *[Laughter]*

[The student cited a lack of morality and urged more disciplinary action from school administrators.]

The President. I agree with that. But what happens if all of that still doesn't work because young people at some point develop a whole other life? I mean, when you look at what is apparently the fact here, these—they created a whole new culture for themselves, a whole other life, which—we don't know the facts yet about what their parents did or didn't know, about what the schools did or didn't know. I think it's important for us not to make hasty judgments about Littleton.

I agree with what you say. But I also think in addition to what you say, we've got to have some warning system to protect everybody else.

Go ahead.

[A student said that people should stop placing blame on movies and video games and spend more time with their children. Another participant said discipline should start at an early age, not in the teen years. A student then asked if the fact that Littleton was a white suburban area would take the focus off of racial groups as the cause of problems.]

The President. Well, I hope so. You know, it's interesting; all of these instances of school violence, even though they occurred in schools which some had a lot of racial diversity, some had not much racial diversity, but they all occurred away from inner-city areas with very high unemployment and high general crime rates. They tended to occur more in small towns and rural areas or suburbs, where you normally would not think that society itself falling apart around you would happen.

Now, part of that could be the absence of the kind of warning and alert systems that you often have in the big city schools. I mean, a lot of big city schools, for example, all routinely have metal detectors and things like that because they know they've got to protect their kids. But I think what it means is that whatever is out there in our culture, whether it is the failure of parents to teach their kids, whether it is that plus then the extra exposure to violent experiences when you're young, kind of one step removed through media or video games or whatever—whatever it is—what it shows is that the people in rural America and in suburban America, in low-crime America and upper income America are just as vulnerable to having alienated young people in gangs or in isolation take violent action. I think that's what it shows. And it should destroy any of our racial or economic

stereotypes about this. This is something that can happen anywhere. That's the point you made, and I think that's right.

[A student noted that T.C. Williams also had social workers and psychologists in addition to the hotline and peer mediators, and asked how many other schools in the country had these alternatives.]

The President. Well, the truth is that some do, and some don't. More and more, I think, schools are doing that. Some have economic constraints. Some may not think they need them. But I believe that—I can tell you this. One of the things I have tried to do is to make it possible for schools to have more trained personnel and more options to serve children that have a whole variety of different needs.

And I suspect that one positive thing that will come out of this awful incident is that schools all over America today will be doing an inventory of what kinds of supports they have for their children. And they will—I expect, just because we're doing this, your principal and your teachers will be flooded with inquiries over the next 2 weeks about what you have done here, about the peer mediation thing, about what kind of social workers you have, what kind of psychologist do you have, what kind of support do you have, because I think we will see everybody taking a serious look at this.

I'm glad you made that point, though, because there are people who have genuine emotional problems that require more professional, intense, longer term help than even the peer mediators can provide. So I think that's an important point you make.

[A student stated that other schools should have the violence prevention alternatives offered at T.C. Williams and asked when the Government would take action.]

The President. Well, first of all, you should know that we have provided, already, funds—last year—for a lot of these services for schools. And the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education put out a booklet that basically cited the best practices in all the schools.

We don't—the Federal Government doesn't run this high school. You know, you have a local school board, and most of the money comes from the State. We give some money, so—but what we did, we sent out a handbook, which basically had the best practices, for early

warning signals, for preventive programs, for the kinds of things that you do here. And we've provided a lot of support to help schools to have the services they need to make them more safe.

Now, in the next few days I'm going to send another piece of legislation up to the Congress to do even more of this. But for it to work, people have to use the resources that are there and implement the systems that are there, and it has to be done in every school in the country.

Let me just say—this is kind of along the lines of your question—when I called the county commissioner in Littleton, Colorado, the woman who is in charge of the local county government there, she was very, I thought, quite brave, considering it was in the middle of this crisis. The school hadn't even been—not all the children had been taken out yet. And she said, "Well, if this can happen here, it can happen anywhere, and maybe, finally, every school in America will do what is necessary to try to prevent this."

So we have—last year we had the first White House conference in history on school safety. We have sent things to every school in America, and we have—and I said I'm going to send another bill this week, or in the next few days, to do more. But it has to—every school has to realize that if you want to be safe, you have to be prepared, just like you are here.

Yes.

[A student stated that parents, teachers, government, and students should work together to prevent school violence and provide for the common welfare of the community. Another student said that having an anonymous hotline was very important. Another commented that racism should stop. Another student stated that there were no guarantees against future violence, and high school students all over America needed to be more sensitive to others and more considerate.]

The President. I must say, these things you say to me are among the most impressive things of all, because all of us want to be part of groups, and we are part of groups whether we like it or not. We're all part of groups. You know, we just—from the families we're born in and the lives we live. And the trick is to convince people that it's good to be part of a group, a racial, an ethnic, a religious, a cultural group, to be an athlete, to be a scholar, to be into music, to be into whatever. But it's

not—it doesn't have to be negative when compared with someone else. That's the thing that breaks your heart.

And also, it's very important—another reason I like this hotline and I like what you said is that it's very hard to be 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 years old; and if you are very lonely and very alienated and you feel you don't belong with anybody or anything, and then all of a sudden, one or two other people come along, and they're just like you, and then you find something on the Internet that you can read that you can relate to, and then things begin to spin out of control. And I think what you said about reaching out to people who seem to be alone and have nobody to care about them, I think that's very, very important as well.

I think that you know it a lot better than I do. But as old as I am, I can still remember, it was—I had some pretty tough times when I was 13, 14, 15, 16 years old, and I had a very fortunate life. You realize how hard you have to work to keep from getting into patterns that will be destructive throughout life, where people feel that they only count when they're in a group, that then they're opposed to somebody else, they can look down on somebody else. It is the curse of human society throughout the world.

Go ahead. You two, and then—this young man hasn't spoken yet, but go ahead. We'll get you the mike as soon as he is finished. Who wants to go next? Go ahead.

[A student said that young people were more desensitized to the value of human life than they had been 20 years ago and therefore some violent students may not have understood the impact of what they had done.]

The President. Yes. Let me say this: I really respect all of you very much to have said that this is a matter of personal responsibility, family responsibility, and you don't want to blame the culture. I respect you for saying that—I don't want to blame the movies or blame the video games; what you've said and how you've talked with your mother and everything.

But I think you have to recognize—let me just say, for example, when I was your age, if anything, the racism was more pronounced; the social hierarchies in the schools were dramatic, between those who were in and those who were out; people fought regularly on the school grounds, and they were vicious to each

other and—but you didn't have as much gun violence.

And I think it is unquestionable that more people have more access to more weapons, and more people at an earlier age can move from profound alienation and misery into using violence against others than was the case 20 or 30 years ago, because they either have—they have more opportunities and because they've been desensitized and maybe because they don't have a chance to sit down with a mother or a father the way you do every night.

So the only thing I'm saying is, I think it's important not to oversimplify this. And I hate it when people blame someone else and don't take responsibility for what they did, but I don't think we can be blind to the fact that there are more opportunities and there is a greater openness to taking violent action on the part of alienated people today than there was 20 or 30 years ago.

And I think the experience that these children have before, maybe—maybe even when they're very young, before they form proper barriers in life about what's right, what's wrong, what can or can't be done, makes them quite vulnerable.

Go ahead. Who was next? This young man.

[A student said there might be a backlash against people who were into the Gothic culture and rock music that would be blamed for instigating the situation in Littleton. He also expressed concern that students might be suspended on the spot for angry words.]

The President. So how do you think we should deal with that?

[The student said that people should be more careful about what they say and find healthier ways to deal with anger. He said the school provided counselors and psychologists for students to talk to, but he was able to discuss his problems with his family.]

The President. Good for you. Let me say just generally, I don't think—if all of you who have participated in this conflict resolution thing, maybe you've seen enough of this in other students to know this—but I can tell you from having lived a lot more years, this is a big problem later in life, too. Sometimes it's a bigger problem for men than for women because of the cultural sort of preconceptions of our society.

If you don't learn to talk about your feelings when you're young, and you don't have a constructive outlet for it, it just gets harder and harder and harder as you get older. And we're talking today about avoiding terrible tragedy. But we ought to talk just a minute about having a good life. You know, most people won't do anything really terrible, and most people will have some sort of life, but if you want to have a good life, you have to have some constructive outlet for your feelings.

And that's one thing that I really like about this whole way we're talking today. And I hope that it's something that will go out across the country and will change the way young people just live their lives. And I hope it's something you can take out of high school, because you'd be amazed how many people my age, in very responsible positions, still can't manage their anger because they never learned to have a constructive way to talk about it.

So this is not just—I mean, I know we're here to talk about this school violence, and I don't want to get off the subject, but I think that this is a general problem of life. And you have said a very important thing. And I hope that all of you will remember this, that it's not just something for high school. And to avoid having bad things happen, learning to manage your anger and to actually share how you really feel about something and get it behind you is one of the most important aspects of growing up. And you would be amazed how few people can really do it right.

[A student noted how easy it was for the Littleton attackers to get guns and stressed the need for regulation of weapons.]

The President. There is no other country in the world where it is so easy for people to get and misuse weapons. And we have a culture of having a right to own weapons and a right to use them and a big hunting culture, and I grew up in it, participated in it, and enjoyed it very much.

But I have—every little thing I've tried to do, from the passing of the Brady bill to the passing of the assault weapons ban, all these things have met with violent opposition, as if I were trying to destroy the American way of life. And all I'm trying to do is keep more people alive.

And so I think that we need—we don't have, really, time to talk about this, because I want

all of you to talk, but this will be a part of what we are trying to do, to strike a better, proper balance between making it harder for people who are violent to get guns and misuse them, without interfering with the constructive role that it plays in our society.

Go ahead. Oh, I'm sorry.

Ms. Harmon. I was just going to say, we're running a little short on time. Maybe we could take a few more questions. It's up to you.

The President. Yes. Go ahead.

[A student stressed that high schools must avoid easy answers that would restrict students' rights and ensure their security at the cost of their freedom.]

The President. First, I think that's a point well taken. You mentioned school uniforms. Let me tell you the position I took on that. I spent some time in Long Beach, California, which is the third biggest school district in California, which means it's huge. And it's the biggest school district that early introduced the school uniform policy, not applied to high schoolers for obvious reasons. But they did it in part because when the junior high schoolers had uniforms, which were basically just two-color outfits they wore every day, it distinguished them from the gangs, which created a safety problem. And it made all the kids safe.

But they found, interestingly enough, that kids from upper income as well as lower income families did better in those very troubling years where you're moving right into your teenage years. And it lowered dropouts; it increased attendance; it reduced discipline problems. It worked fine. What we tried to do was to say if the community decided they wanted to do it, then we would help them. And we've seen it happen a lot.

Now, my only question in this regard, in the order question you asked—and, again, I think it's very important that we not rush to judgment in Littleton. Those people are still grieving. They are still heartbroken. We do not have the facts there. It is very important that none of us make judgments about that now. But we can make judgments about how we want all schools to run.

But one of the things that struck me there was this whole black trenchcoat deal, and whether or not—if the hotline, if they'd had a hotline, and whether or not you had this kind of stuff there—whether the school administrators should

have been able to say, “We’re not going to have a school uniform policy, but we’ll have a non-provocative dress code policy.” Is that too much of an infringement on individual liberty?

We can’t answer that question. You’ve raised a good question. But let me just give you the other side of it. And you have to decide, in every case, whether it’s an infringement on liberty or it’s like going through a metal detector at an airport. I don’t know how many times—before I became President, I was just traveling around like all the rest of us—how many times I went through a metal detector at an airport, and I set it off because of my belt buckle or the money clip in my pants or whatever, so I had to turn around, take it all out, go back in, blah blah blah. Well, when all this started, people said, “Well, is this going to be an infringement on our liberty, right?” And then people saw planes hijacked and blown up, and they said, “Please infringe on my liberty a little bit”—[*laughter*]*—*so that no one felt—I say, nearly no one felt that it was an undue infringement on our liberty.

I’ll give you another, maybe what you think is a harder case, motorcycle helmet laws. You’ll say, “I ought to have a right to split my head open if I want.” But that’s not entirely true, because if I hit you and you split your head open, and you wouldn’t have if you’d had your helmet on, then I and society are supporting you, in a way.

So these questions—I am glad you made the point, but the point needs to be debated against the larger—the other large issue of individual freedom versus heading this stuff off. That’s all I’m asking. And you might keep little models in your head about the importance of free speech, see, on the one hand, and the airport metal detector on the other, and then whenever somebody comes up with a specific, argue it within that framework. A student stated that the First Lady knew what she was talking about in saying that it takes a whole village to raise children and that if everyone would just look out for everyone else’s children, good things would happen.]

The President. I agree with that. Thank you. [*Laughter*] I think that’s very important, that—one of you asked me what I was going to do. I think that the import of what everybody said, all of you said today, is that we all have responsibilities here and that all these children are our children and we all have responsibility.

Who’s next?

Ms. Harmon. I’m sorry to have to say this, but the afternoon is drawing to a close here; students do have to move on. And we’re delighted—

The President. You guys have got to get on the buses, right?

[*Ms. Harmon thanked the students and the President for participating.*]

The President. Let me just say this—I know we’ve got to sign off—first, you were terrific, and I thank you. I thank you for being honest. I thank you for being forthright. Second, in the next few days, as the agony of the grief fades in Colorado and as the facts tend to come out more, I think—I’m speaking not only to those of you who are here in this room but the millions of children all across our country who are listening and the teachers and the educators—we are going to be working hard on this. And anyone who has more ideas for us needs to feel free to send them to us at the White House and send them to the Secretary of Education.

We are working to reach out to the country. We want to do what we can to create more environments like this one and to do everything we can to minimize the chance that anything like this will happen again. And we want to, in the process, reassure the children and the parents of America that overwhelmingly our schools are good, safe places.

Thank you.

NOTE: The discussion began at 12:45 p.m. in the media center. In his remarks, the President referred to John Porter, principal, T.C. Williams High School; Herbert M. Berg, superintendent, Alexandria City schools; Mayor Kerry Donley of Alexandria; and Patricia B. Holloway, chair, Jefferson County, CO, Board of Commissioners.

Remarks Following Discussions With NATO Secretary General Javier Solana and an Exchange With Reporters *April 22, 1999*

The President. Good afternoon. Secretary General Solana and I have just had a good meeting reviewing the NATO Summit. Our alliance is strongly united today, in no small measure because of his leadership. He has made a tremendous difference as we have worked to reshape NATO to meet new challenges and as we have responded to Mr. Milosevic's repression in Kosovo.

Serb forces there have pushed nearly 1.4 million people, three-quarters of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians, from their homes. They have killed thousands, confiscated identity papers, separated parents from children, buried victims in mass graves, told Kosovars, "Take a last look around, for you will never return to Kosovo."

NATO's response has been firm and persistent. Our objective is clear: We want all the people of Kosovo restored to their homes, free of the hostile presence of Mr. Milosevic's forces; protected by an international security force; enjoying liberty and self-government. Mr. Milosevic can accept this outcome, or he can watch as NATO grinds down his war machine and the Serb people he claims to represent face mounting hardship.

Our allied forces come from many backgrounds, but they are working together, now, through some 9,000 air sorties. They have weakened Mr. Milosevic's defenses, command and control, and capacity to produce fuel and ammunition. We are attacking the infrastructure that supports the military offensive, including bridges and electrical power. Increasingly, we are striking at tanks, artillery, and aircraft, and in recent days we've begun to strike key facilities used to direct and incite the campaign of ethnic cleansing.

Meanwhile, our relief efforts are working to bring order out of chaos and hope to those in despair. I am grateful to all the Americans, and indeed, to people around the world who have provided assistance.

Now, tomorrow, the leaders of 42 nations will gather here for NATO's 50th Anniversary Summit. This summit will enable our alliance to advance our mission in Kosovo and to plan for

a better future—to build a Europe that is undivided, democratic, and at peace.

This crisis in Kosovo has underscored the importance of the efforts we have been making for 5 years now to strengthen and adapt NATO for the new century, to enhance our capacity to address regional and ethnic conflicts on NATO's doorstep, to protect our citizens against terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, to improve security cooperation with partner nations across Europe, to help aspiring members improve their candidacies so they can join NATO.

At our summit, we will advance these efforts, meet with partner nations, including Ukraine and the nations of the frontline of the Kosovo crisis. We will reaffirm our commitment to advancing our cooperation for peace and stability with Russia, for though we have differences on Kosovo, the world benefits when we work together.

And we will further our efforts for deeper democracy, tolerance, economic development, and regional integration in southeastern Europe, in the hopes that soon all the people there, including the Serbs who are now suffering from Mr. Milosevic's reckless tyranny, can have peace, prosperity, and true freedom.

Now I'd like Secretary General Solana to say a few words. Mr. Secretary General.

Secretary General Solana. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Let me start by saying that this NATO Summit here in Washington will be one of the most important meetings that the alliance has ever held. Our focus will be on the immediate, particularly in Kosovo. It is no doubt the gravest crisis that Europe and NATO have faced for many years.

And it is with respect that I would like to salute the leadership that you, Mr. President, and your country, the United States, have shown since the very beginning of this crisis. Without that leadership, without the enormous contribution that the United States is making to the Operation Allied Force, we could not succeed in our goal. And our goal is to stop the human tragedy in Kosovo. If Europe is to enjoy a stable, democratic peace, it is essential that our

values prevail in Kosovo, and not those values of Milosevic.

At our summit tomorrow, we will demonstrate our alliance unity, the alliance resolve. We will not be divided; we will not be diverted from our objective. And the objective is clear: the removal of Serb forces from Kosovo, and as the President has said, an international force that will be able to assure that the refugees, the people which are really suffering now, can go back to their country, to their homes with security. Ethnic cleansing is a crime, and we have to reverse it.

We will also signal our determination to intensify the political and military pressure on Belgrade until our goals are met. And we will state our commitment to both an immediate and a longer term effort to assist and rebuild southeastern Europe, a region which has seen too much human suffering and too much instability for far too long.

We know that our values are the right ones, but if they are to have meaning, they have to be defended. This sometimes requires patience and, in any case, requires perseverance.

We must take care not only of Milosevic's aggression but also of his victims. This is what NATO is doing with its effort to solve the refugee crisis.

Let there be no doubt: NATO will see this through to the end. We have the means, and we have the will. That will be, no doubt, the message of this Washington Summit.

But as the President has said, at the same time, in the summit we are going to look to the future. We're going to take decisions that will equip this alliance to be fully ready for all its new roles and new missions for the 21st century. We're going to build a new security order in Europe, in cooperation with our many partner countries.

As the President has said, on Sunday the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will bring, on top of the 19 countries of NATO, another 20 partners. It will take place here in Washington. It seems to me that it will be not only the largest international meeting that this Capital has ever seen but one of the most important ever to have taken place.

Let me say that it will also be another important moment in building a Europe in which the barbarities we see in Kosovo have no place and will not be tolerated.

Mr. President, it was great. Thank you very much for your leadership.

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Mr. President, are you as committed now to now using—

The President. One at a time, one at a time.

Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, I wonder if you could clarify the U.S. Government's position on Secretary General Solana's decision yesterday to authorize a reassessment of last year's plan to possibly introduce ground forces into Kosovo. Does this represent a precursor to that kind of decision?

The President. Well, the answer to your last question is, no. The answer to your first question is, I support the Secretary General's decision to update the assessment. I think it is a wise and prudent course.

Now, my position is still the same. I support the strategy we have embraced. It has the unity of the alliance, and it will be vigorously prosecuted. A vigorous prosecution of the air campaign, an intensification of economic pressures, along with our continuing diplomatic efforts, I believe is the correct strategy. And I believe it will succeed. But I support the decision he made. I think it's only prudent.

Q. Mr. President, there are reports of a new offer by Milosevic to the Russians to allow some type of security force into Kosovo. Number one, what do you know about this offer? And number two, will any security force have to have not only NATO troops but also American forces on the ground as well?

The President. Well, first of all, it's hard—I cannot comment on the offer because I literally don't know anything other than what you just said—that is, I heard about it just a few minutes before you did or after you did or at the same time, so I cannot comment on the details. If there is an offer for a genuine security force, that's the first time that Mr. Milosevic has ever done that, and that represents, I suppose, some step forward.

My interest here is in something that will work that will have the support of the parties. My belief is that the members of our alliance want us all to be able to go in there and that

the Kosovar Albanians want to feel protected and will expect us to be there.

I have always said from the very beginning that I would hope that there would be Russian troops there, Ukrainian troops there, troops from Slavic countries, from Orthodox Christian countries, because I would not entertain going into Kosovo unless our mandate was to protect all the people there, including the Serb minority.

There will be—after all the stuff the Albanians have been through and all the people who have been killed and the families that have been wrecked and the homes that have been burned and the records that have been destroyed, there will be people who will inevitably be looking for some outlet for vengeance there.

So I can't comment on this except to say if it is true, then it is at least the first acknowledgement by Mr. Milosevic that there will have to be a security force there. But for the security force to work, it will have to have the confidence of the people who live there. And it will have to operate in a way that protects all the people there, including the Serb minority.

Q. Secretary Solana and President Clinton, is NATO targeting Slobodan Milosevic directly? They destroyed one of his residences.

Secretary General Solana. The objective of this military campaign, as you know it very well, is very clear, has five points. We want to stop the killing. We want to have all the troops withdrawn from Serbia, from Kosovo. We want an international force, military force, to guarantee the security of Kosovo and to guarantee, fourth, the return of refugees. And for us, this is the most important commitment. The refugees that have been expelled brutally from that country, they have to return. And fifth, we want a political agreement in the terms that the President has mentioned.

Q. Yes, but I'm talking about the attack against one of the residences of Milosevic.

The President. The answer to your—yes, I understand your question. The answer to your question is, no, but we are targeting command and control facilities. And I think it is important.

You know, when the weather permits, we go after the tanks and we go after the soldiers. But the tanks and the soldiers are there because people who believe in ethnic cleansing ordered them to go there. And in this conflict, it would be wrong and unfair not to target the command and control operations as well. And that's why the Socialist Party headquarters in Belgrade, for example, was targeted.

Q. Mr. President, can the Kosovar refugees ever go home, with an international security force, without Mr. Milosevic giving his okay?

The President. Well, that's a hypothetical question, but, of course, there are scenarios under which that could occur.

Q. Mr. President, can you imagine an outcome in this war, sir, that would leave Milosevic in power?

The President. Well, we set forth certain conditions, and if he meets those conditions and the Serbian people are willing to continue him in power, then I could imagine such an outcome. Now, that begs the question of what the War Crimes Tribunal will do or what other action might be taken.

But we—NATO has never taken a position on that issue. Our concern has been for the Kosovar people, for the welfare of the refugees, for the integrity of their life and how they are treated.

Secretary General Solana. I would like to add to what the President has said, it would really concern us in the future of the people who have been suffering—being expelled from their houses, from their country—to see them returned. That we are going to see, and that's our main concern and the concern that we have now to continue.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Statement on Earth Day April 22, 1999

Today, the last Earth Day of the 20th century, is an opportunity to celebrate America's achievements in protecting our environment and public health and to dedicate ourselves to meeting the environmental challenges of the new century ahead.

Working together, we have made tremendous progress since the first Earth Day in cleaning our air and water, protecting our communities and children from toxic threats, and preserving our precious lands. Americans have demonstrated time and again that we can safeguard our environment even as we grow our economy. I am proud of all that Vice President Gore and I have done to advance these efforts over the past 6 years.

Today the Vice President announces a national strategy to reduce air pollution and restore pristine skies in our national parks and wilderness areas so future generations can see and enjoy them in all their natural splendor. This is but one effort to leave this a better

land for our descendants. I join the Vice President in calling on Congress to approve our lands legacy initiative, dedicating permanent funding so that years from now Americans can continue protecting and restoring the deserts, mountains, coastlands, and plains that are so much a part of our Nation's heritage.

A new century brings new environmental challenges—perhaps the greatest is global warming. There is no clearer reminder that we are, indeed, all members of one global community. Only by acting together—as a nation, and in partnership with other nations—can we avert this common threat. This is a challenge the Vice President and I are fully committed to meeting.

It is my sincere hope that when Americans gather 100 years from now to celebrate Earth Day, they will remember us as dedicated stewards of our Nation's air, water, and land, and will instill the same spirit in all those who follow.

Remarks on School Safety and an Exchange With Reporters April 23, 1999

The President. Good morning. Before I leave to go to the NATO Summit this morning, I'd like to say just a few more words about the tragedy in Littleton and the steps we're taking to make all our schools safer.

The images from Colorado have become painfully familiar, the terrified children, the racing ambulances, the grieving families. We saw them last year, in Pearl, West Paducah, Jonesboro, Springfield. We were reminded again this week that none of our communities is immune to senseless violence.

Still, it is important to remember and to remind our children that the vast majority of our schools are safe. Nearly everywhere in America a child still is safer in school than anywhere else in the community.

But this week's tragedy reminds us again that one act of violence is one too many. We must do more to keep guns out of the hands of chil-

dren, to help our young people express their anger and alienation with words, not weapons, to prevent violence from shattering the peace of our schoolyards.

I've spoken to Attorney General Reno, who was at the scene yesterday to assist law enforcement in their investigation and to offer comfort to the students and the families. I also talked with Dr. DeStefano and the school board last evening for a few minutes to share some thoughts with them and to express my appreciation to them for their efforts.

The Justice Department today will make \$1½ million from our crime victims trust fund available to help the communities assist the victims in their long journey toward recovery. And we will do more.

Last October, at our White House Conference on School Safety, I launched a new initiative to bring more of the same community policing

that is doing so much to reduce crime on our streets to our schools. Today I'm pleased to announce the first of the grants funding these community police will be awarded to 336 schools and communities to help hire more than 600 police officers. Like their counterparts on the streets, these school officers will work closely with the citizens they serve, with students, teachers, and parents, to improve campus security, to counsel troubled youth, to mediate conflicts before they escalate into violence.

I want to thank Senator Chuck Robb for his strong leadership on this issue. By the end of the year we hope to have 2,000 new officers in our schools, and I encourage all communities to apply for these grants.

I also want to take this opportunity to remind communities that they have until June 1st to apply for the Federal Safe Schools-Healthy Students funds, to help them put in place comprehensive violence prevention programs. Those of you who were with me yesterday in Alexandria at T.C. Williams High School know how important the students there believe such a program is. These funds can be used for everything from establishing conflict resolution groups to hiring more mental health counselors, to establishing new mentoring programs, to installing metal detectors and other security equipment.

By taking actions to prevent future acts of violence in our schools, we can best honor the memories of those who lost their lives.

Thank you very much.

Legislative Initiatives/Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, you didn't mention gun control. Are you going to do more on gun control?

Q. To be clear, sir, do all hostilities in Kosovo have to end before there can be consideration of ground troops, sir?

The President. First of all, I know you understand I've got to run over there and meet all the people who are coming. We will have more legislative initiatives to announce in the days ahead. As I said a couple of days ago, we will have some legislative responses and efforts we have been working on for some time, actually.

On the other, I think our conditions are clear. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:18 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Jon DeStefano, president, board of education, Jefferson County, CO.

Remarks at the Opening of the North Atlantic Council Meeting on Kosovo *April 23, 1999*

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary General. Mr. Secretary General, fellow leaders, let me begin by welcoming you warmly to the United States. We are honored to host this 50th Anniversary Summit of NATO. We meet to honor NATO's past, to chart its future, to reaffirm our mission in Kosovo, where NATO is defending our values and our vision of a Europe free, undivided, and at peace.

Today we send a clear message of unity and determination: to sustain our air campaign for as long as it takes; to stand firm in our conditions for ending it; to pursue diplomatic initiatives to meet those conditions; to increase political and economic pressure against the regime in Belgrade; to stand by the frontline nations threatened by Belgrade's actions; and to work

with them for stability, democracy, and prosperity in southeastern Europe, so that when Mr. Milosevic's vision for the future is defeated, a better one can rise in its place.

We will seek to do this together with our European partners, and with Ukraine and with Russia. We will make clear what is at stake. Mr. Milosevic's forces burn and loot homes and murder innocent people; our forces deliver food and shelter and hope to the displaced. Mr. Milosevic fans the flames of anger between nations and peoples; we are an Alliance of 19 nations, uniting 780 million people of many faiths and ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. Mr. Milosevic knows only one way to achieve his aims, through force; we have done

everything we could to resolve this matter peacefully.

But when we fight, we fight to prevail—to prevail in this conflict and to build the undivided, democratic Europe that the founders of NATO envisioned 50 years ago.

Thank you, and welcome again.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:25 a.m. in the pavilion at the Ronald Reagan Inter-

national Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana.

Remarks at a North Atlantic Treaty Organization Commemorative Ceremony

April 23, 1999

Mr. Secretary General, leaders of NATO, other distinguished foreign guests, my fellow Americans. It is a profound honor for the United States to welcome NATO back to Washington for its 50th anniversary, an occasion to honor NATO's past, to reaffirm its present mission in Kosovo, to envision its future.

In 1949, in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize, the American novelist William Faulkner acknowledged the fear of nuclear holocaust that then gripped the world. But he declared firmly that humanity will not merely endure, it will prevail. In that same year, 12 nations came here to pledge to vindicate that faith. They were North Americans and Europeans determined to build a new Europe on the ruins of the old through a mutual commitment to each other's security and freedom.

In this auditorium, the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, said that NATO's fundamental aim was not to win a war that would, after all, leave Europe ravaged but to avoid such a war, and I quote, "by becoming, together, strong enough to safeguard the peace." He was right. No member of NATO has ever been called upon to fire a shot in anger to defend an ally from attack.

The American Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, said that NATO would "free the minds of men in many nations from a haunting sense of insecurity and enable them to work and plan with confidence in the future." And he was right. NATO bought time for the Marshall plan. It encouraged allies to pool their military and

economic strength, instead of pitting it against their neighbors.

The Prime Minister of Canada, Lester Pearson, predicted that the NATO Pact's achievement would "extend beyond the time of emergency which gave it birth, or the geographical area which it now includes." And he, too, was right. NATO gave hope to West Germany and confidence to Greece and Turkey. Ultimately, NATO helped break the grip of the cold war. Yesterday, Europe divided by an arbitrary line: on one side, free people living in fear of aggression; on the other, people living in tyranny who wanted to be free. Today, thanks in no small measure to NATO, most of Europe is free and at peace.

Today we are joined by the leaders of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, whose descent into darkness helped to spark NATO's creation. Today they are a part of NATO, pledged to defend what was too long denied to them. So we say to Prime Minister Orban, President Havel, President Kwasniewski: Welcome to NATO, welcome home to the community of freedom.

As we look to the future, we know that for the first time in history we have a chance to build a Europe truly undivided, peaceful, and free. But we know there are challenges to that vision: in the fragility of new democracies; in the proliferation of deadly weapons and terrorism; and surely, in the awful specter of ethnic cleansing in southeast Europe, where Mr. Milosevic—first in Croatia and Slovenia, then in Bosnia, now in Kosovo—has inflamed ancient

hatreds to gain and maintain his power. He is bent on dehumanizing, indeed, destroying a whole people and their culture and, in the process, driving his own people to deep levels of distress.

We're in Kosovo because we want to replace ethnic cleansing with tolerance and decency, violence with security, disintegration with restoration, isolation with integration into the rest of the region and the continent. We want southeastern Europe to travel the same road as Western Europe half a century ago and Central Europe a decade ago.

But we are fundamentally there because the Alliance will not have meaning in the 21st century if it permits the slaughter of innocents on its doorstep. This is not a question of territorial conquest or political domination but standing for the values that made NATO possible in the first place.

This is the mission of NATO at the age of 50 on the edge of a new century, determined to reach forward into the future with a united continent, with a collective defense, remaining open to new members from the Baltics to the Black Sea, remaining committed to work with partners for peace and progress, including Russia and Ukraine, and others who are willing to work for the values and the future we dream of. This is the kind of alliance we come to this summit to reaffirm and to build for the future.

Almost 100 years ago, President Theodore Roosevelt said something that could well be applied to a united Europe and to our united transatlantic Alliance today. Of America's coming of age in the world, he said, "We have no choice as to whether we will play a great

part in the world. That has been determined for us by fate, by the march of events. The only question is whether we will play it well or ill."

Our nations played our part well after World War II, from the Berlin airlift to the founding of NATO, to the restoration of hope and confidence in Western Europe. We played it well after the cold war, from the reunification of Germany to the enlargement of NATO, to the support we have offered democratic open government in Russia and Ukraine, and the reach out we have done to other partners for peace. We played it well when we joined together to end the slaughter in Bosnia.

Now we rise, as we must, to this new and fundamental challenge to the peace and humanity of Europe. Our message is clear: Peace and humanity will prevail in Kosovo. The refugees will go home; they will have security; they will have their self-government. The last European dictatorship of the 20th century will not destroy Europe's long-awaited chance to live, at last, together in peace and freedom.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:15 p.m. in the Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary; President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic; President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana.

Joint Statement on Kosovo *April 23, 1999*

1. The crisis in Kosovo represents a fundamental challenge to the values for which NATO has stood since its foundation: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is the culmination of a deliberate policy of oppression, ethnic cleansing and violence pursued by the Belgrade regime under the direction of President Milosevic. We will not allow this campaign

of terror to succeed. NATO is determined to prevail.

2. NATO's military action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) supports the political aims of the international community, which were reaffirmed in recent statements by the UN Secretary-General and the European Union: a peaceful, multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo

where all its people can live in security and enjoy universal human rights and freedoms on an equal basis.

3. Our military actions are directed not at the Serb people but at the policies of the regime in Belgrade, which has repeatedly rejected all efforts to solve the crisis peacefully. President Milosevic must:

- Ensure a verifiable stop to all military action and the immediate ending of violence and repression in Kosovo;
- Withdraw from Kosovo his military, police and para-military forces;
- Agree to the stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence;
- Agree to the unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons, and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organisations; and
- Provide credible assurance of his willingness to work for the establishment of a political framework agreement based on the Rambouillet accords.

4. There can be no compromise on these conditions. As long as Belgrade fails to meet the legitimate demands of the international community and continues to inflict immense human suffering, Alliance air operations against the Yugoslav war machine will continue. We hold President Milosevic and the Belgrade leadership responsible for the safety of all Kosovar citizens. We will fulfill our promise to the Kosovar people that they can return to their homes and live in peace and security.

5. We are intensifying NATO's military actions to increase the pressure on Belgrade. Allied governments are putting in place additional measures to tighten the constraints on the Belgrade regime. These include intensified implementation of economic sanctions, and an embargo on petroleum products on which we welcome the EU lead. We have directed our Defence Ministers to determine ways that NATO can contribute to halting the delivery of war material including by launching maritime operations, taking into account the possible consequences on Montenegro.

6. NATO is prepared to suspend its air strikes once Belgrade has unequivocally accepted the above mentioned conditions and demonstrably begun to withdraw its forces from Kosovo according to a precise and rapid timetable. This could follow the passage of a United Nations Security Council resolution, which we will seek,

requiring the withdrawal of Serb forces and the demilitarisation of Kosovo and encompassing the deployment of an international military force to safeguard the swift return of all refugees and displaced persons as well as the establishment of an international provisional administration of Kosovo under which its people can enjoy substantial autonomy within the FRY. NATO remains ready to form the core of such an international military force. It would be multinational in character with contributions from non-NATO countries.

7. Russia has a particular responsibility in the United Nations and an important role to play in the search for a solution to the conflict in Kosovo. Such a solution must be based on the conditions of the international community as laid out above. President Milosevic's offers to date do not meet this test. We want to work constructively with Russia, in the spirit of the Founding Act.

8. The long-planned, unrestrained and continuing assault by Yugoslav military, police and paramilitary forces on Kosovars and the repression directed against other minorities of the FRY are aggravating the already massive humanitarian catastrophe. This threatens to destabilise the surrounding region.

9. NATO, its members and its Partners have responded to the humanitarian emergency and are intensifying their refugee and humanitarian relief operations in close cooperation with the UNHCR, the lead agency in this field, and with other relevant organisations. We will continue our assistance as long as necessary. NATO forces are making a major contribution to this task.

10. We pay tribute to the servicemen and women of NATO whose courage and dedication are ensuring the success of our military and humanitarian operations.

11. Atrocities against the people of Kosovo by FRY military, police and paramilitary forces represent a flagrant violation of international law. Our governments will co-operate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to support investigation of all those, including at the highest levels, responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. NATO will support the ICTY in its efforts to secure relevant information. There can be no lasting peace without justice.

12. We acknowledge and welcome the courageous support that states in the region are providing to our efforts in Kosovo. The former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania have played a particularly important role, not least in accepting hundreds of thousands of refugees from Kosovo. The states in the region are bearing substantial economic and social burdens stemming from the current conflict.

13. We will not tolerate threats by the Belgrade regime to the security of its neighbours. We will respond to such challenges by Belgrade to its neighbours resulting from the presence of NATO forces or their activities on their territory during this crisis.

14. We reaffirm our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries in the region.

15. We reaffirm our strong support for the democratically elected government of Montenegro. Any move by Belgrade to undermine the government of President Djukanovic will have grave consequences. FRY forces should leave the demilitarised zone of Prevlaka immediately.

16. The objective of a free, prosperous, open and economically integrated Southeast Europe cannot be fully assured until the FRY embarks upon the transition to democracy. Accordingly,

we express our support for the objective of a democratic FRY which protects the rights of all minorities, including those in Vojvodina and Sandjak, and promise to work for such change through and beyond the current conflict.

17. It is our aim to make stability in Southeast Europe a priority of our transatlantic agenda. Our governments will co-operate urgently through NATO as well as through the OSCE, and for those of us which are members, the European Union, to support the nations of Southeast Europe in forging a better future for their region—one based upon democracy, justice, economic integration, and security co-operation.

NOTE: The joint statement was issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, DC, on April 23 and 24. It was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

The Washington Declaration

April 23, 1999

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, declare for a new century our mutual commitment to defend our people, our territory and our liberty, founded on democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The world has changed dramatically over the last half century, but our common values and security interests remain the same.

2. At this anniversary summit, we affirm our determination to continue advancing these goals, building on the habits of trust and co-operation we have developed over fifty years. Collective defence remains the core purpose of NATO. We affirm our commitment to promote peace, stability and freedom.

3. We pay tribute to the men and women who have served our Alliance and who have advanced the cause of freedom. To honour them and to build a better future, we will contribute to building a stronger and broader Euro-Atlantic

community of democracies—a community where human rights and fundamental freedoms are upheld; where borders are increasingly open to people, ideas and commerce; where war becomes unthinkable.

4. We reaffirm our faith, as stated in the North Atlantic Treaty, in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reiterate our desire to live in peace with all nations, and to settle any international dispute by peaceful means.

5. We must be as effective in the future in dealing with new challenges as we were in the past. We are charting NATO's course as we enter the 21st century: an Alliance committed to collective defence, capable of addressing current and future risks to our security, strengthened by and open to new members, and working together with other institutions, Partners and Mediterranean Dialogue countries in a mutually

reinforcing way to enhance Euro-Atlantic security and stability.

6. NATO embodies the vital partnership between Europe and North America. We welcome the further impetus that has been given to the strengthening of European defence capabilities to enable the European Allies to act more effectively together, thus reinforcing the transatlantic partnership.

7. We remain determined to stand firm against those who violate human rights, wage war and conquer territory. We will maintain both the political solidarity and the military forces necessary to protect our nations and to meet the security challenges of the next century. We pledge to improve our defence capabilities to fulfill the full range of the Alliance's 21st century missions. We will continue to build confidence and security through arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation measures. We reiterate our condemnation of terrorism and our determination to protect ourselves against this scourge.

8. Our Alliance remains open to all European democracies, regardless of geography, willing and able to meet the responsibilities of membership, and whose inclusion would enhance overall

security and stability in Europe. NATO is an essential pillar of a wider community of shared values and shared responsibility. Working together, Allies and Partners, including Russia and Ukraine, are developing their cooperation and erasing the divisions imposed by the Cold War to help to build a Europe whole and free, where security and prosperity are shared and indivisible.

9. Fifty years after NATO's creation, the destinies of North America and Europe remain inseparable. When we act together, we safeguard our freedom and security and enhance stability more effectively than any of us could alone. Now, and for the century about to begin, we declare as the fundamental objectives of this Alliance enduring peace, security and liberty for all people of Europe and North America.

NOTE: The joint statement was signed and issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, DC, on April 23 and 24. It was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on Congressional Inaction on Legislation To Strengthen Social Security *April 23, 1999*

I am deeply disappointed by reports that the congressional Republican leadership has abandoned the effort to enact legislation this year to strengthen Social Security for the 21st century. We have an obligation to ensure that Social Security is safe and strong not only for today's seniors but for our children and future generations as well. The American people expect us to meet this fundamental challenge. Instead, just one week after passing a budget that promises a massive \$800 billion tax cut, the Republican leadership is sending a message that Congress is either unable or unwilling to face up to the challenge of strengthening Social Security.

That is not acceptable, and I urge the Republican leadership to reconsider its opposition to acting on Social Security this year. I have proposed concrete steps to bolster Social Security

and offered time and again to work with the Congress in a bipartisan way to make the tough choices needed to secure the Trust Fund over the long term. Republican leaders have yet to consider my proposals or advance any of their own.

Our economy is the strongest it has been in a generation. Now is the time to strengthen Social Security for the future. I remain committed to working with Members of Congress of both parties who are committed to enacting comprehensive Social Security legislation this year. We can and must accomplish this critical goal for the American people.

Remarks at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization 50th Anniversary
Summit Dinner
April 23, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the White House and, again let me say, welcome to Washington and to the NATO Summit.

Some of you know that I am quite a fan of music. And I found a little-known bit of history related to the founding of NATO 50 years ago. When the original North Atlantic Treaty was signed, the United States Marine Band, which was in the auditorium playing for us today, was in the auditorium then, playing a group of songs from George Gershwin's famous opera, "Porgy and Bess." The two songs they played were "I Got Plenty of Nothing" and "It Ain't Necessarily So." Well, I think after 50 years we can still appreciate Gershwin, but the songs were poorly timed, because NATO has had plenty of substance, and its word has been necessarily so.

In 1949 when we entered NATO, it signaled a radical departure in America's history because we had been warned from the time of our first President, George Washington, against entangling alliances with other nations. But we learned the hard way after World War I that the warning was no longer valid in the 20th century.

In the last 50 years, all of us have become more and more involved with events beyond our borders because we have seen increasingly how they affect the lives of people within our borders and how the values we espouse at home must be defended abroad. That is in large measure what we are trying to do in Kosovo, to protect the innocent families, the children, and to stand for the values that we have stood for as an organization for 50 years now.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to our founders, to the generation of people after the

Second World War who constructed a world of freedom that stood against tyranny and eventually helped to end the cold war. We can best pay that debt by standing up for those values today, including meeting our responsibilities to the children and the future of southeastern Europe in the terrible suffering of Kosovo.

Mr. Secretary General, I want to say a special word of thanks to you for your steadfast leadership, for your continuing reminder to all of us that we must both do our duty and stay together as we do it. Tomorrow we will focus on Kosovo again, but we will also look to the larger issues of the 21st century. Again, I compliment you on your leadership, and I thank all of our colleagues for their input.

We will look back on this summit, I think, and say, "Well, it wasn't one of those traditional meetings, where we got to have a lot of fun and a lot of laughs, because we were so gravely concerned with the suffering of the people in the Balkans. But it was a profoundly important one because it reminded us of why we got started, what we have to do tomorrow, and what it is that gives our Alliance meaning in this present day."

I'd like to ask all of you to join me in a toast to Secretary General and Mrs. Solana, and to NATO and its future. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and his wife, Concepcion. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana.

Remarks at the Opening Session of the North Atlantic Council Summit
April 24, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary General.

Yesterday we recalled NATO's history, embraced our new members, deepened our unity

and our determination to stand against ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and to build a broader transatlantic community that respects human

rights of all ethnic and religious groups and offers all Europeans the chance to build better lives together.

I want to begin by thanking the Secretary General for his leadership. I thank all of you for your leadership and your unity, the foreign and defense ministers, General Naumann and General Clark, and all the people in our governments who worked so hard to support our efforts. I know I speak for all of us when I say we are very proud of our men and women in uniform in the Balkans. And we remember today, especially, the three who are being held prisoner by Mr. Milosevic and who still have not received the Red Cross visits required by the Geneva Convention, even though he is on television in the United States saying they will receive them.

The crisis in Kosovo has underscored the importance of NATO and the imperative of modernizing our Alliance for 21st century challenges. Today we will embrace a comprehensive plan to do just that, so that NATO can advance security and freedom for another 50 years by

enhancing our capacity to address conflicts beyond our borders, by protecting our citizens from terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, by deepening our partnerships with other nations and helping new members enter through NATO's open doors. In preparing NATO for the 21st century, we will make our Alliance even stronger.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:23 a.m. in the Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Gen. Klaus Naumann, chairman, NATO Military Committee; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen in custody in Serbia. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana.

The President's Radio Address

April 24, 1999

Good morning. Tomorrow in church services all across America, we'll be thinking of those who lost their lives in Littleton, Colorado. This is a time for all Americans to pray for their families as well as those who were injured and their loved ones and all the people of the schools and the community.

It's also a time for all Americans to ask what we can do, as individuals and as a nation, to turn more young people from the path of violence; how we can take responsibility, each and every one of us, for the future of our children. We've seen far too many tragedies like the one at Columbine High School.

It's striking that these violent assaults on human life often illuminate the best of the human spirit. We marvel at the bravery of the fatally wounded teacher who led 40 students to safety. We look with admiration at the medics and the police officers who rushed to the scene to save lives; the clergy, the counselors, the local leaders who immediately began the painful proc-

ess of helping people to heal; and the parents and students who, in the face of hatred, refuse to return it.

At a moment of such terrible, terrible violence, these people didn't turn away, and we can't either. Instead, every one of us must take responsibility to counter the culture of violence.

Government must take responsibility. Next week I'll send to Congress two new bills to keep our children safe. First, we must do more to keep guns out of the hands of violent juveniles. My bill will crack down on gun shows and illegal gun trafficking, ban violent juveniles from ever being able to buy a gun, and close the loophole that lets juveniles own assault rifles.

Second, we must do more to prevent violence in our schools. My safe schools bill will help schools pay for more counselors and conflict resolution programs, more mentors, and more metal detectors. It also includes \$12 million for emergency teams, to help communities respond when tragedy strikes.

And Government can help parents take responsibility. It's harder than ever for parents to pass on their values in the face of a media culture that so glorifies violence.

As Hillary pointed out in her book, the more children see of violence, the more numb they are to the deadly consequences of violence. Now, video games like "Mortal Kombat," "Killer Instinct," and "Doom," the very game played obsessively by the two young men who ended so many lives in Littleton, make our children more active participants in simulated violence.

A former lieutenant colonel and psychologist, Professor David Grossman, has said that these games teach young people to kill with all the precision of a military training program but none of the character training that goes along with it. For children who get the right training at home and who have the ability to distinguish between real and unreal consequences, they're still games. But for children who are especially vulnerable to the lure of violence, they can be far more.

Vice President Gore has led the fight to give parents the tools to limit the exposure of their children to excessive violence, from a television rating system to new ways of blocking inappropriate material on the Internet to the V-chip. By this July, fully half of all new televisions will have the V-chip; so will every new television in America by the year 2000.

Years ago, Tipper Gore sounded the first alarm about the damaging effects on our children of excessive violence in movies, music, and video games. Today, she is still drawing attention to mental illness. This June, she will host the

first-ever White House Conference on Mental Health, where we'll talk about how to recognize mental illness in young people before it's too late.

These are steps the National Government is taking to protect our children. But it is not a job Government can or should do alone. Parents come first. They should turn off the television, pay attention to what's on the computer screen, refuse to buy products that glorify violence. Make sure your children know you care about what they're doing.

And to the media and entertainment industries, I say just this: You know you have enormous power to educate and entertain our children. Yes, there should be a label on the outside of every video, but what counts is what's on the inside and what it will do to the insides of our young people. I ask you to make every video game and movie as if your own children were watching it.

In the days ahead, as we continue the process of healing, we must pledge ourselves to the task of putting an end to the culture of violence and building in its place a culture of values we can be proud to pass on to all our children.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:30 a.m. on April 24 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m., and the transcript was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Columbine High School teacher David Sanders and gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.

Washington Summit Communiqué *April 24, 1999*

An Alliance for the 21st Century

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, have gathered in Washington to celebrate the 50th anniversary of NATO and to set forth our vision of the Alliance of the 21st century. The North Atlantic Alliance, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, remains the basis of our collective defence; it embodies the transatlantic

link that binds North America and Europe in a unique defence and security partnership.

2. Fifty years ago, the North Atlantic Alliance was founded in troubled and uncertain times. It has withstood the test of five decades and allowed the citizens of Allied countries to enjoy an unprecedented period of peace, freedom and prosperity. Here in Washington, we have paid tribute to the achievements of the past and we

have shaped a new Alliance to meet the challenges of the future. This new Alliance will be larger, more capable and more flexible, committed to collective defence and able to undertake new missions including contributing to effective conflict prevention and engaging actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations. The Alliance will work with other nations and organizations to advance security, prosperity and democracy throughout the Euro-Atlantic region. The presence today of three new Allies—the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland—demonstrates that we have overcome the division of Europe.

3. The Alliance takes the opportunity of this 50th anniversary to recognise and express its heartfelt appreciation for the commitment, sacrifice, resolve and loyalty of the servicemen and women of all Allies to the cause of freedom. The Alliance salutes these active and reserve forces' essential contributions, which for 50 years have guaranteed freedom and safeguarded trans-Atlantic security. Our nations and our Alliance are in their debt and offer them profound thanks.

4. The NATO of the 21st century starts today—a NATO which retains the strengths of the past and has new missions, new members and new partnerships. To this end, we have:

- approved an updated Strategic Concept;
- reaffirmed our commitment to the enlargement process of the Alliance and approved a Membership Action Plan for countries wishing to join;
- completed the work on key elements of the Berlin Decisions on building the European Security and Defence Identity within the Alliance and decided to further enhance its effectiveness;
- launched the Defence Capabilities Initiative;
- intensified our relations with Partners through an enhanced and more operational Partnership for Peace and strengthened our consultations and co-operation within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council;
- enhanced the Mediterranean Dialogue; and
- decided to increase Alliance efforts against weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

5. As part of the Alliance's adaptation to the new security challenges, we have updated our Strategic Concept to make it fully consistent with the Alliance's new security environment. The updated Concept reaffirms our commitment

to collective defence and the transatlantic link; takes account of the challenges the Alliance now faces; presents an Alliance ready and with a full range of capabilities to enhance the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area; reaffirms our commitment to building the ESDI within the Alliance; highlights the enhanced role of partnership and dialogue; underlines the need to develop defence capabilities to their full potential to meet the spectrum of Alliance missions, including forces which are more deployable, sustainable, survivable and able to engage effectively; and provides guidance to the NATO Military Authorities to this end.

6. To achieve its essential purpose, as an Alliance of nations committed to the Washington Treaty and the United Nations Charter, the Alliance performs the following fundamental security tasks:

Security:

To provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment, based on the growth of democratic institutions and commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any other through the threat or use of force.

Consultation:

To serve, as provided for in Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as an essential transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital interests, including possible developments posing risks for members' security, and for appropriate co-ordination of their efforts in fields of common concern.

Deterrence and Defence:

To deter and defend against any threat of aggression against any NATO member state as provided for in Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty.

And in order to enhance the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area:

Crisis Management:

To stand ready, case-by-case and by consensus, in conformity with Article 7 of the Washington Treaty, to contribute to effective conflict prevention and to engage actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations.

Partnership:

To promote wide-ranging partnership, cooperation, and dialogue with other countries in the Euro-Atlantic area, with the aim of increasing transparency, mutual confidence and the capacity for joint action with the Alliance.

7. We warmly welcome the participation of the three new Allies—the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland—in their first Alliance Summit meeting. Their accession to the North Atlantic Treaty opens a new chapter in the history of the Atlantic Alliance.

We reaffirm today our commitment to the openness of the Alliance under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty and in accordance with Paragraph 8 of the Madrid Summit Declaration. We pledge that NATO will continue to welcome new members in a position to further the principles of the Treaty and contribute to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. This is part of an evolutionary process that takes into account political and security developments in the whole of Europe. Our commitment to enlargement is part of a broader strategy of projecting stability and working together with our Partners to build a Europe whole and free. The ongoing enlargement process strengthens the Alliance and enhances the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic region. The three new members will not be the last.

At the Summit in Madrid we recognised the progress made by a number of countries aspiring to join the Alliance in meeting the responsibilities and obligations for possible membership.

Today we recognise and welcome the continuing efforts and progress in both Romania and Slovenia. We also recognise and welcome continuing efforts and progress in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Since the Madrid Summit, we note and welcome positive developments in Bulgaria. We also note and welcome recent positive developments in Slovakia. We are grateful for the co-operation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ with NATO in the present crisis and welcome its progress on reforms. We welcome Albania's co-operation with the Alliance in the present crisis and encourage its reform efforts.

We welcome the efforts and progress aspiring members have made, since we last met, to advance political, military and economic reforms.

¹Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

We appreciate the results achieved, and look forward to further progress by these countries in strengthening their democratic institutions and in restructuring their economies and militaries. We take account of the efforts of these aspiring members, together with a number of other Partner countries, to improve relations with neighbours and contribute to security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic region. We look forward to further deepening our co-operation with aspiring countries and to increasing their political and military involvement in the work of the Alliance.

The Alliance expects to extend further invitations in coming years to nations willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and as NATO determines that the inclusion of these nations would serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance and that the inclusion would enhance overall European security and stability. To give substance to this commitment, NATO will maintain an active relationship with those nations that have expressed an interest in NATO membership as well as those who may wish to seek membership in the future. Those nations that have expressed an interest in becoming NATO members will remain under active consideration for future membership. No European democratic country whose admission would fulfil the objectives of the Treaty will be excluded from consideration, regardless of its geographic location, each being considered on its own merits. All states have the inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security. Furthermore, in order to enhance overall security and stability in Europe, further steps in the ongoing enlargement process of the Alliance should balance the security concerns of all Allies.

We welcome the aspirations of the nine countries currently interested in joining the Alliance. Accordingly, we are ready to provide advice, assistance and practical support. To this end, we approve today a Membership Action Plan which includes the following elements:

- the submission by aspiring members of individual annual national programmes on their preparations for possible future membership, covering political, economic, defence, resource, security and legal aspects;

- a focused and candid feedback mechanism on aspirant countries' progress on their programmes that includes both political and

- technical advice, as well as annual 19+1 meetings at Council level to assess progress;
- a clearinghouse to help co-ordinate assistance by NATO and by member states to aspirant countries in the defence/military field;
- a defence planning approach for aspirants which includes elaboration and review of agreed planning targets.

We direct that NATO Foreign Ministers keep the enlargement process, including the implementation of the Membership Action Plan, under continual review and report to us. We will review the process at our next Summit meeting which will be held no later than 2002.

8. We reaffirm our commitment to preserve the transatlantic link, including our readiness to pursue common security objectives through the Alliance wherever possible. We are pleased with the progress achieved in implementing the Berlin decisions and reaffirm our strong commitment to pursue the process of reinforcing the European pillar of the Alliance on the basis of our Brussels Declaration of 1994 and of the principles agreed at Berlin in 1996. We note with satisfaction that the key elements of the Berlin decisions are being put in place. These include flexible options for the selection of a European NATO Commander and NATO Headquarters for WEU-led operations, as well as specific terms of reference for DSACEUR and an adapted CJTF concept. Close linkages between the two organisations have been established, including planning, exercises (in particular a joint crisis management exercise in 2000) and consultation, as well as a framework for the release and return of Alliance assets and capabilities.

9. We welcome the new impetus given to the strengthening of a common European policy in security and defence by the Amsterdam Treaty and the reflections launched since then in the WEU and—following the St. Malo Declaration—in the EU, including the Vienna European Council Conclusions. This is a process which has implications for all Allies. We confirm that a stronger European role will help contribute to the vitality of our Alliance for the 21st century, which is the foundation of the collective defence of its members. In this regard:

- a. We acknowledge the resolve of the European Union to have the capacity for autonomous action so that it can take decisions and approve military action where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged;

- b. As this process goes forward, NATO and the EU should ensure the development of effective mutual consultation, co-operation and transparency, building on the mechanisms existing between NATO and the WEU;
- c. We applaud the determination of both EU members and other European Allies to take the necessary steps to strengthen their defence capabilities, especially for new missions, avoiding unnecessary duplication;
- d. We attach the utmost importance to ensuring the fullest possible involvement of non-EU European Allies in EU-led crisis response operations, building on existing consultation arrangements within the WEU. We also note Canada's interest in participating in such operations under appropriate modalities.
- e. We are determined that the decisions taken in Berlin in 1996, including the concept of using separable but not separate NATO assets and capabilities for WEU-led operations, should be further developed.

10. On the basis of the above principles and building on the Berlin decisions, we therefore stand ready to define and adopt the necessary arrangements for ready access by the European Union to the collective assets and capabilities of the Alliance, for operations in which the Alliance as a whole is not engaged militarily as an Alliance. The Council in Permanent Session will approve these arrangements, which will respect the requirements of NATO operations and the coherence of its command structure, and should address:

- a. Assured EU access to NATO planning capabilities able to contribute to military planning for EU-led operations;
- b. The presumption of availability to the EU of pre-identified NATO capabilities and common assets for use in EU-led operations;
- c. Identification of a range of European command options for EU-led operations, further developing the role of DSACEUR in order for him to assume fully and effectively his European responsibilities;

- d. The further adaptation of NATO's defence planning system to incorporate more comprehensively the availability of forces for EU-led operations.

We task the Council in Permanent Session to address these measures on an ongoing basis, taking into account the evolution of relevant arrangements in the EU. The Council will make recommendations to the next Ministerial meeting for its consideration.

11. We have launched a Defence Capabilities Initiative to improve the defence capabilities of the Alliance to ensure the effectiveness of future multinational operations across the full spectrum of Alliance missions in the present and foreseeable security environment with a special focus on improving interoperability among Alliance forces (and where applicable also between Alliance and Partner forces). Defence capabilities will be increased through improvements in the deployability and mobility of Alliance forces, their sustainability and logistics, their survivability and effective engagement capability, and command and control and information systems. In this connection, we endorse the Council decision to begin implementing the Multinational Joint Logistics Centre concept by the end of 1999, and to develop the C3 system architecture by 2002 to form a basis for an integrated Alliance core capability allowing interoperability with national systems. We have established a temporary High-Level Steering Group to oversee the implementation of the Defence Capabilities Initiative and to meet the requirement of co-ordination and harmonisation among relevant planning disciplines, including for Allies concerned force planning, with the aim of achieving lasting effects on improvements in capabilities and interoperability. Improvements in interoperability and critical capabilities should also strengthen the European pillar in NATO.

12. We reaffirm our commitment to the 1995 Peace Agreement, negotiated in Dayton and signed in Paris, which established Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single, democratic and multi-ethnic state, and to the full implementation of the Peace Agreement. We reiterate our readiness to work constructively with all Parties that support the Peace Agreement and seek to implement it.

13. The Madrid Peace Implementation Council meeting in December 1998 confirmed that the next two years would be vital in strengthening the peace process in Bosnia and

Herzegovina and recognised that SFOR's presence remains essential, both to keep the peace and to provide the secure environment and support for civilian implementation. Return of refugees to areas in which they are a minority will remain vital for political stability and reconciliation. We will support efforts to take this process forward.

14. SFOR will continue to work closely and effectively with the High Representative, whose role we support, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the OSCE and other major international organisations, the UN International Police Task Force and other agencies implementing the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement. We commend the crucial contribution of men and women of both NATO and Partner countries serving in SFOR, who are helping to bring peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

15. SFOR's presence cannot, however, be maintained indefinitely. SFOR is being streamlined through efficiency measures. We note that the Council in Permanent Session is examining options on the future size and structure of SFOR.

16. The continuing crisis in and around Kosovo threatens to further destabilise areas beyond the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). The potential for wider instability underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to the stabilisation of the crisis region in South-Eastern Europe. We recognise and endorse the crucial importance of making South-Eastern Europe a region free from violence and instability. A new level of international engagement is thus needed to build security, prosperity and democratic civil society, leading in time to full integration into the wider European family.

17. NATO is determined to play its full part in this process by contributing to the building of a more secure and co-operative relationship with and between the countries of the region. Given the differences in economic development and the diversity and complexity of the problems of each country in the region, international efforts to develop and stabilise the region must be comprehensive, coherent and well co-ordinated. To achieve these ends, NATO, the WEU, the EU, the OSCE and the UN must work closely together. The international financial institutions also have a crucial role to play. The Alliance's efforts to enhance regional security and stability in South-Eastern Europe and to

help resolve humanitarian problems, and the efforts by other international organisations, as well as those by the countries of the region, should be mutually reinforcing.

18. We will be meeting with colleagues from the countries of South-Eastern Europe tomorrow. We intend to build on that meeting by maintaining NATO's consultations with the countries of the region. Accordingly, we will propose to them a consultative forum on security matters which brings together all NATO members and countries of the region at an appropriate level.

19. We direct the Council in Permanent Session, building on, as appropriate, the existing EAPC and PfP framework, to give substance to this proposal, inter alia, in the following areas:

- 19+1 consultations where appropriate;
- the promotion of regional co-operation in the framework of an EAPC co-operative mechanism, taking into account other regional initiatives;

- targeted NATO security co-operation programmes for the countries in the region, as appropriate;

- regionally focused PfP activities and exercises;
- better targeting and co-ordination of Allies' and Partners' bilateral assistance to the region.

20. The Alliance's efforts to enhance regional security in South-Eastern Europe complement those by other international organisations, as well as those by the countries of the region. We welcome the forthcoming European Union conference on a Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe on 27th May 1999, and the South-Eastern Europe Co-operation process, as well as other regional efforts. Coherence and co-ordination between the various initiatives will be of great importance.

21. The security of the Balkan region is essential to achieving lasting stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. Our goal is to see the integration of the countries of the region into the Euro-Atlantic community. We want all the countries and peoples of South-Eastern Europe to enjoy peace and security and establish normal relations with one another, based on respect of human rights, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.

22. We reaffirm our commitment to consultation, partnership and practical co-operation through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace. We commit our-

selves today to build an enhanced and more operational relationship with Partners for the 21st century that strengthens stability, mutual confidence, and security throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. The EAPC and the PfP have transformed political-military relations across the continent and have become the instruments of choice when the Alliance and its Partners consult and act together in the pursuit of peace and security. We look forward to consulting with our Partners at tomorrow's EAPC Summit meeting.

23. The EAPC, founded in 1997, contributes substantially to stronger political consultation and practical co-operation between the Alliance and its Partners, for solutions to security issues. We applaud this expanded dimension of political consultations, which has enhanced transparency and confidence among all EAPC members. The Alliance and its Partners have consulted regularly on regional security issues, such as on Bosnia and Herzegovina and on Kosovo. We have also developed new areas of co-operation such as peacekeeping, humanitarian de-mining, control over transfer of small arms, and the co-ordination of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

24. We welcome the successful fulfilment by the Alliance and its Partners of five years of Partnership for Peace and the full implementation of PfP enhancements launched in 1997. Enhanced PfP has ensured that NATO-Partner co-operation contributes concretely to Euro-Atlantic stability and security. The participation of 15 PfP Partners in IFOR/SFOR demonstrates the real-life benefits of PfP's focus on interoperability and provides valuable lessons for future Alliance-Partner co-operation. The presence of Partner officers in an international capacity in NATO military headquarters enables Partners to participate in planning for NATO-PfP exercises and NATO-led PfP operations. Enhanced PfP has also permitted NATO to take action to assist Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with their unique security concerns.

25. We welcome and take special note of the initiatives designed to make the Partnership more operational and ensure greater Partner involvement in appropriate decision-making and planning, as we had envisioned in our Madrid Declaration. These steps will ensure that the Partnership will be better able to address its objectives, and will provide a solid foundation for its continuing evolution as the core of a

co-operative security network between NATO and its Partners for the 21st century. To further this goal, we have today approved the following comprehensive package. We have:

- approved a Political-Military Framework for NATO-led PfP operations, which will enhance Partners' roles in political guidance and oversight, planning, and command arrangements for such operations;

- endorsed the expanded and adapted Planning and Review Process, which will further enhance interoperability of Partner forces declared available for PfP activities, and will allow for more focused and increased Partner contributions of valuable forces and capabilities for future NATO-led PfP operations;

- endorsed the outline Operational Capabilities Concept for NATO-led PfP operations, which will provide for deeper military co-operation between the Alliance and Partners with the goal of improving the ability of Partner forces and capabilities to operate with the Alliance in NATO-led PfP operations and directed the Council in Permanent Session to pursue its further development;

- endorsed the outline programme on enhancing PfP training and education to optimise and harmonise NATO and national PfP activities in order to meet the current and future demands of an enhanced and more operational PfP. The outline programme includes the role of three new PfP tools—a PfP Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes, a PfP Exercise Simulation Network and PfP Training Centres. We directed the Council in Permanent Session to develop a PfP Training and Education Enhancement Programme.

26. We remain firmly committed to our partnership with Russia under the NATO-Russia Founding Act. NATO and Russia have a common objective in strengthening security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Throughout the Kosovo crisis, NATO and Russia have shared the common goals of the international community: to halt the violence, to avert a humanitarian catastrophe, and to create the conditions for a political solution. These goals remain valid. Consultation and dialogue are even more important in times of crisis. NATO and its member countries are determined to build on the areas of common ground with Russia concerning the

international response to the crisis in Kosovo and remain ready to resume consultations and co-operation in the framework of the Founding Act.

27. Close relations between NATO and Russia are of great importance to stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. Since the conclusion of the Founding Act in May 1997, considerable and encouraging progress has been made in intensifying consultation and co-operation with Russia. The NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council has developed into an important venue to consult, to promote transparency and confidence-building, and to foster co-operation. Russia's participation in the implementation of the peace agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina was a significant step towards a new co-operative relationship. We have developed an extensive dialogue on such matters as disarmament and arms control, including the adaptation of the CFE Treaty; peacekeeping and nuclear weapons issues. Strategy, defence policy and doctrines, budgets and infrastructure development programmes, and non-proliferation, are further examples of this increasing co-operation.

28. We attach great importance to a strong, enduring and distinctive partnership between NATO and Ukraine. Ukraine has an important role to play in enhancing security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and in particular in Central and Eastern Europe. We are pleased with the progress reached since the signing of the NATO-Ukraine Charter in Madrid, and will continue to strengthen our distinctive partnership. We continue to support Ukrainian sovereignty and independence, territorial integrity, democratic development, economic prosperity and Ukraine's status as a non-nuclear weapons state as key factors of stability and security in Europe. We encourage Ukraine to carry forward its democratic and economic transformation, including its defence reform, and reaffirm NATO's support for Ukraine's efforts to this end. We applaud the progress made in the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform. We welcome the establishment of a NATO Liaison Office in Kyiv to further enhance Ukraine's role as a distinctive Partner. We also look forward to today's inaugural Summit meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission.

29. The Mediterranean Dialogue is an integral part of the Alliance's co-operative approach to security since security in the whole of Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the

Mediterranean. We are pleased with the development of our Mediterranean Dialogue. The Dialogue is progressive in nature and we welcome the progress towards developing broader and deeper co-operation and dialogue with the countries in the Mediterranean region. We endorse the enhancements to the political and practical co-operation of the Mediterranean Dialogue agreed by the Council in Permanent Session and direct it to pursue their early implementation. We encourage Allied nations and Mediterranean Dialogue countries to organise events such as the Rome Conference in 1997 and the Valencia Conference in 1999 as positive steps to strengthen mutual regional understanding. We look forward to further opportunities to strengthen co-operation in areas where NATO can add value, particularly in the military field, and where Dialogue countries have expressed interest. The Dialogue and other international efforts, including the EU Barcelona process, are complementary and mutually reinforcing and thus contribute to transparency and building confidence in the region.

30. The proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) weapons and their means of delivery can pose a direct military threat to Allies' populations, territory, and forces and therefore continues to be a matter of serious concern for the Alliance. The principal non-proliferation goal of the Alliance and its members is to prevent proliferation from occurring, or, should it occur, to reverse it through diplomatic means. We reiterate our full support for the international non-proliferation regimes and their strengthening. We recognise progress made in this regard. In order to respond to the risks to Alliance security posed by the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery means, we have launched an Initiative that builds upon work since the Brussels Summit to improve overall Alliance political and military efforts in this area.

31. The WMD Initiative will: ensure a more vigorous, structured debate at NATO leading to strengthened common understanding among Allies on WMD issues and how to respond to them; improve the quality and quantity of intelligence and information-sharing among Allies on proliferation issues; support the development of a public information strategy by Allies to increase awareness of proliferation issues and Allies' efforts to support non-proliferation efforts; enhance existing Allied programmes which in-

crease military readiness to operate in a WMD environment and to counter WMD threats; strengthen the process of information exchange about Allies' national programmes of bilateral WMD destruction and assistance; enhance the possibilities for Allies to assist one another in the protection of their civil populations against WMD risks; and create a WMD Centre within the International Staff at NATO to support these efforts. The WMD initiative will integrate political and military aspects of Alliance work in responding to proliferation.

32. Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation will continue to play a major role in the achievement of the Alliance's security objectives. NATO has a long-standing commitment in this area. Allied forces, both conventional and nuclear, have been significantly reduced since the end of the Cold War as part of the changed security environment. All Allies are States Parties to the central treaties related to disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, and are committed to the full implementation of these treaties. NATO is a defensive Alliance seeking to enhance security and stability at the minimum level of forces consistent with the requirements for the full range of Alliance missions. As part of its broad approach to security, NATO actively supports arms control and disarmament, both conventional and nuclear, and pursues its approach against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means. In the light of overall strategic developments and the reduced salience of nuclear weapons, the Alliance will consider options for confidence and security building measures, verification, non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament. The Council in Permanent Session will propose a process to Ministers in December for considering such options. The responsible NATO bodies would accomplish this. We support deepening consultations with Russia in these and other areas in the Permanent Joint Council as well as with Ukraine in the NATO-Ukraine Commission and with other Partners in the EAPC.

33. The CFE Treaty is a cornerstone of European security. We reaffirm our commitment to the successful adaptation of the Treaty reflecting the new security environment and paving the way to greater conventional security and stability

in Europe. In the course of the negotiations so far, Members of the Alliance have already declared their intention to undertake reductions in their equipment entitlements or holdings, and we strongly encourage others to follow suit with similar substantial reductions. In this context, we are pleased that agreement has been reached by CFE States Parties in Vienna in March 1999 on the key outstanding issues, permitting drafting work to proceed without delay. Allies will do their utmost to complete an adapted Treaty for signature by the time of the OSCE Istanbul Summit in November 1999. Until the adaptation process is completed, the continued full implementation of the existing Treaty and its associated documents will remain crucial.

34. We call on Russia to ratify the START II Treaty without delay. This would pave the way for considerable reductions of nuclear arsenals and would allow negotiations on a START III Treaty aiming at further far-reaching reductions. We remain committed to an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and call upon all countries to accede to and implement the Treaty in due course. We support the early commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty.

35. We are determined to achieve progress on a legally binding protocol including effective verification measures to enhance compliance and promote transparency that strengthens the implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. We re-emphasise the importance of universal adherence to, and effective implementation of, the Chemical Weapons Convention. We support de-mining efforts in Bosnia, the development of practical initiatives under the auspices of the EAPC, and—for signatories—activities to meet obligations under the Ottawa Convention.

36. We call on Belarus, Russia and Ukraine to ratify the Open Skies Treaty without delay.

37. We will seek to intensify on a mutually reinforcing basis the Alliance's contacts and co-operation with other international organisations with a role to play in consolidating democracy and preserving peace in the Euro-Atlantic Area.

38. As stated in the Washington Treaty, we recognise the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Alliance and the UN have worked together effectively in implementing the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We look forward

to developing further contact and exchanges of information with the United Nations, in the context of co-operation in conflict prevention, crisis management, crisis response operations, including peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance. In the crisis in Kosovo, the Alliance is using its civil and military capabilities to work with the UNHCR, the lead agency in the field of refugee relief, and other relevant international organisations, in providing humanitarian assistance and refugee relief. The Alliance will consider on a case-by-case basis future co-operation of this kind.

39. Co-operation and co-ordination between the Alliance and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe has expanded considerably in the light of the support we have provided to the OSCE-led Kosovo Verification Missions. We hope to make use of these important bridges between our two organisations to work together in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, in the spirit of the OSCE's Common Concept for the Development of Co-operation between Mutually Reinforcing Institutions. We continue to support the efforts of the OSCE to develop a Document-Charter on European Security, worthy of adoption at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in November 1999.

40. The Alliance and the European Union share common strategic interests. Our respective efforts in building peace in the former Yugoslavia are complementary. Both organisations make decisive contributions to peace and stability on the European continent. Co-operation between the two organisations on topics of common concern, to be decided on a case-by-case basis, could be developed when it enhances the effectiveness of action by NATO and the EU.

41. The Alliance, in order to adapt its structures to better prepare it to meet future challenges, launched a comprehensive programme including the continuing adaptation of NATO's command structure. Accordingly, Allies welcome the activation decision of the implementation phase of the Alliance's new command structure. This will ensure NATO's ability to carry out the whole range of its missions more effectively and flexibly; support an enlarged Alliance and our more operational relationship with Partners; and provide, as part of the development of the ESDI within NATO, for European command arrangements able to prepare, support, command and conduct WEU-led operations. After

successful trials, we have embarked on the full implementation of the CJTF concept, giving us an important new tool for crisis management in the next century. Allies also welcome the full integration of Spain into NATO's military structure from January this year, another significant milestone for the Alliance.

42. Terrorism constitutes a serious threat to peace, security and stability that can threaten the territorial integrity of States. We reiterate our condemnation of terrorism and reaffirm our determination to combat it in accordance with our international commitments and national legislation. The terrorist threat against deployed NATO forces and NATO installations requires the consideration and development of appropriate measures for their continued protection, taking full account of host nation responsibilities.

43. NATO Heads of State and Government believe that a key to the future success of the North Atlantic Alliance is the efficient production and availability of advanced weapons and technology in support of security for all its members. We also believe that viable defence industries on both sides of the Atlantic are critical to the efficient functioning of NATO military forces. To that end, we welcome continued transatlantic defence industrial co-operation to help ensure interoperability, economies of scale,

competition and innovation. We will seek to ensure that NATO's armament activities meet the Alliance's evolving military needs.

44. We welcome the presence in Washington of the President and other representatives of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NPA). The NPA plays a significant role in complementing NATO's efforts to project stability throughout Europe. We therefore attach great importance to enhancing our relations with the NPA in areas of common concern. We also appreciate the contribution made by the Atlantic Treaty Association in promoting better understanding of the Alliance and its objectives among our publics.

45. We express our deep appreciation for the gracious hospitality extended to us by the Government of the United States on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty.

NOTE: The joint statement was issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, DC, on April 24. It was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

The President's News Conference *April 24, 1999*

The President. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to read a brief statement, after which we will entertain questions, alternating from the American press corps and the international press corps here.

We have just about completed the first two days of our NATO meeting, welcoming new members, adopting very important changes to make NATO operations more relevant and more effective in meeting the new challenges of the 21st century.

We have also reaffirmed our determination on Kosovo to get the Serb forces out, to get the refugees back home, under the protection of an international security force, moving toward self-government.

Yesterday we sent a strong message of support to the frontline states who have risked and sacrificed so very much in this crisis. NATO will respond to any actions by Serbia against its neighbors as a result of NATO presence on their territory during this crisis or to any move to undermine the democratically elected government of Montenegro. We also expressed our support for a genuine democratic transition in Serbia.

For 5 years now, we have been working to build a new NATO, prepared to deal with the security challenges of the new century. Today we have reaffirmed our readiness in appropriate circumstances to address regional and ethnic conflicts beyond the territory of NATO members. I am pleased that our strategic concept

specifically endorses the actions such as those we are now undertaking in Kosovo.

Now, this afternoon we will meet with President Kuchma to advance our cooperation with Ukraine. Tonight and tomorrow we will gather with 23 of NATO's partner nations. The Partnership for Peace launched in 1994, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership started in 1997 have clearly exceeded expectations. Sixteen partner nations are now serving with NATO in Bosnia. Our forces have conducted literally hundreds of exercises with forces from partner countries. These are the nations of central and eastern Europe, of the Caucasus and central Asia, whose futures are clearly intertwined with ours.

Our Alliance also recognizes the tremendous importance of Russia to Europe's future, and we are determined to support Russia's transition to stronger democracy and more effective free markets and to strengthen our partnership with Russia.

We worked closely with Russia for a peaceful solution for Kosovo at Rambouillet. While our allied nations all agree that the offer Mr. Milosevic has apparently made to former Prime Minister Chernomyrdin on Thursday was inadequate, nevertheless we welcome Russia's efforts and hope they will continue and ultimately result in Serb agreement to our conditions so that we can reverse the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.

That concludes my statement. Go ahead, Sandra [Sandra Sobieraj, Associated Press].

Effectiveness of Policy in the Balkans

Q. [Inaudible]—the Pentagon will be sending more tanks and more troops to the Balkans, American Reserves will be called up, NATO may well end up searching ships as part of an oil embargo, and still, Milosevic is not backing down. What specific assurances can you give the American people that we are not drifting into a long and endless conflict with no end in sight?

The President. Well, we're not drifting. We are moving forward with a strategy that I believe strongly will succeed, one that we have reaffirmed here and intensified. I think the important thing for everyone to understand is that in order for this strategy to succeed, we need two things: one, vigorous execution, and two, patience.

Keep in mind, we now know from the evidence that has come out that the campaign Mr. Milosevic and the Serb leaders have carried out

against the people of Kosovo was planned in detail last year. It was not executed in October in no small measure because of the threat of action by NATO. It was executed when we began our air campaign.

They had 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo, and almost 300 tanks. It takes time to reverse that. But we are working on it, and we will prevail if we execute well with real determination and if we have the patience.

I would remind all of you that it may seem like a long time—I don't think this air campaign has been going on a particularly long time. In the Persian Gulf, there were 44 days of bombing before there was any kind of land action. And the land was flatter, the targets were clearer, the weather was better. We are doing what needs to be done here with great vigor, and I am convinced we will prevail if we have the patience. We have to be prepared not only to execute with determination but to pay the price of time.

Yes?

European Security

Q. [Inaudible] On the European pillar in NATO, are you satisfied that the outcome in the statement will not allow a split to occur between the European forces and the American forces? And specifically, what role will the Western European Union, WEU, play?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the language speaks for itself. Europe will have to decide exactly how to constitute this force and also how to make it effective. One of the things that I think that will receive nearly no publicity during this meeting, obviously because of the dominance—appropriate dominance of Kosovo in the news—is the document we adopted today that deals with the European security initiative but also deals with what we can do to make all of our efforts more effective, including enhancing the defense capabilities of all of our allies.

As long as this operation—however it's constituted by the Europeans—operates within and in cooperation with NATO, I think it will strengthen the capability of the Alliance, and I think it will actually help to maintain America's involvement with NATO.

We have Members of the Congress here today—Senator Roth, sitting here on the front row, has been one of the strongest supporters of our partnership with NATO and with our

European allies. But I believe this is a very, very positive thing. The details are for the Europeans to decide, and you should ask them that. But as long as it's consistent with the Berlin principle—that is, separable but not separate from NATO—I think it will work very well.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

NATO Ground Troops

Q. Mr. President, the buildup of American troops and allied troops in Macedonia and Albania seem to smack of potential intervention, military intervention, despite ground troops, all your protestations.

The President. Is that a question?

Q. That's a question. I mean, is that true? [Laughter]

The President. The short answer is, no. Let me remind you, we are in Macedonia and Albania to try to help them, two very brave countries with very strong-willed leaders, operating under extreme duress. We're trying to help them manage a massive refugee problem. And in Albania, we have troops there, also, to secure the helicopter operation we have put in there and to make sure that we can secure it not only as it's moved in, but as it becomes operational.

Yes, ma'am?

Future of Southeast Europe

Q. How much of a guarantee can countries in the southeast Europe region get that they will actually be an important part of the reconstruction once the Kosovo conflict is over?

The President. Well, that is what we will deal with tomorrow when we meet with the leaders of all those nations. Last week I went to San Francisco to speak to the American newspaper editors to outline what I believe is an essential part of the long-term solution to the problems of the Balkans and southeast Europe generally. They are not yet sufficiently a part of the future we all imagine for Europe in the 21st century, which is not only peace and stability but also prosperity and shared decisionmaking.

So my view is that we should do more to draw those nations closer to one another, to give them a positive reason to work together and to properly treat the ethnic minorities within their borders and work out ways for them to participate in the life of their country, as well as to maintain their own religious and cultural traditions. And we should work out ways

for the nations of that region to relate more closely to all the European institutions and to Canada and the United States in North America.

So, to me, this will not work over the long run—if you don't want to see this repeated, what we're doing now, it is not enough to defeat this moment of aggression and to reverse it and to send the Kosovars back home. We are going to have to create an alternative positive future. We know what the history of ethnic animosity in the Balkans is. We know that there is not a single ethnic group, even the Serbs, who cannot cite some historic example of legitimate grievance that can be manipulated by an unscrupulous politician.

So what we need, with all these magnets pulling the people apart, we need a powerful set of magnets pulling the people together. And those have to be economic, as well as political and security. So the NATO open-door policy, the European Union's open-door policy, the prospect of new cooperation with all the states of southeastern Europe among themselves and with Europe and the United States and Canada—I think this is a very, very important thing.

Over the long run, we have to do this: We have to create a positive future for this part of Europe if we want to avoid being in the very position we're in today again in a few years, in another place.

Yes, Larry [Larry McQuillan, Reuters].

Oil Embargo

Q. Mr. President, there seems to be a great deal of concern about the oil embargo that NATO has endorsed. The French are expressing concern that if military force is used to enforce it, that it would amount to an act of war. I'm wondering, do you agree with that assessment? And are you concerned that, on one hand, you're encouraging the Russians to negotiate a settlement, and on the other hand, they may be caught in the middle of an oil embargo clash?

The President. Well, of course, I hope that won't happen. But let me tell you where we're coming from. We sent our pilots into the air to destroy the oil refinery and supply systems of Serbia, and they did so successfully. They risked their lives to do it. How can we justify risking the lives of the pilots to go up and destroy the refinery and the supply capacity of Serbia and then say, "But it's okay with us if people want to continue to supply this nation

and its outlaw actions in Kosovo in another way?"

So what we have done is we've asked our ministers of defense to come up with a plan that will apply in an even-handed way. Obviously, we don't expect it to and we will not do anything to try to see that it leads to violence. But we have to be firm about it. And if we want this campaign to succeed with economic and political pressure and with the air action, then we have to take every reasonable means to give it the chance to succeed. And that's what we intend to do.

Yes, sir?

Proposed United Nations Peace Mission

Q. Mr. President, the Austrian former Prime Minister, Franz Vranitzky, was proposed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan as a possible candidate for a peace mission to Kosovo. Would you kindly explain to us whether this has your approval and what you would expect from such a mission?

The President. Well, I can't respond to your specific question for a very simple reason: I did not know which individuals were being considered by the Secretary-General until, oh, a couple of hours ago. So I've had no direct communication with the Secretary-General, nor have I even discussed it with the members of my staff.

I have, as it happens, known Mr. Vranitzky for many years; I knew him before I was President, before I was a candidate for President. I have an enormously high regard for him, personally. But in order to make a judgment about that, I would have to have a clear idea about exactly what it is—what is the mission and what would be the parameters of it. So I can't really comment on the specifics. But I do have a very high regard for him, personally. I think he's an excellent man.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, Cable News Network].

Bombing of Serb Television

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, a lot of people have a clear understanding when you authorize bombing missions against military targets, tanks, armor, military headquarters. But they have a little bit more difficulty understanding why you would authorize bombing Serb television in the middle of the night, knowing there are journalists working there, knowing there are cleaning crews there, knowing these

people have no choice but to work there, and also know that within a matter of hours Serb TV would be back on the air from other locations. So the question is, what goes through your mind, knowing you're going to, in effect, authorize the killing of these people for questionable military gains?

The President. Our military leaders at NATO believe, based on what they have seen and what others in the area have told them, that the Serb television is an essential instrument of Mr. Milosevic's command and control. He uses it to spew hatred and to basically spread disinformation. He does not use it to show all the Kosovar villages he's burned, to show the mass graves, to show the children that have been raped by the soldiers that he sent there.

It is not, in a conventional sense, therefore, a media outlet. That was a decision they made, and I did not reverse it, and I believe that I did the right thing in not reversing that decision.

Yes, sir?

NATO's New Strategic Concept

Q. Mr. President, the new strategic concept practically legitimates NATO action beyond the borders. How far geographically will NATO go?

The President. I don't think it's a geographical issue. I think that what we tried to do was to say that there are some things which can occur in Europe, in nonmember nations, that can affect the security and stability of all of Europe, including NATO members. And I think the language should speak for itself.

Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News].

Effectiveness of Airstrikes

Q. Mr. President, before the air campaign began, Pentagon planners advised you, according to reports that have not been denied, that the air campaign could degrade, it could damage, it could diminish, but it could not by itself stop the killing on the ground in Kosovo if Milosevic intended to persevere. You have said again today that you will continue the air campaign and that you believe it will prevail. Have the Pentagon planners given you new advice? Have they changed their mind? And if not, sir, on what do you base your optimism?

The President. Well, first of all, I believe, first, the report that you have from the Pentagon planners is an accurate one and is what I believed to be the case at the time.

Keep in mind—and I think I made this clear at the time—the reason we went forward with the air actions is because we thought there was some chance it would deter Mr. Milosevic based on two previous examples: number one, last October in Kosovo, when he was well poised to do the same thing; and number two, in Bosnia, where there were 12 days of NATO attacks over a 20-day period. However, I also well understood that the underlying facts were somewhat different. I still believe we did the right thing. And I believe, as one of the area's leaders said in the last couple of days, it would have been much worse had we not taken action.

Now, there is a literal sense, Sam, in which, from the air, you cannot take every Serbian body in a uniform on the ground in Kosovo and extract them from Kosovo and put them back in Serbia. That, I think, is self-evident to everyone. So when I tell you that I think this will work, what I mean by that is, I think if we execute well, if we are determined, and if we spend enough time doing it, we will either break down his military capacity to retain control over Kosovo or the price of staying there will be far greater than the perceived benefits.

That is the logic behind the campaign, not that it will physically extract every person and put them back across the border. Everyone knows that's not true. And I'm glad you asked the question because I think it's very important that everyone be clear on this.

This is—my belief is that if we vigorously, comprehensively execute the air campaign, and if we are prepared to take the time and do our very best to care for the refugees as best we can in the meanwhile and to provide stability and support to the frontline states and especially to Albania and Macedonia, that we will prevail. That is what I believe. And I believe we will do it because we have the capacity to dramatically degrade his military operation which is the

instrument of his control and because we have the capacity to make this policy very, very expensive for him militarily and economically and in other ways.

Yes, sir, in the back.

Effectiveness of Policy

Q. Mr. President, under the scenario that you've just laid out doesn't mean that he would necessarily comply with the five conditions, which would also mean that it might be too high to keep his forces there, the cost, but then you would have to be willing to move some forces in to take the ground that they could no longer hold. And it seems at the moment there's no willingness to do that.

The President. Our position on that, I think, is the correct one. The Secretary General has recommended a reassessment of what would be required. I think that everybody in the Alliance agrees with his decision; that is the correct decision. But we have not weakened our conditions, nor will we. If anything, I think this meeting has seen not only a reaffirmation but an intensification of our determination to see the refugees back in, the Serb forces out, an international force to protect them, and the movement toward self-government for the Kosovars.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 173d news conference began at 3:50 p.m. in the amphitheater at the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; former Chancellor Franz Vranitzky of Austria; U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Remarks at the Meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization-Ukraine Commission

April 24, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary General. Like all the NATO leaders, I am very pleased

to welcome President Kuchma to this first summit meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission.

When we launched this commission 2 years ago in Madrid, we hoped it would lead to a pragmatic and truly distinctive working partnership. Ukraine is a nation critical to our vision of an undivided, peaceful, democratic Europe.

The experience of the last 2 years has vindicated our hopes. Our Armed Forces are working together well in Bosnia. Ukraine played a vital role in Kosovo in the verification mission until it was driven out by the regime in Belgrade.

I appreciate President Kuchma's efforts to persuade Mr. Milosevic to end his campaign against the Kosovar Albanians so that the Kosovar people can come home with security and self-government.

Ukraine has also proposed an ambitious program of cooperation with NATO, and the Alliance has agreed to establish our very first Partnership for Peace training center in the Ukrainian town of Yavorov. Our nations also will support Ukraine's efforts to reform its economy, deepen its democracy, and advance the rule of law, all vital to Ukraine's security and the success of our partnership.

When we act to maintain peace and security in Europe, we will strive to do so with our partners, including Ukraine. That is what we hope to do with Ukraine and other nations in Kosovo once peace is restored there.

We have taken many practical, good steps toward realizing the promise of our partnership. But we should also not lose sight of the larger significance of what we are trying to do here, in light of the history of Ukraine and the history of Europe, for the people of Ukraine have felt the horrors of communism and fascism and fam-

ine. At different points in this century, the flags of five outside powers have flown over Ukrainian territory. Now Ukraine flies its own flag, and it is incumbent upon all of us to support Ukraine's transition and what its people have called their European choice.

Ukraine still faces large challenges: political, economic, environmental. But now it is free to choose its destiny. And it has used that freedom to choose democracy and tolerance and free markets, integration, and the choice to dismantle its nuclear arsenal.

President Kuchma's presence here is a reminder that most of Europe is coming together today. Most of Europe has rejected the idea that the quest for security is a zero-sum game in which one nation's gain is another's loss. So most of all, I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the people of the United States to express my respect and gratitude to President Kuchma and the people of Ukraine for the choices they are making, and to assure them that all of us and our partners will stand with them as they work for a better future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:28 p.m. at the Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana and President Kuchma.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring the Leaders of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council

April 24, 1999

Thank you very much. Please be seated. Mr. Secretary General, Mrs. Solana, allies, and friends: It's a great honor for Hillary and for me to welcome the largest group of world leaders ever to assemble in Washington here to the White House on this beautiful spring evening.

Just a few years ago, a gathering of all the nations here in partnership would have been unthinkable. But we are all here tonight because

we are thinking—we are thinking of a future brighter than the past; a future of shared values and shared visions; a future in which we define national greatness by its commitment to human rights and mutual respect, not to ethnic and religious bigotry; in which we measure the success of nations by how well we lift people up, not by how much we tear them down.

In a world full of both promise and peril, where for good or ill our destinies are more and more linked, we have chosen to be allies, partners, and friends. In an age most observers define by the rise of modern technology, modern scientific breakthroughs, a modern global economy, it is ironic and painful that all over the world and, of course, especially in Kosovo, the peace is threatened by the oldest demon of society: the fear and hatred of the other, those who are of a different race or ethnic background or religion.

Just a few days ago, a voice from the age we honor at this 50th anniversary summit spoke to us from his home in Poland. Marek Edelman, a hero of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, published a letter here in an American newspaper urging all of us to persevere in Kosovo. "I know," he wrote, "like all of my generation, that freedom has and must have its price."

Tonight we remember that the burden of defending freedom and peace is lighter when it is shouldered by so many. And we remember that the cause of freedom and peace is stronger when it is embraced by a group of nations as great and diverse as those who are joined together in this Council.

And so I ask all of you to join me now in a toast to the leaders and the people of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. And thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:27 p.m. in the pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and his wife, Concepcion. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana.

Remarks at the Opening of North Atlantic Council Meeting With the Frontline States

April 25, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary General. We want to welcome the leaders of all the frontline states here and say that we are very grateful for what you have done. The people of Albania and Macedonia have welcomed almost half a million refugees to their countries, often, literally, into their homes. You have shared what you have, though the strains are immense. NATO is working to relieve your burden with the United Nations by building camps, providing supplies, helping to bring more refugees to other countries until they can return to Kosovo. We must do more, intensifying our relief operations, taking our share of refugees.

The nations of the region have risked and even faced armed confrontation with Serbia, by facilitating and supporting our campaign to end the bloodshed in Kosovo. Yesterday—or Friday, NATO made its position very clear. We said, unambiguously, if Belgrade challenges its neighbors as a result of the presence of NATO, we will respond.

The nations of the region have faced enormous economic dislocation and losses. We are committed to working with you and with multi-

lateral institutions to ease your emergency needs and help you with your debts. You want a better future for your nations and your region, and there, as well, we are committed to help.

Many of us have tried to lay out a vision for the region, a positive alternative to the violence and ethnic hatred, a vision of people and nations working together, bridging old divides, forging a common future of peace, freedom, and prosperity. How do we get there?

First of all, we must prevail in Kosovo. A just end to the conflict is essential to putting the entire region on the path to stability. Second, we must strengthen our efforts to support economic development and deeper democracy, ethnic and religious tolerance, and regional integration in southeastern Europe. We must build on the many positive ways in which the nations of the region, often with our support, already are bringing change at home, in cooperation across borders.

In that regard, I want to especially commend Slovenia's strong efforts in recent years to reach out to its neighbors. We will work toward the day when all the people of the region, including

the Serbs now suffering under reckless tyranny, enjoy freedom and live together.

This will require a commitment by nations of the region to continue political and economic reforms. And I particularly respect the efforts of Bulgaria and Romania in this regard, to stick with their programs under very difficult circumstances.

It will require that we sustain our engagement. I welcome the suggestion of the German-EU Presidency to hold a conference in Bonn next month to advance these common efforts. I hope our finance ministers, when they meet here next week with international financial institutions, will explore imaginative and aggressive ways for us to help.

Finally, we must continue to strengthen the security bonds between your countries and NATO. Five of the nations here are NATO partners. Yesterday NATO and its partners agreed to deepen our security engagement. We will continue to work with Bosnia and Croatia on implementation of the Dayton accords, looking toward eventual partnership. And yesterday

NATO adopted a robust membership action plan to help aspiring nations strengthen their candidacy so they can enter NATO. New members will bolster our Alliance and Europe's security.

In all the countries present here today, leaders and citizens are working to realize a vision just the opposite of Mr. Milosevic's, reaching across the divides to pursue shared dreams of a better life. All of them are on the right road, and we must travel it with them to ensure that they succeed.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:16 a.m. at the Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana.

Remarks at the Opening Session of the Summit of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council

April 25, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary General. First of all, I would like to join you in welcoming all the members of our Partnership Council. From Central Asia to North America, from the Mediterranean to the Baltic, this Council and the Partnership for Peace are building a region of shared values and shared endeavors.

Many nations in this room, indeed, are accepting risks and hardships to support the peace in southeastern Europe. To be sure, there are challenges to our common vision of a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace: the challenge of overcoming instability and economic hardship in the Balkans; of defeating those who employ ethnic hatred in the service of power; the challenge of integrating a democratic Russia into the European mainstream; the challenge of averting a gulf between Europe and the Islamic world; the challenge of resolving tensions in the Aegean.

We must see reducing conflict and tensions and increasing prosperity and integration as two sides of the same coin. Therefore, as we fight against ethnic hatred in Kosovo, we must fight for the rebuilding of southeastern Europe and the integration of the region into the larger European community.

We must continue to strengthen the Partnership for Peace and deepen the role that our partner countries play in the planning and execution of the missions we undertake together. We must continue to build on our cooperation with Russia, with Ukraine, with all the members of this Council, to advance the interests and ideals we share.

We must continue the enlargement of NATO, the Partnership for Peace, and the Partnership Council. All of these things, I am convinced, will make Europe stronger and freer and more stable. And I think that I can speak for my

friend Mr. Chretien when I say that those of us in North America strongly support it.

As I said last night at our dinner, if you look around this room, the idea that all of us could be sitting here together around one table would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. We are here around this table together because we are thinking about our common future. And that is the best thing to say about this meeting today.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 12:09 p.m. at the Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Solana.

Remarks at the Close of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization 50th Anniversary Summit

April 25, 1999

Hello. I am going to read a statement, and then I have to go, unfortunately, to another appointment. But Secretary Albright, Secretary Cohen, Mr. Berger, General Shelton are going to be available to answer questions.

We came to this summit committed to chart a course for the NATO Alliance for the 21st century, one that embraces new members, new partners, and new missions. Here we committed NATO, first, to fulfill its mission of collective defense with the ability to meet new security threats; second, to remain open to new allies and to seek stronger partnership with nations all across Europe, central Asia, and obviously including Ukraine and Russia.

We've also reaffirmed our determination repeatedly to intensify our actions, military and economic, until we achieve our objectives in Kosovo. On this, the Alliance leaves Washington more united even than it was when we came here.

Meanwhile, we will stand by the neighboring countries that have accepted risks and hardship in support of this effort. If Mr. Milosevic threatens them for helping us, we will respond. And we will work to support democracy and development in the region, so that the forces pulling people together will be stronger than those pulling them apart, and all nations—including, someday, a democratic Serbia—can join the European mainstream.

What NATO did here this weekend was to reaffirm our commitment to a common future, rooted in common humanity. Standing against ethnic cleansing is both a moral imperative and

a practical necessity, as the leaders of the front-line states, who have so much at stake in the outcome, made so clear to us.

Our vision of a Europe undivided, democratic, free, and at peace, depends upon our constructive commitment to the hundreds of thousands of poor refugees, so many men, women, and children with no place else to turn, who have been made pawns in a power struggle. It depends upon our ability and our collective commitment, after this crisis has passed, to help all the people of southeastern Europe build a better future.

In our last luncheon, just a few moments ago, when we had all the members of our Partnership Council there, someone made a joke. He said, "Look around this room. We have several members of the last Politburo here that the Soviet Union had." And then they were counting up. And then others said, "Well, we weren't on the Politburo, but we should have been." [Laughter] And they were laughing.

But they made an important point. There has been this breathtaking explosion of freedom. But the old order has not yet been replaced by a new one that answers all the legitimate needs of people, not just for freedom but also for security and prosperity.

We must be committed to building that kind of future for the people of central Europe, for the people of southeastern Europe, and for our other partners, going all the way to the central Asian states. We cannot expect for people to stop being drawn back to old ways of organizing themselves, even profoundly destructive ways

resting on ethnic and religious divisions, unless there is a far more powerful magnet out there before them.

And so we committed ourselves to building that kind of future for all of our allies in the 21st century. When all is said and done, I think people will look back on this summit, perhaps many years from now, and say that was its last-

ing value: We looked to the future with a clear vision and made a commitment to build it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. in the amphitheater at the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks in a Discussion Entitled “The Third Way: Progressive Governance for the 21st Century”

April 25, 1999

[Moderator Al From, president of the Democratic Leadership Council, opened the discussion.]

President Clinton. Thank you very much. I’d like to begin just by expressing my profound gratitude to Al From and to all the people at the Democratic Leadership Council for having the passion and the patience to work at this for years and years and years.

I, too, want to thank Hillary and the hearty band within the White House who keep us focused on the big ideas and values that got us here in the first place. And I’d like to say a special word of thanks to my friend and aide Sidney Blumenthal for the work that he’s done in trying to put this meeting together.

I would also like to just very briefly say how very much I admire the people who are here with me at this table today, how much I have learned from them, how much I look forward to working with them at every opportunity.

Wim Kok, from The Netherlands, actually was doing all this before we were. He just didn’t know that—he didn’t have anybody like Al From who could put a good label on it. [Laughter] But he was doing it, for years and years and years. Tony Blair has made me long for a parliamentary system. [Laughter] Gerhard Schroeder had to wait even longer than I did—[laughter]—and was also a distinguished Governor. And Massimo D’Alema has proved that you—I think—I’ll make you a prediction here—I think he is already proving that even in Italy, where governments tend to be like the flavor of the month for ice cream, that the right sort of politics can have a sustained long-term impact

on some of the most wonderful people in the world. So I’m honored to be here with all of them.

I’d like to thank my friend and ally Congressman Cal Dooley, who is out there; the Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater; the Secretary of the Army, Louis Caldera, who helped me in so many ways. And we’re going to hear afterward from Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former Governor and Democratic Party Chairman Roy Romer, Mayor Wellington Webb of Denver, and Commissioner Michael Thurmond. I thank them.

All of you know we’ve just finished a 3-day NATO conference, celebrating the 50th anniversary of NATO, bringing in new members, celebrating an astonishing partnership with over 40 countries, including the countries of southeastern Europe, all except for Serbia, and the countries of central Asia in this amazing new group which, itself, is full of Third Way questions.

At our last luncheon, one of the members made a crack that we had five members of the last Politburo of the Soviet Union sitting around our table today. And another one said, “Yes, and a lot of the rest of us should have been on the Politburo, but we weren’t.” [Laughter] And it was a picture of how much the world has changed.

What gives rise to this kind of politics? When the old order is destroyed or when the realities of daily life or popular dreams can no longer be accommodated by a given set of political arrangements or a political debate. We see that in southeastern Europe today with the crisis in

Kosovo, where the old choice is between state stability and being consumed by ethnic hatreds, and what we're arguing for is a new integration based on the embrace of difference, not the oppression of it.

I would like to just pose a couple of questions and then let our panelists take off. You heard Al From say that basically our lodestars have always been in the United States the concept of opportunity, responsibility, and community. We've worked on this for years. We tried to think of simpler and more complex ways to say what we stand for, but we've never done any better than that.

So I think I will just leave it there. But let me say, what could that mean in the present time? What is giving rise to all these people's elections? Why is this happening everywhere? It's not some blind coincidence. I believe it is because the social arrangements which were developed within countries and the international arrangements among them, which grew up from the Great Depression through the Second World War and then the cold war, are no longer adequate to meet the challenges of the day.

And most of the parties of the right made a living by beating us in elections by saying how bad we were. And whatever—we were always for more Government, and they were for less of it. And if you thought it was, by definition, bad, then less is always better than more.

So they had quite a run in the 1980's. And then it became readily apparent that that didn't really solve any problems and that there were serious questions that demanded serious answers. So I will just pose three and then let our panelists go in whatever order they would like.

I seems to me that the great question that any political party that purports to represent ordinary citizens must answer is: How do you make the most of the economic possibilities of the global information economy and still preserve the social contract? What can governments do to help make sure that every responsible citizen has a chance to succeed in the global economy? And how can we discharge our responsibilities, as the leaders of wealthy countries, to put a human face on the global economy so that in other countries, as well, no one who's willing to work is left behind?

The second question I'd like to ask is, what is the nature of the social contract now, and how is it different from what it used to be?

What does it mean? Are there entitlements that we should still have? Beyond entitlements, what are the empowerment issues of the social contract? What is the role of the private sector and the relationship of the government to it?

And finally, what do we mean by the concept of community? Who's in? Who's out? And how can we create a concept of both national and international community that is a more powerful magnet drawing people together than the awful magnets pulling them apart, rooted in racial and ethnic and religious difference throughout the world?

And I will leave with that. It is a cruel irony that in this world we're entering, that we have always celebrated in our dreams as a place of unbelievable technological explosion, unbelievable scientific advance, unbelievable advances in health care, and using computer technology to empower people in small African and Latin American villages, for example, to learn things—would be dominated by the most primitive hatreds in all of human history, those rooted in our basic fear of people who are different from us. How can we construct a community in which those forces pulling us together are more powerful than those tearing us apart?

There are hundreds of questions we debate all the time, but just about every question we debate falls within one of those three categories. And so having set it up like that, we have no agenda, and I'll just turn it over to our friends.

Mr. Blair, would you like to go first?

[At this point, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, and Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy presented their opening remarks.]

President Clinton. I should say that the Prime Minister is a good friend of the man who is now the most famous Italian in America, Roberto Benigni. And after his performance at the Academy Awards, you have both affection and respect. [Laughter]

I would just like to try to comment on a couple of things, to maybe make the conversation somewhat more specific and sort of segue into the participation of our other American leaders here.

If you look at this whole Third Way challenge, in America, for the Democratic Party, it meant we had to prove we could manage the economy

in an intelligent way and then deal with the whole question of social justice. And in our country, those questions basically meant three things. One is what to do about the poor and how to have a welfare system that empowered people who could take care of themselves but also took care of people who could not take care of themselves—first question.

The second question, how to deal with the fact that we had phenomenal economic growth but increasing inequality. That inequality had been increasing for quite a long time, partly because of Government policies, partly because the new economy gives such a wage premium to education and skills.

And the third question, to my mind, in many ways the most important, how can this country with all of its phenomenal success and low unemployment—the lowest unemployment in 30 years—and now, finally, rising wages again, how can we strike the right balance, a better balance between work and family—give families the support they need to raise their children, take care of their parents, have the time they need, have the child care, the health care they need, and still maintain the economic dynamism? What is the right balance?

Now, for Europe, it goes the other way. I wish Prime Minister Jospin were here from France. Very interesting—France has had economic growth averaging over 3 percent for the last 3 or 4 years, but their unemployment rate hasn't gone below 11 percent, I think—something like that—anyway, still in double digits. And we know from our own experience that when unemployment—I mean, when growth can be sustained above 2½ percent in an industrial society, normally the unemployment will go down until it bottoms out at around, at least around 6 percent, even without going over 3 percent.

So the European question is, how do you get growth manifested in jobs and not give up your social solidarity? In America the question is, how do we keep all this growth—we love it—and get a little more stability for families and make sure we have done what we should for the poorest of our communities and our people and try to make sure that Americans who do work and carry the load in this country have a chance to have more of the growth in terms of their personal wealth and well-being. So to some extent, we are crossing.

Now, I mention that to just give you a couple of specific examples. Gerhard Schroeder mentioned the German job training system. We sort of copied a lot of elements of that and tried to amend it for America in setting up our school-to-work program in 1993, because the Germans do the best job of moving people from—who do not go on to university for 4 years—moving most people into the workplace with modern skills so they can claim a higher wage.

And in our country, we have—John Sweeney, the head of the American labor movement—the labor apprenticeship programs. A lot of the labor training programs do a good job of that, but as a society, we don't do as good a job of that. So we're trying to improve that.

Another interesting example: How do you deal with the fact that more and more people are working at home, more and more people are working in flexible work environments? You're going to have more and more part-time jobs. How is that consistent with maintaining a kind of social safety net? I would argue that The Netherlands have done the best job of that. Wim Kok's country has the highest percentage of voluntary part-time workers in all of Europe; that is, they choose to do so. And they've worked out an agreement, which maybe he would like to talk about, so that even the part-time workers earn, on a pro rata basis, their vacation—annual vacation rights, and have retirement and health care and other things. They have the social protections. And there it makes them more willing when necessary to take part-time work. This is a big deal.

When I became President in America, there were 3 million people making a living primarily out of their own home, for example. When I was reelected, there were 12 million. Now there are 20 million, in only 2 years. So this economy is going to, if you will, atomize a lot. It's going to get a lot more diverse and kaleidoscopic. So we'll have a lot of challenges to face in having the proper sense of social safety net.

And then, as I said, the most important thing is getting it right between work and family, since I think we would all admit that the most important job of any society is raising children as well as possible, something we are even more burdened with in the moment, that conviction.

So I just throw those ideas out. These are things that are going on in other countries,

something that we're battling with here constantly. And I wonder if any of you would like to comment on that.

[Prime Minister Kok and Chancellor Schroeder offered comments.]

President Clinton. Let me just say very briefly, I think when we meet in Germany in the next few weeks with the G-8, I hope we will ratify a number of changes to the global financial system that I believe will be adopted by the international financial institutions and other bodies that will avoid having another financial crisis like the one we saw in Asia that we have all worked so hard to keep from spreading to Latin America and elsewhere.

And it really is a classic Third Way problem, because what happened was, in the last 50 years after World War II when the so-called Bretton Woods instruments were developed, the IMF, the World Bank, and others designed to promote global trade and global investment, with the explosion of technology and the explosion of trade, more and more money had to move around the world.

And then as always happens, there came an independent market in money, unrelated to the trade and investment. So that now every year, every day, there will be about \$1.5 trillion in trade per day in goods and services, and the amount of money that moves—excuse me, \$1.5 trillion a day in trade in money, which is roughly 15 times the daily volume of trade in goods and services. And that's the basic problem. So we don't have a framework that has the right incentives to keep that from getting out of hand and collapsing economies, protecting people from their own foolishness, as well as from the foolishness of investors.

But I think we can make some changes and keep the growth going and get rid of the problems, which is obviously the kind of balance we've been striving for.

Anybody else?

[Prime Minister D'Alema and Prime Minister Blair offered comments. Mr. From then introduced Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; former Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; and Labor Commissioner Michael L. Thurmond of Georgia, who each made brief remarks.]

President Clinton. Well, let me say, first of all, I want to thank all four of them for speaking

here today and for the work they do. And they're all friends of mine, and I was sitting here feeling like—sort of like a proud father or something. I'm so proud of my friendship of many years with Governor Romer; and Mayor Webb, who did so much to help me become President; Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. We're glad your mother is here. Ethel, welcome. There is no Lieutenant Governor in America who has had remotely the impact that she has had on the lives of her constituents. It's a stunning thing in many ways. And I think Mr. Thurmond can speak for himself. [Laughter] But I'm really proud of him, as well.

You see—the reason—let me just say, one of the reasons that I so much love the DLC and I was so proud of hearing them talk is that for most of us, including those of us at this table, the stories you just heard—that's why we got in politics. And then when you become a leader of a country and you're arguing about what's in some bill or what is the debate before the Parliament or the Congress or—if you're not careful, the debate gets very abstract and very frozen and very wooden and very meaningless to the people that put you in this position in the first place.

And the further you get away from your constituency—and I think sometimes our friends in the press almost contribute to this in a way, because they have difficulties, too. You know, they have to write a complicated subject, and they've got to get a headline out of it. Or they have to figure out how to take an issue that's going on and how to put it into 15 seconds on the evening news.

But what you just heard is the ultimate test of whether ideas and our values and our work amount to a hill of beans. It's whether it changes the lives of people in concrete, positive ways. And so, I just want to thank them and those whom they represent. And I'd like to give my fellow panelists here the chance to make any comments or ask questions they'd like of those who just spoke.

Tony, do you want to start?

[Prime Minister Blair and Prime Minister Kok made remarks.]

President Clinton. I just want to comment on one thing, because a lot of you talked about at what level something should be done. We're having a huge Third Way debate here in this country that has many different manifestations

related to how the Federal Government should give money to local governments in various areas. And it's very interesting. By and large, the Republicans will say—and they really believe this—that since we can't run law enforcement, for example, we should just set aside how much money we want to give and give it to local government and say, "Go enforce the law. They'll lower crime." And the old motto would have been, we would have passed a law which would have had 15 different programs, each with a different subcommittee chairman's name on it, and said, "Go spend the money in this way."

Now, what I'm trying to do is to say, "Okay, we shouldn't tell you how to do things, but you have told us what works." Therefore, we should stop giving money for things that don't work and start giving money for things that do. So we say, "If community police works, that's what we should do." If Kathleen's program works on testing parolees, which by the way, I'm trying to get enough money out of Congress to do that nationwide, just what she said. She's proved it's worked, right? So we don't tell them whether they should contract with people to do the drug testing or what they should do or exactly how they should do it. But I think we should say, "Look, in Maryland, this works. Therefore, we'll give you the money if you do this. But we're not going to just give you the money, and you decide whether you want to waste it or not."

And that's the debate we're having, you know, because we're not trying to micromanage local government, but we are trying to take things that work and say, "Okay, if they work in Denver, or if they work in Georgia, if they work someplace else, we need to stop funding things that don't work, start funding things that do. But we're not going to tell you how to do it. You figure out how, but this is a thing that works, and so do it."

And it's a big debate. And I urge you all to watch it this year. It'll play itself out in three or four different areas. And we may not win them all. But I think it's a very important debate to have, because it will be about the nature of the Federal responsibility in a lot of areas in the years ahead.

Would anyone else like to talk before we adjourn? Gerhard, do you want to say anything else? Massimo?

[Chancellor Schroeder and Prime Minister D'Alema made remarks.]

President Clinton. Thank you. Yes, I'm not sure I would even have you here, Massimo, if I were running for reelection. [Laughter]

No, no, I'll tell you a serious story. Hillary and I went to Italy over a decade ago, and we were in northern Italy, and I met these Italian Communists who were anti-Soviet Union, pro-NATO, and pro-free enterprise. And I thought to myself, I've got to be very careful about what words mean, anymore. It was amazing. [Laughter]

Let me introduce three more people who came here and are just as tired as our panelists are, and they sat through this whole thing. I'd like to thank Cherie Blair, Rita Kok, and Doris Schroeder-Koepf for being here. Thank you all for coming and being a part of this.

And let me say, I'm sure you all know that this was a very difficult but profoundly important 3-day meeting we had of NATO. And all these leaders, I think, must be quite exhausted. We have worked very hard and tried to do the right thing on every front. But they cared enough about these ideas and the worldwide movement to try to achieve what we have worked on and believe in, in common, that they came here to be with us. And I think we owe them all a very great debt of gratitude, and we thank them.

[Mr. From thanked the participants and closed the discussion.]

NOTE: The discussion entitled "The Third Way: Progressive Governance for the 21st Century," began at 5:21 p.m. at the National Press Club Building. In his remarks, the President referred to actor-director Roberto Benigni; Prime Minister Lionel Jospin of France; John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; Ethel Kennedy, mother of Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend; Cherie Blair, wife of Prime Minister Blair; Rita Kok, wife of Prime Minister Kok; and Doris Schroeder-Koepf, wife of Chancellor Schroeder. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the other participants.

Apr. 26 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Certification of the Nuclear Weapons Stockpile

April 23, 1999

Dear _____:

In my September 22, 1997, message transmitting the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification, I announced that I would provide to the appropriate committees of Congress the annual certification of the nuclear weapons stockpile by the Secretaries of Defense and Energy and accompanying report. Enclosed is a copy of that certification and report.

I am pleased to note the Secretaries' conclusion that the nuclear stockpile has no safety or reliability concerns that require underground testing at this time. Problems that have arisen in the stockpile are being addressed and resolved without underground nuclear testing to

ensure the stockpile remains safe and reliable. In reaching this conclusion, the Secretaries obtained the advice of the Directors of the National Weapons Laboratories, the Commander in Chief, United States Strategic Command, and the Nuclear Weapons Council.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to the congressional leadership and selected Representatives and Senators. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 26. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Statement on the Supreme Court's Decision To Consider the Food and Drug Administration's Regulation of Tobacco Products

April 26, 1999

I am very pleased that the Supreme Court has agreed to take up the case regarding the Food and Drug Administration's regulation of tobacco products. Almost 3 years ago, the FDA put in place a regulation to protect our children from tobacco, which the tobacco companies challenged in court. Every day 3,000 young peo-

ple become regular smokers, and 1,000 will have their lives cut short as a result. I remain firmly committed to the FDA rule, which will help stop young people from smoking before they start by eliminating advertising aimed at children and curbing minors' access to tobacco products.

Remarks at a Union of American Hebrew Congregations Dinner Honoring Rabbi David Saperstein

April 26, 1999

Thank you very much. Rabbi Yoffie—or Mr. President, should I say? [*Laughter*] My good friend Barney Frank—I would like to be furnished with a copy of the jokes he told before I got here. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Richard Ben-Veniste, Marian Edelman, Senator Metzenbaum, and others who organized this great dinner, and thank at least the Members of Congress

I have been told are here, Senator Wellstone, Representative Shelley Berkley, and Representative Tom Udall.

And like David, I would like to say to you, Mr. Landsburg, our prayers are with your daughter, and we're pulling for her, and we're proud that she's making the progress she is.

As David said, sort of in passing, we first met, oh, about somewhere between 12 and 15 years ago at a weekend retreat, courtesy of Marian and Peter Edelman. It was one of these deals where you get really smart people, and they talk all weekend. And they solve every problem, and then they can't imagine why it doesn't happen afterward, you know? It's a fabulous thing. [Laughter]

And I met that guy, and I thought: Now, this guy is some talker. [Laughter] And then, it is true, he stayed with Hillary and me when he came to Little Rock for the 30th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock Central High School, and we did stay up half the night. And Hillary sends her love.

I know, David, that over the years you've often been willing to stand against the tide and take a minority viewpoint and be very brave. But when you said that most people think we married wives that were smarter than we are, in this case, the majority is right. [Laughter]

Even by the high standards of rabbis, David can talk. I mean, he is a good talker. [Laughter] But he talks so fast. [Laughter] You know, tonight he was clipping along at a pretty good pace, and it's the slowest I ever heard him speak. [Laughter] One night I saw him on television debating Jerry Falwell. And he was unbelievable. He just waxed him. He leveled him, you know? [Laughter] But unfortunately, no one who lived below the Mason-Dixon line could understand a word he said. [Laughter]

I want you to know where I was tonight. While you were listening to all these people heap praise on David, I was home praying that God would forgive them for the lies they were telling. [Laughter] Then I decided, what the heck, I'll come tell a few, too. [Laughter]

Let me say, like all of you, I love this man. And whether he's speaking fast or slow, the most important thing about him is that whatever it is he says, he does his dead-level-best to do. And that is really the difference between David and most of the rest of the world, including most of the rest of us, from time to time. If we are all completely honest, we would have to admit that there are very few people who are as absolutely certain, day-in and day-out, year-in and year-out, to say something and then follow it up by acting in a way that is completely consistent with what they say. He is such a person, and that is why he is such a great treasure.

As he says, since I've been President, I've often sought his wise advice, and his energy I have tried to tap. I've done it so often, it's almost to the point of abusing our friendship. And it's hard for a man in his position to be friends with the President. You know, he was so gracious tonight—so were you, Rabbi; you never mentioned any of the things that I've done that you disagreed with. [Laughter] Barney would have, but I wasn't here to say it—just to hear it. [Laughter] And what all they said before amounts to, "He's not so bad for a President, but we know they're never completely perfect."

I want you to know that David talked about religious liberty. It means a lot to me. And if you look around the world today, we'd be a lot better off if it meant a lot to other people, too. He played a major role in the guidelines we issued in 1995 to help protect the right of students in public schools to express their religious convictions within the Constitution and without a need to amend the Constitution. And I don't know if anybody has noticed, but that's one issue you don't have to fight now.

When I became President, everybody was convinced we were going to have this huge battle over this constitutional amendment, prayer in the schools and all that. And I told the Secretary of Education, I said, "I don't believe anybody has read the decisions. I think this is a bogus political battle." And so we got David and a few other people and some scholars together, and we put out a booklet. And we sent it to all the schools and said, "Look, here are your rights now. Here's what you have to do. Here's how you can avoid problems. Give this to everybody." And I mean, within 6 months the whole issue of the constitutional amendment died.

So David did two good things: He increased people's sense that they were actually free to practice their faith, whatever it is, within the Constitution, wherever they wish. And he did it and, at the same time, totally diminished the sense that it was somehow needed to amend the Constitution in a way that I'm convinced would have raised a whole lot more problems than it solved.

And it's the kind of thing that he did that he got almost no notice for. And most of the rest of us didn't either, because it wound up being a dog that doesn't bark. But in the end,

that's sometimes the highest measure of our success in public life.

He played a major role in the dialog we had on race. And therefore, his influence is still felt in a lot of what we are trying to do in the White House in that regard.

I do believe that, as David said better than I in his wonderful, wonderful speech, you must believe that we are not only all created in God's image but that we have a little bit of God within us, and so does everyone else. That is very important to his faith and to his action. The Talmud says, whoever is able to protest against the transgressions of the world and does not lie is liable for the transgression of the entire world.

I think David wakes up thinking about that every morning. He's probably taken some of our transgressions away along with his because he's done way more than his share. [Laughter] But I say that because we have all been sort of sobered in these last days by what is going on in Kosovo and by this terrible tragedy in Littleton, Colorado.

And when we think about it, we think we know, too, that beneath all the prosperity our country enjoys there are still plenty of people who have not participated in it here and, in more subtle, less visible ways, are also suffering. He thinks about that.

And I would just like to take a few moments tonight to ask you, in David's honor, to think about this new millennium we're about to enter; how fortunate we are to go into it with many, if not all, but many of our social conditions improving and our economy booming and our country able to play a very privileged role to advance the cause of peace and humanity around the world. But we know that this future—[inaudible]—that most people think of as dominated by technology and global information sharing and a global economy and people drawing together, that the good parts of that future are far from assured, because a lot of the modern things that we think are inherently good are just like all the old things that happen in all previous times; they have a dark underside that must be struggled against.

The same explosion of technologies, for example, that fuels the prosperity of people all across the world really helps a lot of those who want to exploit today the oldest weakness of human society, fear and hatred of the other. I mean, think about it. The Internet offers scientists the way to exchange information and fight disease,

offers poor children the way to access libraries. It's amazing how many kids in high school now are filing research papers, and they don't have a—every single source they got, they got off the Internet. But the Internet also offers websites that glorify death, lionize Hitler, and tell teenagers to make pipe bombs. It is not a thing, in and of itself, that is good.

Now, what's all that got to do with what we're talking about here? What has Littleton to do with Kosovo? I think it has a lot to do with the whole way we think about life and the way we define ourselves and the way we use categories. None of us could function without categories. Categories help us to organize our days, to understand the outside world, to even organize our inner lives and our search for truth. Some of us are black; some of us are white. Some of us are Jewish; some of us are Muslim; some of us are Christian. Some are straight; some are gay. Some are Arab; some are Israeli. We categorize them. You've got to have them. You couldn't function without them.

The problem comes when people believe the categories are the truths, instead of helpful ways of helping us organize our search for the truth. Because when you believe that, then if you're an insecure kid in school and somebody says there's something wrong with you because you're not in the "in" crowd, you think it means something, instead of just a way of characterizing, "Here's what this group of kids thinks is important, and I'm not one of them. I'm something else, but really I'm just as good as they are." You think about it.

Somebody says, "I want to build Greater Serbia." What the heck does that mean? Nothing to you; but if you were Serb and you had a sense of historic grievance, it might mean quite a lot to you, unless you had enough wisdom to know that the concept of being a Serb could only mean something if it were consistent with your search for the ultimate human truth and what connects you to the Albanians or the Macedonians or the Montenegrins or whatever.

Tougher for you in the Holy Land. And I applaud your search for peace, because even in the place where your faith was born, you know that the exclusive occupation of a given acre of land is not as important as the ability to relate to the common humanity of others who are your neighbors.

But if you think about it—we all ought to think about this—I have been plagued by this

thing in Littleton. I thought about—I've relived my life as a parent. My heart goes out to the parents who lost their children, including the parents of the two boys who did the killing. Because how many people are living in homes with people they love but are really strangers? How many times, even in our own homes, have we felt that? Maybe in nonviolent circumstances, but we all feel it. In a certain way we're all strangers on our journey through life.

And the only thing that enables us to hang together is, somehow we know that there is this thing that we share, that was given to us by God, that makes us in God's image, that gives us a piece of immortality. It is our common humanity.

If a child has a sense of that, then if somebody looks down on the child, the child can say, "That's their problem, not mine. They're not better than I am." The child can almost feel sympathy for them and certainly feel sympathy for others who are far more discriminated against. But if someone believes that categories are reality, are truth, then when someone looks down on the child, the child is not only angry at that person, but the child then looks around for someone to look down on.

I saw this happen when I was a kid in the South. Why were the poor whites the worst racists? Because the rich whites were looking down on them all the time. They knew they didn't have very much education. They knew they didn't have great jobs, and their lives were kind of a drag, and they felt like nobody respected them. But thank God, they had somebody they could look down on.

This is a huge problem in every society. And when you have a society like ours, where we refuse to take even the most elemental steps to control access to weapons that kids should not have access to and when we fought for the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban and the things that I'm trying to pass now—that I hope all of you support, and I know you will—they actively decide we're threatening the American way of life. Why? Because people believe that categories are realities. The gang they're in is the real gang with the whole truth and opposed to the others. It's the real difference in Mr. Saperstein and his debating partner, Mr. Falwell.

And in the end, you know, when this thing is over in Kosovo—and it will be over and they will go home, because we will not quit—but

when it's over, what's going to happen? The Kosovar Albanians who were uprooted from their homes and their schools, saw their villages burned—what should they do? Go home and see their Serbian neighbors, who turned the other way and were silent, because either they were afraid, maybe they were even secretly glad, maybe they even secretly believed in the Greater Serbia, maybe they openly believed in it—so what are they going to do, go in and get even with them?

We cannot stop when the war is over and the refugees go home. We have to give the people in the Balkans a way to be proud of their ethnic heritage, acknowledge that they all have legitimate historical grievances and then recognize that no one ever gets even. That is God's work; we don't do that. And the more we try to get even, the more we remain the prisoners of those against whom our anger is directed.

Now, somehow, we have got to drive that home to our children. And it's hard. But we ought to start here. You know, we're all raised in this old child's adage, "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me." It's just not true. Hardly anybody believes that anymore. There are a few people, like me, who have had more practice living with it than others. *[Laughter]* But it's a huge deal.

I can still remember when I was in second grade and I was the only kid that wasn't picked to play on a softball team. Nobody wanted me because I was too fat and slow. I can still remember it like it was yesterday. So that happens to kids. You know, our children need to know that they're still God's children and they're just as good as anybody else. And they should feel sympathy for people who are disrespecting and enormous pain for people who really suffer far greater than they do. They shouldn't get into this thing where they want to get even with the people that dissed them and they've got to have somebody to look down on. But this is human nature out of direction, people who believe that categories matter, that they're reality.

And I know I'm, as the Baptists say, preaching to the choir tonight. But this is a very important thing. Why are people so hung up on a lot of the issues that Barney has worked to get me to work with him on? Why are people afraid to pass the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act"? Why are they afraid of that?

I don't mean that categories don't matter. It really matters if you're Jewish or if you're Muslim; you have a different way of worshiping God. And they matter; all these things matter. But they do not define the whole truth. And that is the point that needs to be made.

Categories are things made up by imperfect people to help us organize reality so we can get through the day and try to search inside to get closer to the truth. They will never define the whole truth. We cannot do that. We cannot do that; that is not for us to do.

This sounds so basic, but after all this time I've spent as President, the most vivid memories I have—sitting in Kigali in Rwanda with a woman who woke up, having been cut by machetes, to find that her husband and six children had been slaughtered and somehow a miracle had let her survive. And instead of being full of hatred for losing everything, she was spending her life trying to figure out how to get people to live together again. And all the other examples like that I've seen. Every single time it was somebody in excruciating pain, having suffered enormous abuse, who somehow said, "All these things that we used to think matter so much, they don't matter as much as our common humanity."

It is that which allows people to have sufficient self-respect to endure the normal slings and arrows of life and sometimes the extraordinary unfairness that life brings. It is that which enables people to have the empathy and the sympathy necessary to be fully alive. And with all the modern world and all the fancy gizmos we have and all the growth of the economy we have and the stock market at 10,000—when you strip it all away, if we could learn that one lesson, most of the world's problems would go away. We would have peace in the Middle East in the month, if we could do that.

And so I ask you to think about that. I ask you to think about it especially in the Middle East. We said after this national election is over and the Israelis organize a new government, we'd like to bring the parties together within 6 months to pursue a final agreement. And we are committed to doing that, and I know you will support that. But in the end, to make it work, both sides will have to remember that the categories are important, but they can't be

the whole truth. Otherwise it will become a zero-sum game.

And you know, everybody has got a beef in life. You've got a beef, every one of you. But most of us get out ahead of where we would if all we got was simply justice and no mercy. And we have—somehow we have got to just bang this message home in the Middle East, in the Balkans, and in our own homes, in our communities, in our schools.

Yes, we must do more to deal with the problems of violence in the society. And I am proud of the fact that one of the legacies of this administration will be that we did contest with the NRA what kind of future we were going to have in America and whether we were going to be just totally irresponsible on the gun issue. I'm glad of that.

Yes, parents should have more control and have all these blockers and all this stuff on the Internet to keep some of the madness away from their kids. Yes, that's true, too. But in the end, most kids come out all right because most kids have the barriers and the self-respect and the guidance necessary and the humility necessary to find their humanity, instead of drifting into madness. And we have to find that for the Serbs and for the brutally injured Kosovars. We have to find that for the people who will make the hard decisions in the Israeli Government and among the Palestinians. We have to find that everywhere.

And I have found that, from the first day I met him, in the man we honor tonight. And I love him for it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 p.m. in the Presidential Ballroom at the Capitol Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie, president, Union of American Hebrew Congregations; Richard Ben-Veniste, former Watergate prosecutor; Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president, Children's Defense Fund, and her husband, Peter, professor, Georgetown Law School; former Senator Howard M. Metzenbaum; Gilead Landsburg, whose daughter Rabbi Lynne Landsburg was injured in an auto accident; and Rev. Jerry Falwell, pastor, Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, VA.

Remarks Announcing Proposed Gun Control Legislation *April 27, 1999*

Thank you very much, Carolyn, John Conyers, Senator Chafee, Senator Feinstein, all the many Members of Congress who are here. I thank the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Treasury, and Secretary of Education. I'm glad to see our old friend Mayor Helmke and Bob Walker and others here. We have, I think, over 40 Members of Congress here and two Senators who went back to the floor to fight for this issue to be put on the floor today.

I would like to do two things. First, I want to tell you specifically what we are proposing, and I'll do that. But secondly, I would like to tie what we are proposing to all these culture arguments and talk about, if you will, at least two cultures that exist in America, and say that I think this, in the end, is going to come down to what our conception of America as a community is and what our responsibilities to one another are.

I want to begin by saying a lot of people have made remarkable contributions, I think, to this effort to get us to look at the violence of our culture and how it makes the most vulnerable of our children, without regard to their income or their social status, closer to the line of taking violent action, and how it complicates family life for everyone.

I want to thank Hillary for what she's done. I also want to thank Al and Tipper Gore, who have done enormously important work on this for years, to try to help us deal with the TV issues, the ratings, the V-chips, and now, the new efforts we've been making with the Internet community to give parents some more control over that and the efforts we have to make to train the parents to figure out how to do it, since their kids all know more about it than they do.

But this is very important stuff. In June, Tipper Gore's going to host our White House Conference on Mental Health. And the Attorney General and Hillary and I were just talking about some of the things we can do to help to make sure all of our schools have the adequate mentoring and mediation and even mental health services our kids need. All this is very important. And we have to deal with that.

But if you believe that we have special cultural challenges, it seems to me that that's an argument that we ought to bend over backwards to try to remove the opportunities for bad things happening, if we have more kids that are vulnerable to doing those things, not an argument that we ought to say, "Well, we should walk away from that and just try to make sure everybody individually in the whole country never does anything wrong."

And what's the real problem here? The problem is, we have another culture in our country that I think has gotten confused about its objectives. We have a huge hunting and sport shooting culture in America, and unlike many of you, I grew up in it. I was 12 years old the first time I took a .22 and shot it at a can on a fencepost in the country. I know about this.

We always talk about the NRA; the NRA has been powerful not only because they have a lot of money but because they can influence people who vote. And in that culture, people believe everybody should be personally responsible for their actions; if you just punish people who do wrong more harshly, fewer people will do wrong; and everybody tells me I've got a constitutional right to keep and bear arms, so don't fool with me; and every reasonable restriction is just the camel's nose in the tent, and pretty soon they'll come after my shotgun, and I'll miss the next duck hunting season.

And we smile about that, but there are some people who would be on this platform today who lost their seats in 1994 because they voted for the Brady bill, and they voted for the assault weapons ban, and they did it in areas where people could be frightened. And the voters had not had enough time, which they did have within 2 more years, to see that nobody was going to take their gun away.

So we have more than one cultural problem here. And I want to make a plea to everybody who is waiting for the next deer season in my home State to think about this in terms of what our reasonable obligations to the larger community of America are.

Do we know for absolutely certain that if we had every reasonable law and the ones I'm going

to propose here, that none of these school violence things would have happened? No. But we do know one thing for certain. We know there would have been fewer of them, and there would have been fewer kids killed in the last several years in America. We know that for certain. We know that.

Cultures are hard to change. And cultures should never be used to avoid individual responsibility. But we—when we get to where we change, then we wonder. We look back and we say, “How could we have ever done it otherwise?”

Let me ask you something. Next time you get on an airplane, think about how you’d feel if the headline in the morning paper right before you got on the airplane was “Airport Metal Detectors and X-Ray Machines Abolished as Infringement on Americans’ Constitutional Right To Travel.” Think about it. That’s the headline in the morning paper. And right next to it there is another headline, “Terrorist Groups Expanding Operations in the United States.” And you read the two headlines, and you’re getting on the airplane, exercising your constitutional right to travel, which is now no longer infringed by the fact that you might have to go through the metal detector twice and take out your money clip or take off your heavily metaled belt and that somebody is x raying your luggage as it gets on the airplane. It’s unthinkable now, isn’t it? This will become unthinkable, too, that we should ever reverse these things if we ever have enough sense to do them.

But we still have a cultural and a political argument that says, to defend Americans’ rights to reasonable hunting and sport shooting, you have to defend the indefensible, as well. This is—it doesn’t make any sense at all, unless you’re caught up in this sort of web of distorted logic and denial.

But Carolyn McCarthy may have made the most important point here. We’re all in here preaching to the saved. You wouldn’t be here if you didn’t agree. But somebody needs to call these Members that grew up where I grew up, that lived in the same culture I did, that belong to both parties, and say, “Hey, we’ve got to make this like airport metal detectors and x-ray machines. This is about our community. This is about our responsibility to our children. This is about protecting our children and—the vulnerable children themselves—from people who are about to go over the line here. And this

is crazy that we’re living in a society that takes no reasonable steps to protect the larger community.”

So it’s not just a culture of violence that has to change; it’s the culture of hunting and sport shooting that has to stop financing efforts to frighten their members, who are good, God-fearing, law-abiding, taxpaying citizens out there, into believing that every time we try to save a kid’s life, it’s a camel’s nose in the tent.

I have had to go through those metal detectors as many as 3 times, back when I had a real life and I was traveling around, because I had all kinds of stuff in there—[laughter]—and every time I start to get a little aggravated, I think, “Boy, I don’t want that plane to blow up.” [Laughter] You know, make me go through a dozen times if you want to—and the person behind me.

Now, we’ve got to think about this in that way. These are the folks we have to reach. When there are no constituents for this movement, the movement will evaporate. When people from rural Pennsylvania and rural West Virginia and rural Colorado and Idaho start calling their Congressmen and saying, “Hey, man, we can live with this. We can live with this. This is no big deal, you know? I mean, we’re just out there doing what we do. We’ll gladly put up with an extra hassle, a little wait, a little this, a little that, because we want to save several thousand kids a year.”

That is my challenge to you. That is what is going on.

Now, here are the things we want to do. A lot of you won’t think they’re enough, but you remember the culture. You change the culture; we’ll change the laws. You change the message; we’ll do it. And none of them have anything to do with anybody’s legitimate right to hunt.

First of all, we ought to strengthen the Brady law. It’s kept 250,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers—the States now have the insta-check system, which is good. The mandatory waiting period has expired; that’s bad because we need it in addition to the insta-check system to give a cooling-off period to people who are in a fit of rage. It’s important.

The law that we would present, the act, will also prevent juveniles who commit violent crimes from ever buying a gun. It would apply the Brady law’s prohibition to juvenile violence. It would require Brady background checks on

anyone who wants to buy explosives—very important. And it would abolish, at long last, as Senator Feinstein said, a dangerous loophole that was likely exploited in Littleton, which allows people to buy weapons at gun shows without any background checks at all.

Now, you need to go make this case on this gun show deal. I don't know how many of you have ever been to one of these gun shows. I've been to gun shows in rural America. People walk around, and they've got their cars, and they've got their trunk open, and people walk in and say, "This is nice, and that's nice," and "This is a 100-year-old rifle," and blah, blah, blah. And then they say, "This is just too much hassle, you know." People pay cash, and nobody, you know—so it's going to be a hassle for them. It's worth it. It's worth it. We're sorry. It's worth it.

You don't have to pretend it won't be a hassle. Tell them you know it will be a hassle. It's worth it. People's lives are at stake here. What these shows started out doing, which was a good way for people who live in rural areas—it started out primarily in rural areas—who enjoy hunting and interested in different kinds of weapons, to have an interesting experience on a weekend afternoon, has turned out to be a gaping loophole through which criminals and deranged people and other people get guns they could not otherwise get.

And so we have to say, "We haven't asked you to abolish your gun shows, but we've asked you to undergo the inconvenience necessary to save more lives." We don't have to be insensitive; we just have to be determined. But I'm telling you, if we don't do something about this gun show loophole, we're going to continue to have serious, serious problems. And it's very important.

The second thing we've got to do is to strengthen the assault weapons ban, to close the loophole that allows dealers to sell older, high-capacity ammunition magazines manufactured abroad. Now, I bet you—when Senator Feinstein was talking about this, you thought, now, who in the world could be against this? I actually had a conversation with a Member of Congress who said to me—serious, a good person, it was a really good person, when we were doing this back in a '94, a really good person, this person I was talking to—who told me—[laughter]—let me tell you, I just want you to understand what the argument was. He said, "But

you've got to understand, we've got people who use these bigger magazines for certain kinds of sport contests." And I said, "Well, so what?" [Laughter] But he said, "They'll beat me if I vote for this." I said, "They'll beat you if they think all you're doing is making their lives miserable because some Washington bureaucrat asked you to do it. If you can explain to them that it's worth a minor alteration in their sporting habits to save people's lives, they won't beat you."

But my point is, you've got to help these people. You hear this, and you think, "God, this is a no-brainer. This is a hundred-to-nothing deal. Who in the wide world could ever be"—you have to understand, there is another culture out there. And almost everybody in it is God-fearing, law-abiding, taxpaying, and they show up when they're needed. And they don't like this because they don't understand that if they do what you're asking them to do, they can save a lot of lives. And we have got to fix this. This is just pure mathematics; you're going to have fewer people die if you get rid of these magazines. So you need to go out there where the problem is and debate your fellow citizens and discuss it with them. It's important.

The third thing the legislation would do is to raise the legal age of handgun possession from 18 to 21 years. It would also strengthen our zero tolerance for guns in schools, which, as one of the previous Members said, had led us to 6,000 suspensions or expulsions last year, by requiring schools to report to the police any student who brings a gun to school and requiring that the student get counseling. That, I think, is very important.

The provision holding adults criminally responsible would only apply, but—this is quite important—but it would apply if they recklessly failed to keep firearms out of the reach of young people. This would mandate a steep increase in penalties for adults who transfer guns illegally to juveniles. It would require child safety locks to be sold with all new guns.

Finally, it would crack down on illegal gun trafficking, doubling the number of cities now working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to trace every gun seized by the police. I know this is very important to Congresswoman McCarthy.

It would require that dealers submit information not only on the guns they sell but on used

guns, which are often very hard for law enforcement agencies to trace. It would significantly increase penalties for gun runners caught trafficking large numbers of firearms. It would establish a national system, as soon as it's feasible, to limit handgun purchases to one a month, following the lead of Virginia.

You know, I've got to say—this is very interesting. When we were going over the list of things we wanted to propose, some people said, "Well, that might be a loser because it sounds to people who care about this like that's too many, and what is this?" You know, the States that have had big problems in the past, with lots of illegal gun purchases and guns then being used for illegal purposes—Virginia did this, and it really helped them. This was a big deal. And I just talked to Senator Robb about this a couple days ago, and he said, "You know, all I can tell you is it's working in our State." So I would ask you to seriously consider what this might mean for our efforts to control the law enforcement aspects of this.

So these are the things that I wanted to say. But I hope you'll remember what I said to you about the culture. We do have to keep working on the culture. Hillary's right about it. Al and Tipper Gore are right about it. We've got a lot of responsibilities. We've got to keep working on the services for kids. We've even got to work on helping parents actually communicate with their children.

One Senator called me the night before last and said he'd had a town meeting in his State with children. And he asked how many of the schoolchildren had actually talked to their parents about what happened in Littleton. And only 10 percent of the kids raised their hands. And one child said, "I had to go and turn off the television and tell my parents we were going to talk about it." She said, "They're just scared. They're scared. They didn't know how to talk about it."

So there are all these cultural issues. And then there's this big cultural issue of the gun and sport hunting culture. And I hope that—a lot of my folks at home might take offense at what I said today, but I'm trying to help explain them to you. And I felt comfortable taking on these issues, and I thought maybe I was in a unique position to take on all these gun issues all these years because of where I grew up and because I understand how people think who don't agree with this.

But I'm telling you, we've got to keep working until people start thinking about this stuff the same way they think about x rays and metal detectors at airports. That's the goal. We have to redefine the national community so that we have a shared obligation to save children's lives. And we've got to get out of this crazy denial that this won't make a difference. It's crazy; it won't make—just because it won't make all the difference doesn't mean it won't make a difference. It will make a difference.

I implore you to remember what these Members have said. I implore you to go out and get people going at the grassroots, as Carolyn McCarthy said. We need help. We can pass all this if the American people want it bad enough. We can pass it all if the American people want it badly enough. And we don't need to go through another Littleton for the American people to want it badly enough. You can help make sure that happens.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Paul Helmke of Fort Wayne, IN; and Bob Walker, president, Handgun Control, Inc., and the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of First Lady Hillary Clinton.

Remarks on Presenting the National Medals of Science and Technology April 27, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. I want to begin by thanking Neal Lane and Secretary Daley for the terrific job they do for our admin-

istration every day and for the American people. I also want to welcome the two eminently qualified Members of Congress to be here, Senator

Bill Frist, a distinguished physician, and Representative Rush Holt, our only bona fide scientist in the United States Congress, and it's about time we had one, and I'm glad they're both here. *[Laughter]*

Each year, I look forward to presenting these medals because they show again that America's future is flowering as a result of the work of the honorees and people like them all over our country. I suppose I am living proof, when I come here every year, that it is possible for a person to love and support those things which he does not fully understand. *[Laughter]* Indeed, one of the reasons that I asked Al Gore to join the ticket with me in 1992 was that I felt that the work you do would shape the future of America, and I thought there ought to be somebody here in the White House who knew more about it than I did. In the years since, I've done my best to be a good student.

One of the things that impresses me is the nature of the work that all of you do, although it is very different. I was deeply moved when I read as a young man what Albert Einstein said when he said, "I think and think for months and years. Ninety-nine times, the conclusion is false. The hundredth time, I am right." I wonder how many of you, day and night, perhaps fueled by lukewarm coffee or kept awake by stubborn puzzles, have waited for that hundredth time. We are very glad that you made the effort.

You have sought answers to questions that few Americans can even begin to understand, or others people ask but can't answer, questions about neutrino physics and plant genetics, about polymer composites and urban poverty. Your success in illuminating the hows and whys of our world and raising the quality of human existence have helped make the time in which we live perhaps the most exciting in human history. I am humbled by your achievements and honored to present these medals to you.

I'd like to take just a moment to reaffirm something that is obvious to all of you but needs to be equally clear to your fellow Americans. In an age when the entire store of knowledge doubles every 5 years, where prosperity depends upon command of that ever-growing store, the United States is the strongest it has ever been, thanks in large measure to the remarkable pace and scope of American science and technology in the last 50 years.

Our scientific progress has been fueled by a unique partnership between government, academia, and the private sector. Our Constitution actually promotes the progress of what the Founders called "science and the useful arts." The partnership deepened with the founding of land grant universities in the 1860's. After World War II, President Roosevelt directed his science adviser, Vannevar Bush, to determine how the remarkable wartime research partnership between universities and the Government could be sustained in peace. "New frontiers of the mind are before us," Roosevelt said. "If they are pioneered with the same vision, boldness, and drive with which we have waged the war, we can create a fuller and more fruitful employment and a fuller and more fruitful life." Perhaps no Presidential prophecy has ever been more accurate.

Vannevar Bush helped to convince the American people that Government must support science, that the best way to do it would be to fund the work of independent university researchers. This ensured that, in our Nation, scientists would be in charge of science. And where before university science relied largely on philanthropic organizations for support, now the National Government would be a strong and steady partner.

This commitment has helped to transform our system of higher education into the world's best. It has kindled a half century of creativity and productivity in our university life. Well beyond the walls of academia, it has helped to shape the world in which we live and the world in which we work. Biotechnology, modern telecommunications, the Internet, all had their genesis in university labs, in recombinant DNA work, in laser and fiber optic research, in the development of the first web-browser.

It is shaping the way we see the universe. Just last week, astronomers at San Francisco State University, whose work was supported by the National Science Foundation, announced they had detected a solar system of three large planets orbiting the star Upsilon Andromedae. This suggests strongly that there are billions of planets in the universe, some of them undoubtedly very much like Earth. Now, on my bad days here, that's a very sobering thought—*[laughter]*—but quite an exciting one.

It is shaping the way we see ourselves, both in a literal and in an imaginative way. Brain imaging is revealing how we think and process

knowledge. We are isolating the genes that cause disease from cystic fibrosis to breast cancer. Soon we will have mapped the entire human genome, unveiling the very blueprint of human life. Meanwhile, I want to compliment the committee on recognizing today the role of social science in honoring William Julius Wilson, whose work has deeply influenced what I have tried to do as President, to bring the benefits of work to people too long denied them.

Today, because of this alliance between Government and the academy, we are, indeed, enjoying fuller and more fruitful lives. With only a few months left in the millennium, the time has come to renew the alliance between America and its universities, to modernize our partnership to be ready to meet the challenges of the next century.

Three years ago I directed my National Science and Technology Council to look into and report back to me on how to meet this challenge. Today I'm pleased to present their findings.

The report makes three major recommendations. First, we must move past today's patchwork of rules and regulations and develop a new vision for the university/Federal Government partnership. Vice President Gore has proposed a new compact between our scientific community and our Government, one based on rigorous support for science and a shared responsibility to shape our breakthroughs into a force for progress. Today I ask the National Science and Technology Council to work with universities to write a statement of principles to guide this partnership into the future.

Next, we must recognize that Federal grants support not only scientists but also the university students with whom they work. The students are the foot soldiers of science. Though they are paid for their work, they are also learning and conducting research essential to their own degree programs. That is why we must ensure that Government regulations do not enforce artificial distinctions between students and employees. Our young people must be able to fulfill their dual roles as learners and research workers.

And I ask all of you to work with me, every one of you, to get more of our young people, especially our minorities and women students, to work in our research fields. Over the next decade, minorities will represent half of all of our school-age children. If we want to maintain

our continued leadership in science and technology well into the next century, we simply must increase our ability to benefit from their talents, as well.

Finally, America's scientists should spend more time on research, not filling out forms in triplicate. Therefore, I direct the NSTC to redouble their efforts to cut down the redtape, to streamline the administrative burden of our partnership.

These steps will bring Federal support for science into the 21st century. But they will not substitute for the most basic commitment we need to make. We must continue to expand our support for basic research.

You know, one of Clinton's laws of politics—not science, mind you—is that whenever someone looks you in the eye and says, “This is not a money problem,” they are almost certainly talking about someone else's problem. [*Laughter*]

Half of all basic research, research not immediately transferable to commerce but essential to progress, is conducted in our universities. For the past 6 years we have consistently increased our investment in these areas. Last year, as a part of our millennial observation to honor the past and imagine the future, we launched the 21st century research fund, the largest investment in civilian research and development in our history. In my most recent balanced budget, I proposed new information technology initiative to help all disciplines take advantage of the latest advances in computing research.

Unfortunately, the resolution on the budget passed by Congress earlier this month shortchanges that proposal and undermines research partnerships with NASA, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of Energy. This is no time to step off the path to progress and scientific research. So I ask all of you, as leaders of your community, to build support for these essential initiatives. Let's make sure the last budget of this century prepares our Nation well for the century to come.

From its birth, we have been built by bold, restless, searching people. We have always sought new frontiers. The spirit of America is, in that sense, truly the spirit of scientific inquiry.

Vannevar Bush once wrote that “science has a simple faith which transcends utility . . . the faith that it is the privilege of man to learn to understand and that this is his mission . . . Knowledge for the sake of understanding, not

merely to prevail, that is the essence of our being. None can define its limits or set its ultimate boundaries.”

I thank all of you for living that faith, for expanding our limits and broadening our boundaries. I thank you—through both anonymity and acclaim, through times of stress and strain as well as times of triumph—for carrying on this fundamental human mission.

Major Williams, please read the citations.

[At this point, Maj. Darryl Williams, USA, Army Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.]

The President. Thank you, Major. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Congratulations again. We’re adjourned. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to 1998 National Medal of Science recipient William Julius Wilson.

Memorandum on Renewing the Federal Government-University Research Partnership for the 21st Century

April 27, 1999

Memorandum for the National Science and Technology Council

Subject: Renewing the Federal Government-University Research Partnership for the 21st Century

Federal investments in university research are critically important to the Nation, helping foster the discovery of knowledge, stimulating technological innovation, improving the quality of life, and contributing to America’s economic prosperity. Universities also have the unique role of educating and training the next generation of scientists and engineers. Indeed, the integration of research and education is the hallmark of the American university system, which many nations now seek to emulate. Beginning with the visionary establishment of the land grant universities by President Lincoln in 1862 and continuing with President Truman’s effort to redouble our Nation’s commitment to university-sponsored research and education by the establishment of the National Science Foundation, the partnership that has evolved between the Federal Government and our Nation’s system of research universities has served us well by any measure of success.

However, with the end of the Cold War and the globalization of the world’s economy, it became apparent that the future success of the partnership cannot be taken for granted. That is why I directed the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) to assess the current state of the partnership and recommend

ways to strengthen it. The resulting report on *Renewing the Federal Government-University Research Partnership for the 21st Century* finds that the partnership is fundamentally sound, but that it can still be improved. Therefore, I direct as follows:

1. The NSTC, in consultation with research universities and other stakeholders in the Federal science and technology enterprise, shall develop a statement of principles that clearly articulates the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each of the partners and establishes a framework for addressing future issues as they arise. Ultimately, this statement of principles will serve to shape future discussions and guide policy development and decision making.

2. The NSTC shall develop recommendations to better support the integration of research and education in Government policies and practice. The vital and dual roles of students (undergraduates as well as graduates), as both researchers who contribute to the national research enterprise and as students who gain research experience as part of their training, must be recognized and reflected in Government and university policies and practices.

3. The NSTC shall propose specific actions by member agencies to make the partnership more effective and efficient. These actions should be aimed at fostering a productive policy, regulatory, and administrative environment and promoting cost and administrative efficiencies while maintaining accountability for public funds.

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These actions should be completed within 12 months of the date of this memorandum. The findings and recommendations contained in the NSTC report *Renewing the Federal Government-University Research Partnership for the*

21st Century should provide the basis for proceeding.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Statement on Ordering Reserves to Active Duty To Support Military Action in Kosovo

April 27, 1999

Today I authorized the Secretaries of Defense and Transportation to order to active duty up to 33,102 essential members of our Reserve component to support NATO and U.S. operations related to the conflict in Kosovo.

The Secretary of Defense has informed me that he intends to exercise that authority immediately to recall approximately 2,000 essential Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard crews from eight States. These reservists will support refueling operations for our intensifying air operations in Kosovo. I expect that over the coming days and weeks, Secretary Cohen and General Shelton will call upon additional personnel from all branches of the service to fill critical support positions in our humanitarian and com-

bat operations in and around the former Yugoslavia. These Reserves are essential to America's military strength; they are part of the total force we bring to bear whenever our men and women in uniform are called to action.

All Americans are proud of the commitment these citizen soldiers make to their country. On behalf of all Americans, I thank each reservist, their families and loved ones, and their employers here at home for their service and sacrifice in support of our important mission in Kosovo.

NOTE: The Executive order on ordering Reserves to active duty is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress on Ordering Reserves to Active Duty To Support Military Action in Kosovo

April 27, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I have today, pursuant to section 12304 of title 10, United States Code, authorized the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Transportation with respect to the Coast Guard, when it is not operating as a service within the Department of the Navy, under their respective jurisdictions, to order to active duty any units, and any individual members not assigned to a unit organized to serve as a unit, of the Selected Reserve, or any member in the Individual Ready Reserve mobilizations category and designated essential under regulations prescribed by the Secretary concerned. These reserves will aug-

ment the active components in support of operations in and around the former Yugoslavia related to the conflict in Kosovo.

A copy of the Executive order implementing this action is attached.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 27, 1999.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Memorandum on Establishment of the Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U.S. Seaports
April 27, 1999

Memorandum for the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Transportation, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, United States Trade Representative, Director of National Drug Control Policy, Chief of Staff to the President, Director of Central Intelligence, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Subject: Establishment of the Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U.S. Seaports

United States seaports are an integral part of our Nation's commerce. Too often, however, they tend to be a major locus of crime, including drug trafficking, cargo theft, and smuggling of contraband and aliens. Moreover, the criminal conspiracies often associated with these crimes can pose threats to the people and critical infrastructures of seaport cities.

Many government agencies at the Federal, State, and local level are addressing this significant problem, at times in partnership with the private sector. I have determined that the Nation needs a comprehensive review of the nature and extent of seaport crime and the overall state of security in seaports, as well as the ways in which governments at all levels are responding to this problem.

Therefore, I hereby direct as follows:

1. The Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General and the Secretary of Transportation, in cooperation with other heads of executive departments and agencies as appropriate, shall establish the Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U.S. Seaports (hereinafter, the Commission).

2. The Commission shall be comprised of not more than 25 members and shall be co-chaired by 3 Federal officials, one of whom shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury, one of whom shall be appointed by the Attorney

General, and one of whom shall be appointed by the Secretary of Transportation.

3. The Commission members shall include senior officials of: the Departments of State, the Treasury, Defense, Justice, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Transportation; the Environmental Protection Agency, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Council, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. All members of the Commission shall be full-time Federal employees.

4. The Commission shall undertake a comprehensive study of the nature and extent of the problem of crime in our seaports, as well as the ways in which governments at all levels are responding. The study shall address all serious crime relating to the maritime context, including but not limited to drug trafficking, cargo theft, and the smuggling of contraband and aliens. Moreover, the study shall carefully examine the role of internal conspiracies often associated with such crime in seaports, including the potential threats posed by terrorists and others to the people and critical infrastructures of seaport cities.

5. In the course of its work, the Commission shall seek input from, and take full account of, the expertise and views of the many different State and local government agencies with relevant responsibilities, as well as the involved private sector interests.

6. The Commission shall complete its work within 1 year of the date of its establishment. On or before that date, the Commission shall submit a report to the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Transportation, including the following:

- An analysis of the nature and extent of serious crime and an assessment of the overall state of security in U.S. seaports;
- An overview of the specific missions and authorities of Federal agencies with relevant responsibilities, together with a description in general terms of the typical roles played by State and local agencies as well as by the private sector;

- An assessment of the nature and effectiveness of the ongoing coordination among the Federal, State, and local government agencies; and
 - Recommendations for improving the response of Federal, State, and local governments to the problem of seaports crime.
7. Within 3 months of the submission of the Commission's report, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Transportation shall forward the report, together with their joint recommendations, to the Chief of Staff to the President for final review and appropriate action.
8. The Secretary of the Treasury shall appoint an Executive Director who will oversee the sup-

port staff and a working group to be established to further the work of the Commission. The Executive Director shall report directly to the Co-Chairs of the Commission.

9. With the exception of the personnel costs (including the salaries and any necessary travel expenses) of the members of the Commission and the working group, which shall remain the responsibility of their parent agency, the Department of the Treasury shall fund the Commission, including all costs for support staff, office space, and logistics.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Chevy Chase, Maryland April 27, 1999

Thank you very much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, this has been an atypical and thoroughly enjoyable fundraiser. *[Laughter]*

First of all, when I was introduced, Father, to you, I thought to myself, how did the conversation go when Tommy Boggs asked you to come and pray over all these politicians, lobbyists, and fundraisers? And I think it must have gone something like this: He asked you, and you said, "Well, if I can pray over you, Tom, I can pray over anybody." *[Laughter]*

Let me say—we were having a conversation here at the table, and I was telling Pat Kluge, Tom, how much I liked your whole family and how much I admired your late sister Barbara and treasured the brief occasions I had to be with her, how I will always cherish the fact that I was with your remarkable father on the last weekend of his life, in San Antonio, Texas, when I was a very young man—and I was completely enamored of him—and how your unbelievable mother took me under her wing and didn't shed me when a lot of other people were, in 1992. *[Laughter]* And now she represents me to the Pope—*[laughter]*—and is maybe the only person on the Earth—*[laughter]*—who could convince the Pope that I am worth dealing with. *[Laughter]* So, anyway—so I love the Boggs family. *[Laughter]*

And I understand that one of the things that Lindy's going to do before she leaves the Vatican is to nominate you for sainthood, Barbara. *[Laughter]*

But let me say to all of you, I appreciate, Tom, what you said in the introduction. But I would like to say that I hope all the people who came here, who are not rank-and-file Democrats, would just consider a few things.

We had a remarkable NATO Summit here over the weekend, the largest number of world leaders who had ever been gathered in Washington, heads of government and heads of state, at one time, not only to deal with the immediate crisis of Kosovo but to envision the world of the 21st century that we want to make—a world in which Europe, for the first time in history, is undivided, democratic, and free, and at peace; a world in which people are working together and cherishing both their diversity and their interdependence; a world which offers our children the promise of greater peace and prosperity than any age in human history.

And at the end of that summit, Al From and the Democrat Leadership Council sponsored a forum in which Governor Romer spoke about his experiences as Governor and the new labor commissioner in Georgia—the first, along with

the attorney general, the first two African-Americans ever elected to statewide office in Georgia—talked about the work he had done to move people from the welfare rolls to the work rolls.

The mayor of Denver, an African-American in a city where African-Americans are decidedly in the minority, talked about the work he had done to get the unemployment rate in the city of Denver down to 3.9 percent and what they'd done to try to knit the community together and build support for the schools.

And the Lieutenant Governor of Maryland, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, talked about, among other things, the work they were doing to try to keep more people out of prison but to make people with drug-related offenses be drug tested twice a week as a condition of being out of prison, and how much it had reduced the growth of imprisonment, reduced the crime rate, and reduced the recidivism rate.

And it was a remarkable thing. But what really is interesting about it is, the discussion was not partisan in any conventional sense. And I brought to the discussion the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the Chancellor of Germany, the Prime Minister of Italy, and the Prime Minister of The Netherlands, all of whom represent the same sort of movement that came to our country when Al Gore and I were elected in 1992.

I say that to make this point: Every major country has to confront the challenges of creating as much opportunity as we can in the global economy and at the same time preserving the cohesion that any decent nation and any decent community has. How do you get the benefits of all this exploding technology and entrepreneurialism and global economics and retain and strengthen the benefits that come from supporting families and communities, raising children well?

And I believed in 1992, when I ran for President, and I believe it more strongly today, that we had to break the citizens of this country from the grip of an outdated political debate; that it would be possible, if you followed the right policies, to balance the budget and increase your investment in education and health care. It would be possible to preserve the environment and improve it and grow the economy at a more rapid rate. It would be possible to move the world toward peace and still use force in a disciplined way to stand up for peace and

to stand against the resurgence of ethnic and racial and religious hatred in the world.

And insofar as we have had any success, I am thankful that I could be the instrument of that in the White House for the 18 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment in 29 years and the first surplus since 1960, now to the biggest peacetime surpluses ever. I'm grateful for that.

I'm grateful that we have over 90 percent of our children immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the history of the country. I'm grateful for the tax credits and other advances which have opened the doors of college virtually to every person in America.

I'm grateful that the air and water is cleaner and that we've set aside more land in perpetuity than any administration in history except those run by the two Roosevelts. I'm grateful for all that.

But it all started with a set of ideas, that we had to find a way to guarantee opportunity for every responsible citizen, to reinforce responsibility, and to build a genuine sense of community so that we all felt not only that we had obligations to one another that crossed all the lines that divide us but that we would all actually be better off if our neighbors were better off.

And we are trying to carry that into the world, into working for peace, from the Middle East and Northern Ireland to the Balkans; trying to help our friends in Asia get over their financial crisis and keep it from spreading to Latin America; in trying to make sure that the economic growth that has still escaped some of the inner cities and poor rural areas and Native American reservations in our country can at long last be extended to them; in trying to guarantee that every child in this country has an excellent, world-class education; in trying to deal with the challenges of aging by reforming Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century and at the same time continuing to pay down our debt, so that we can liberate our children from excessive dependence on high borrowing at high interest rates and excessive reliance on all the turbulence that may yet still engulf the global economy.

All of that started with a set of ideas, with a group of people who were prepared to think in a different way and to have values without having ideology, to have ideas that were tested

not only by whether they were consistent with those values but by whether they in fact worked or not.

Today we had a truly astonishing meeting in the White House with 40 Members of Congress that included three Republicans—three brave Republicans—to talk about something I had planned to do for some time, before the terrible tragedy in Colorado, about what we had to do to strengthen our protection that guns won't fall into the hands of children.

And I said then and I will say again, I believe very strongly that there are things in our culture that have to be challenged and that there is too much ready violence in the culture. And between Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore, we have worked on this hard, now, for 6 years. We've got the TV rating system and the V-chip that will soon be in all new televisions.

We've made a lot of headway even on the Internet, in giving parents the tools to screen out certain websites on the Internet. The technology is there. I have to say parenthetically, with the head of the National Education Association here, our biggest challenge is going to be trying to teach the parents of this country to be half as good on computers as their kids are. But if we can do that, the technology is there. We've worked on these things. There are cultural issues, all right, and we need to do more there.

But it is also true that there is another culture in America, made up of people who are overwhelmingly God-fearing citizens who pay their taxes and obey the law and show up when they're needed and who love to hunt, and they use their guns for sporting purposes and have been, I think, welded into a political force designed to stop us from dealing with the objective things we can do about guns to make our society safer.

They've been convinced that every little thing we do, no matter how small or modest, is the camel's nose in the tent, and somebody's going to come get their hunting rifle. And as a result, our society has plainly failed to do what any great and sensible country would do.

And today I said I was going to go back and try to get the waiting period of the Brady bill back, even though we have the insta-check, that we were going to try to apply the Brady law and its prohibition on handgun ownership to juveniles who have been convicted of violent offenses, that we were going to try to plug some

loopholes in the law that relates to assault weapons and gun shows, where there is no background check, and a lot of other things.

But I want to make a general point. I come from a culture, as do some of these—Tommy Boggs was—I thought I was going to see him a few weeks ago, and he was down at Beryl Anthony's hunting lodge instead of with me. So we come out of this culture. I was 12 years old the first time I ever shot a .22 at a can on top of a fencepost in the country.

But I promised myself, when I got elected President, that because of my background, I was in a position to try to take on the positions that the NRA had taken and at least have a halfway decent chance of explaining it to the American people. And I'm proud that we've done that. We've got the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. And I hope we get some more things like that.

But the point I want to make to you is, that took a decision, and I had to have a party that backed me up. And I lost some House Members. One of the reasons we're sitting here worrying about whether we can pick up six more House Members is, more than six lost their seats in 1994 because they stood up and voted for the Brady bill and they stood up and voted for the assault weapons ban. And there are children alive in America today because of it. And we were right about that.

So you don't have to be all attached to party labels to believe that ideas matter in politics and conventional wisdoms have to be challenged if the country is going to go forward and become what it ought to be.

And so, I just want all of you to know here that for those of you who have been with us all along, I am grateful. For those of you who are here for the first time, I am very grateful.

I'm not running for anything. I'm here because I believe in what we've done, and I know there's a lot more to do, not only in the 2 years I have remaining on my term but in the years ahead. And this country needs to be led from a dynamic, vital center rooted in a concern for these basic ideas, not the politics of left and right but how to get opportunity to every responsible citizen and how to build a genuine sense of community in which we care for other people because it is morally right to do, but we also are smart enough to understand that we'll all do better if other Americans do better. That unleashes a flood of good ideas. And if

you can only get half of them done, the country is in a much better place.

So when I look back on the last 6 years, when I look to the next 2 years, when I look ahead to the next 10 years, I believe the philosophy we have brought to America is the right one. And I believe our country would be better served if we had more people who believed in it and worked for it every day. That's why I'm here supporting Joe and Beth and Loretta and Roy and Andy and all of our fine team, because I believe that with all my heart.

And if you believe that this is a better country in the last 6 years, I appreciate it if you think that I had something to do with it. But I was the instrument of the ideas that, when implemented, made America a better place. And we need more people who can carry those ideas and have the ability to implement them.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:22 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Fa-

ther William L. George, assistant to the president of Georgetown University for Federal relations; dinner hosts Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr., and his wife, Barbara; Patricia Kluge, president, Kluge Investments; Corinne Claiborne (Lindy) Boggs, U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See; Commissioner of Labor Michael L. Thurmond and State Attorney General Thurbert E. Baker of Georgia; Al From, president, Democratic Leadership Council; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy; Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands; Robert F. Chase, president, National Education Association; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Representative Loretta Sanchez, general cochair, former Governor Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, and Andy Tobias, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; and former Representative Beryl Anthony of Arkansas.

Remarks Following a Meeting With a Congressional Delegation and an Exchange With Reporters

April 28, 1999

Situation in the Balkans

The President. Good afternoon. I just had a good meeting with a large bipartisan delegation from both Houses of Congress on Kosovo. It was our fourth meeting since the airstrikes began. We spoke about the NATO Summit, its unity and determination to achieve our objectives in Kosovo; about the progress of our military campaign and the intensification of economic sanctions; about the humanitarian challenge that we face and the work that we and our allies are doing to meet it.

Just on Monday, some 3,500 Kosovar refugees in trains and buses arrived in Montenegro. Yesterday about 5,000 entered Macedonia; almost 3,000 arrived in Albania, exhausted, hungry, shaken, all by the violence and abuse they experienced on the way. At one point, 1.8 million ethnic Albanians lived in Kosovo. Nearly 1½ million have been displaced since the start of the crisis.

Our humanitarian coordinator, Brian Atwood, who just returned from the region, has described an elderly Albanian woman he met in a camp outside Tirana. She saw all the male members of her family and most of the men in her village rounded up by Serbian authorities, tied up, doused with gasoline, and set on fire in front of their families.

It's the kind of story that would be too horrible to believe if it were not so consistent with what so many other refugees have been saying. What we need to remember is that this is the result of a meticulously planned campaign, not an isolated incident of out-of-control rage, a campaign organized by the Government of Belgrade for a specific political purpose, to maintain its grip over Kosovo by ridding the land of its people.

This policy must be defeated, and it will be defeated. That was the clear message of the NATO Summit. Nineteen democratically elected NATO leaders came together to demonstrate

their unity and determination to prevail. We agreed to intensify the air campaign, and that is what NATO is doing, both against military targets in Kosovo and against the infrastructure of political and military power in Belgrade.

Our partners in southeastern Europe, the frontline states, who are risking so much and who have borne such a heavy burden, have followed through on their pledges of support. We are also providing more funds to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and to NGO's to deliver food and supplies to the refugees. Our Defense Department has found a site for the facility it will build in Albania for up to 20,000 refugees. We hope it will begin taking in refugees in about 2 weeks.

I spoke to Members of Congress about all these efforts today. I told them that now is the time to pass the supplemental funding for Kosovo that I requested 9 days ago. We need it to maintain our military readiness. Just as important, we need to sustain humanitarian relief and support for the frontline nations that have absorbed the brunt of this emergency.

Let me stress that my request fully funds our military and humanitarian needs in Kosovo. Congress should resist the temptation to add unrelated expenditures, even important ones, which could delay the process, because that would undermine the very goals that this funding is intended to meet. We must get a Kosovo funding measure passed and to my desk now.

We also talked about other legislative initiatives pending on Kosovo in the Congress. I stressed that the 19 NATO Allies are speaking with a single voice. America must continue to speak with a single voice as well. I told them we would welcome the support of the Congress so that Mr. Milosevic will have no doubt that we had the determination and the patience to persevere until we prevail.

Each day our military campaign takes a toll on Serbia's machinery of repression. The Serbian leadership has failed to divide us and will not outlast us. The combined military might and moral determination of Europe and North America will endure.

We know what the final outcome will be: The Serbian forces will leave Kosovo; an international security force will deploy to protect all the people there, Serbs as well as Albanians; and the refugees will return with security and self-government.

Thank you.

Q. Did you say you promised Congress you would ask permission—

Q. [*Inaudible*]—how can you say the strategy is working when 40,000 troops remain in Kosovo?

Q. Mr. President, do you see any signs that Milosevic is losing his grip, sir? Any signs at all?

The President. We have some indications that there are differences of opinion, obviously, developing in Belgrade, and we saw some of it public this week. There are some things that we know that I think I should not comment on. But the thing I want to tell the American people is, we know, objectively, what damage has been done. We know now we're going to be in a position to fly around the clock at lower altitudes from all directions in better weather.

Historically, the weather is better in May than in April, better in June than in May, better in July than in June. And I feel very strongly that we should stay with and be very strong in determination to pursue our strategy, as well as the very important decisions we made at the NATO conference to intensify the economic pressure. And I believe that if we do these things, we will be successful.

I am determined to do it. I believe our allies are all determined to do it. I think when they left here, they were more determined than when they came.

As to the question the gentleman asked about the troops, keep in mind, the fact that they have mobilized more troops is an indication of the trouble they're having. If they had no problems, they wouldn't need the troops. The initial state of play on the ground was they had 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo and nearly 300 tanks. So we always knew that if they were willing to take the bombing in the beginning, they could do what they have done. Now, we have to stay with it to reverse that, and we can, and we will if we stay with it. I'm determined to do that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks on Signing the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999 April 29, 1999

Thank you. Let me say, first of all, I thank Dr. Metts for being here, for giving us a first-hand and concrete expression of what this bill will mean to the States of our country and to the local school districts. I thank the Members of Congress who have spoken, Senator Wyden, Senator Frist, Congressman Roemer, my old colleague Congressman Castle.

We're delighted to have the Vermont education commissioner here, Marc Hull, along with Senator Jeffords and Senator Kennedy and a very large delegation of Republicans and Democrats from the United States Congress, from the Senate and the House. I'd like to ask the Members of Congress just to stand so the rest of you will see how many people here worked on this bill.

You know, there have been days in the last few years when I'm not sure we could have gotten this many Members of Congress to agree that today is Thursday. *[Laughter]* This was a truly astonishing effort, and I want to thank them all.

I want to say, too, a special word of appreciation to Governor Carper and a very profound thanks to Secretary Riley. He and I started, as I have told many people, working on education reform together 20 years ago this year. And over the last 20 years, we have done our best to sort out what we ought to do and how we ought to do it and where the responsibility for what particular action ought to lie.

And I suppose, if I could put it into a sentence, I would say that insofar as possible, when it comes to the education of our children in kindergarten through 12th grade, the beginning of what should be done, should be done by the States, and "how" should be decided by the local districts, but basically, whenever possible, by the local principals and teachers and parents involved in the schools; that the Federal Government is called upon to meet the needs that States can't meet on their own, the needs of poor children, children with special needs, or to fill in the gaps when there are crying national needs unmet; and that when substantial Federal dollars are involved, it's okay for the Federal Government to say "what," too. But we should all be singing out of the same hymnal,

insofar as possible. And we should all remember that all education, in the schools at least, occurs in the classrooms, in the libraries, on the schoolyards, among the students and parents and principals.

I think it is quite remarkable to see the places where you're really seeing a turnaround now, where you have high expectation, high standards, discipline, and genuine accountability for the students and the teachers and the principals. You also see a dramatic attempt to cut the cost of education where the money's being wasted and to increase the investment in education where more is needed.

One of the things I'm very proud of that Secretary Riley has done is, independent of this bill we're signing today, is to slash the paperwork burdens on State and local officials by well over 60 percent since he has been the Secretary of Education, while putting an even more ambitious agenda before the educators of America.

Now, the Founding Fathers understood that this would be a big debate; we'd always be having this debate. Thomas Jefferson once said, "Were we directed from Washington when to sow and when to reap, we should soon want for bread." I may have liked that even more when I was Governor, but it still sounds pretty good to me. *[Laughter]*

But the framers understood something else, too. They understood that the country had a right to decide and had to decide from time to time what we were going to do, maybe not when and how but what. They believed, for example, in 1787 that education was an important national purpose and declared that all new territories must put aside land for public schools, thereby establishing the fact that education, though a State and local responsibility, must be a national priority.

This Education Flexibility Partnership Act exemplifies, I think, the Founders' vision of how a properly balanced Federal system of government can work, providing freedom from Federal rules and regulations. This new law will allow States and school districts not just to save administrative dollars, with less headache and red-tape, but actually to pool different funds from

different sources in the Federal Government. But by demanding accountability in return, it will make sure States and school districts focus on results.

Now, Doctor, you mentioned one example. I'll give you an example from my own life that made me so strongly for this bill. In 1990 or '91 when I was Governor, the Department of Education under President Bush gave us permission in a very small, very poor rural school district to take all of our Federal funds at elementary schools, including the Chapter I funds and some of the special ed funds, and put them together and take class size down to 15 to 1, in a district where the test scores were low and the learning was tough.

And this little district had a formula—they also actually had an idea that even 6-year-olds could be used to teach other 6-year-olds to read and to learn their alphabet and do basic writing.

And I should tell you that in this first grade class—they had a rough means of testing the children in the first grade, to test their basic competencies—and there were four children in these four first grade classes that had been held back for a second year. Everybody else was in the first grade for the first time.

And so we did this. Here's what happened. The four kids that were held back scored 4 times as high on their basic competencies as they did. All the Chapter I kids scored 3 times as high, and the overall classes did twice as well as the previous year's class.

It was a wonderful thing, except I couldn't do it everywhere in the State. And I said to myself—I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. See, here we had discovered something that is profoundly important. I got all the help that I think the Federal Government could give me at the time. And we did the best we could to take those lessons, in the absence of the Federal funds, and apply them.

We want to produce results. We want our children to learn. We want all of our kids to be able to learn to the maximum of their ability, which means that they can learn at a world-class standard. And we need to give people who are on the ground, working with the kids and committed to that, the chance to do it. And if they're not, and the money's being misspent under this law, then we'll revert to another system.

But that is the meaning of this. This can change children's lives. And again I say, I am

profoundly grateful to everyone who had anything to do with it.

I hope that—now, we're getting off to a good start, and we'll keep on doing this. Last year, at the end of the year, we made our first big downpayment on providing 100,000 more teachers, so we can have smaller class sizes. We're going to have to hire 2 million new teachers in America in the next few years, with a growing student population and increasing retirement among teachers. This is an important contribution to that effort.

I hope we can pass the bill to modernize or build 6,000 new schools, because we've got a lot of schools that are too old, some of them even too old to take the computer hookups that have now been made everywhere in Delaware, as you heard the doctor say.

I hope that we will reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to reflect the lessons learned in Chicago and elsewhere and ask the schools that receive these Federal funds to end the practice of social promotion but to increase the efforts to help children through after-school and summer school programs and mentoring programs, to turn around or shut down failing schools, and to ensure that we do more to see that our teachers know the subjects they're charged with teaching.

The greatness of this country has always been the promise of opportunity for everyone who is willing to work for it. Today, you not only have to be willing to work for it, you have to know enough to achieve it. Therefore, there is no important responsibility that should have greater weight on our minds as Americans, without regard to party and without regard to whether we work in the National Government or the State and local government or the smallest rural school or the biggest inner-city school or whether we're just taxpaying citizens, with or without children in those schools—there is nothing more important for us to be focused on today than making sure that very early in the next century we can look at each other straight in the eye and say—and believe and be right about saying—that it is possible in America, in every community, to get a world-class education.

Thank you very much.

Now, I'd like to ask the Members of Congress to come on up, and we'll sign the bill. Come on.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:04 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Iris T. Metts, secretary of edu-

cation and Gov. Thomas R. Carper of Delaware. H.R. 800, approved April 29, was assigned Public Law No. 106-25.

Statement on the Report of the Working Group on Financial Markets *April 29, 1999*

As part of our ongoing efforts to increase opportunities and reduce risks in the global economy, we have focused on ways to strengthen the world's financial system. Today I welcome the Working Group on Financial Markets' report entitled "Hedge Funds, Leverage, and the Lessons of Long-Term Capital Management."

The report contains a number of policy recommendations that are designed to reduce the potential risks of excessive leverage, as demonstrated by the near-collapse of long-term capital management. By enhancing transparency in

the financial system, by increasing the amount of information made available to the public, and by improving risk management on the part of financial institutions, we can help reduce these risks. Taken together, the report's recommendations are an important step in our efforts to promote more secure financial markets. This report is the result of a collective effort by all of the Federal financial regulatory agencies. I want to commend the Working Group for this thoughtful report. I look forward to working with Congress on these important issues.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Waive the Federal Government's Claim to Tobacco Settlement Funds *April 29, 1999*

I am disappointed that so few States are devoting tobacco settlement funds to reducing youth smoking, as shown by the new report from the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and the American Heart Association. This new report underscores why I strongly oppose any legislation waiving the Federal Government's claim to tobacco settlement funds without a commit-

ment from the States to fund youth tobacco prevention efforts. In the absence of such a commitment, States won't have to spend a single penny of the \$246 billion tobacco settlement to reduce youth smoking. We must act now: Every day, 3,000 children become regular smokers, and 1,000 will have their lives cut short as a result.

Interview With Katie Couric of the National Broadcasting Corporation *April 29, 1999*

Gun Control Legislation

Ms. Couric. Mr. President, first of all, thank you very, very much for talking with us this afternoon. We really appreciate it.

Senator Trent Lott called your proposed gun control legislation the typical knee-jerk reaction, and Congressman Tom DeLay accused you of

exploiting the issue for political benefit. You would say to them?

The President. That's ridiculous, and down deep they know it. I think—you know, what I tried to say the other day is that we have a culture with too much violence in it for our children, and we need to address that, television,

the Internet, the whole range of things. But we also have a culture in America full of good people who are devoted to hunting and sport shooting, whose political views on these issues, I think, have been manipulated to create a movement that has terrified a lot of Members of Congress from taking the most elemental precautions to keep criminals and keep children from having guns that they shouldn't have, that any other society in the world would take.

Ms. Couric. Good people—

The President. And that's why we have—well, what I mean is, most of the people that are involved in serious hunting and sport shooting, they're law-abiding; they pay their taxes; they do what they're asked to do for the country; they're fine people. But they have been convinced that the most modest, sensible ways of keeping society safer are some kind of camel's nose in a tent that will end up in the loss of their rifles, and that's ridiculous.

You know, the Brady bill has kept over a quarter of a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting guns. Who knows how many people it saved. But we've got loopholes in the Brady bill. We've got loopholes in the assault weapons ban. We've got loopholes in the restrictions on these bit ammunition clips. We don't apply background checks at gun shows, which we ought to. We don't apply background checks to the purchase of explosives, which we ought to. These are sensible measures that will keep people alive.

Ms. Couric. Who are these people being manipulated by? The National Rifle Association?

The President. The National Rifle Association and some of these other groups as well.

Ms. Couric. The NRA, by the way, Mr. President, is getting ready to meet in Denver. If you could have a cup of coffee with Charlton Heston before that meeting gets underway, what would you say to him?

The President. I would say it's, "You ought to be Moses and lead your people out of Egypt into the Promised Land. You ought to think about how we can protect the rights of hunters and use the good things the NRA's done to educate children, young people, on gun safety, for example. And stop wasting your energy when we try to say that a juvenile that commits a violent crime shouldn't have a gun; stop wasting your energy when we try to reinstitute the waiting period for the Brady bill or close the assault weapons loopholes or close the loopholes in the

Brady bill or say that we ought to have a background check for explosives or a background check at these gun shows. That's what we ought to do."

This is designed to keep people alive, for goodness sakes. This has nothing to do with the right to hunt or to engage in sporting contests.

Ms. Couric. Mr. President, do you believe any elements of your gun control package might have prevented the tragedy in Littleton?

The President. Well, we have to have all the facts. We know that they were involved with explosives. We know they had an assault pistol. We also—one of the things we didn't talk about is that I want to strengthen the tracking—weapons tracking capacity of the Government when weapons pass through multiple hands. There may have been a gun show sale involved here. Depending on who bought it, we don't know what the background check would have occurred.

What we do know is that if all these proposals were in place, they would save more lives more places. Just the Brady bill alone has kept a quarter of a million people from getting guns who had questionable backgrounds. There's no doubt in my mind that a lot of lives were saved. The assaults weapons ban is a good thing, but there are too many loopholes in it, and we want to close them. This just makes sense.

Responsibilities of Parents

Ms. Couric. President Clinton, you've admitted that access to guns is just part of the problem. Another part is parenting in this country, or lack thereof. What are parents doing wrong?

The President. Let me tell you a story, because I don't think it's so much as what they're doing as maybe as what they're not doing. A Member of the Congress, who is a friend of mine, and I had a conversation the other night. And he had just been with a high school, and he asked the students at the high school—this was a few days after Littleton—how many of them had talked to their parents about this. And he said only a small minority raised their hands. And one young woman stood up and said, "I had to stand in front of the television and tell my parents we were going to not watch any more television until we talked about this, because I think they were afraid. They didn't want to deal with the fact that this could happen in other places in America."

I think that what we have to do is to, first of all, tell parents they have to assume responsibility for their children's television and video games and all that. They have to assume their family responsibility for that. But they also have to know, insofar as they possibly can, what's going on in their children's lives and minds. And we have to work with them to help them develop the skills necessary to determine if their kids need help and then get the help they need, whether it's counseling or mental health services or whatever.

Ms. Couric. That sounds great, but do you enroll every parent in America in parenting classes?

The President. No. I think what you need is—Hillary's told me this morning—we got up, and we talked late, late last night about this. And then we got up this morning, and we were talking again. And she said—I thought it was a great idea—she said, “What's worked in this country to change societies?” We just had a big announcement today from Secretary Shalala that teen pregnancy's gone down for another year. There's been a national campaign against teen pregnancy, a real movement that asked all sectors of our society, starting with parents, but including everyone else, to do something on this. We've seen a decline in drunk driving, largely spurred, I think, by Mothers and Students Against Drunk Driving. We saw a national campaign to get people to wear their seatbelts when they were driving. And she said, and I agree, we need a national campaign that mobilizes all these things, that doesn't pretend that guns are the issue, that culture is the whole issue, that parents are the whole issue, that school safety is the whole issue but deals with all of this together. If the American people make up their mind that we're going to do better on this, we'll do better.

Role of Entertainment Industry

Ms. Couric. But as you know, Mr. President, parents and children and families are bombarded with these violent images every day on television, in the movies. Video games reward children for obliterating figures with virtual bullets and bombs. Many parents want to do the right thing, but these cultural influences are so enormously strong, they feel as if they're swimming against this tide.

The President. They are. I have two or three things to say about that.

First of all, the first amendment prohibits us from banning some of these things, but we now have a television rating system, to go with the movies rating system. We will soon have all new televisions with a V-chip in them, so the rating systems can be enforced by parents. We are seeing more and more technology develop which will allow some websites to be blocked by parents, if they're inappropriate.

We first have to try to get parents more control over the exposure of their children to the culture of violence. The second thing we have to do is to challenge the entertainment industry to minimize the use of gratuitous violence and not to present it in a way that will desensitize people to the pain, the agony, and ultimately, the finality of violence.

Ms. Couric. But for many of those people, that's their stock-in-trade.

The President. It is, and there's a market for it. The American people buy it. They purchase it. They lap it up. But I think we have to face the fact that kids today are growing up in a culture that is more violent, culturally violent. The crime rate has been going down for 6 years overall, but the images are violent. And therefore, children that are more vulnerable are more likely, A, to be desensitized to violence and, then, to actually be desensitized to the impact of their employing violence.

But I think in the end you've got to take it back to the fact that we all have responsibilities, and it starts with parents. We have to help convince our children that they should not have their actions controlled or directed outside them, and they shouldn't let other people define what kind of people they are. And we've then got to do more in the schools, with counseling, with mediation, with getting mental health services where they need it. And we've got to then ask ourselves, what are the further responsibilities of the entertainment community? What are the responsibilities of the Government?

Go back to the gun industry. Something they could do that I think would be great—I'm talking about the manufacturers now—they ought to voluntarily come forward, as many have, and say, we're going to have more child trigger locks. They even are now developing technologies where a thumbprint can be imprinted on a gun and only the people who have the print can fire the gun. There are lots of things that can be done, but if we're all caught up in this and

it becomes our obsession, I know we will do better. I know we will.

Ms. Couric. Some Members of Congress have asked for an emergency summit meeting at the White House with leaders of the entertainment industry. Do you plan to have that summit?

The President. Well, I plan to bring some high-level folks from the entertainment industry and from other sectors of our society that I think can be active here together at the White House in the near future, and then figure out how we can put together the elements of a national campaign. I think the entertainment industry is going to have to be a big part of it.

What I think is a mistake is—I think it would be a mistake for the people who don't want to offend the NRA to blame Hollywood and the people that don't want to offend Hollywood to blame the NRA, instead of keeping our children and their safety and their future in mind and asking ourselves, what should we do about guns? What should we do about culture? What should we do about the schools? How can we help the parents? And what is Government's responsibility? Those are the big questions. We should ask and answer all of them, not just one.

Ms. Couric. Mr. President, can you say to Hollywood executives, "Look, I need your help"? Or is it tough to put pressure on them, given the fact that they've been so supportive of you and so generous to your campaigns?

The President. No. No, it's easier for me to do, I think, in some ways, because I know them. Keep in mind, the first time I went out to Hollywood and did this in a highly public way was in late 1993. And then we got a lot of Hollywood executives in, and they played a major role in the development of the television rating systems, which was essential to make the V-chip work.

So we got a lot of support out of the entertainment community for the rating systems and for the V-chip. We've gotten a remarkable amount of support in the years since from the high-tech community for control technologies on the Internet. So I think that—they don't go as

far as I wish they would often on the violent content of some movies and some television shows and some video games, but there has been progress made.

One of the big problems we've got now is to make sure parents understand how to use the V-chip on television and understand how to use the blocking technologies on the Internet. Most parents are like me; they're not nearly as computer literate as their children are. And we've got a big job there to do.

But yes, I have no problem asking them to do more and challenging them to do more. That's easy. The difficult thing is to ask all of those questions of all of those people I mentioned. That's why I think the First Lady's idea of having a national campaign in which we all get caught up is the right way to go here.

Ms. Couric. And yet, it inevitably gets so mired in politics, and the best of intentions, it seems, are—

The President. Well, I think the only thing that gets mired in politics on this score, really, is when you have to pass a bill in Congress that's opposed by powerful interest groups. But otherwise, I think at a community level and in terms of empowering the schools and the parents and organizing groups to demand changes, I think it will be pretty straightforward.

And even in Congress, as I told this group I spoke to a few days ago, if the American people want change badly enough, the Congress will respond. They'll go beyond partisan politics. They'll go beyond interest group politics. If they believe the American people want it bad enough, they'll respond.

Ms. Couric. Mr. President, thank you again for your time. We really appreciate it.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:25 p.m. in the Library at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Charlton Heston, president, National Rifle Association. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 30. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks Announcing Measures To Address School Violence *April 30, 1999*

Ladies and gentlemen, in the last several days, like most Americans, I have spent an enormous amount of time following the events in Colorado, talking to family and friends and others. And I have some thoughts on that that I want to share with you today.

Let me begin by saying we got some more good news today on the economic front, with the word that our economy expanded by 4.5 percent in the first quarter of this year. This news provides both more evidence that we should stick with our economic strategy and also is a worthwhile reminder that for all the challenges we face at home and abroad, we are indeed a fortunate people. We are strong enough to meet those challenges.

Over the past 10 days our whole Nation has been united in grief with the people of Littleton, Colorado. We have also been profoundly moved by the courage, the common sense, and the fundamental goodness of Littleton students, teachers, parents, and public servants as they have spoken to us of the tragic events there. I have listened carefully to what they have said and to other young people and parents who have been on the townhall meetings and those whom I have met personally.

We should recognize the simple truth that there is no simple, single answer. We should not be fighting about who takes the blame. Instead, we should all be looking for ways to take responsibility, and we should be doing that together.

As we have united in grief, now we should unite in action. If we ask the right question, "What can we do to give your children safe, whole childhoods?" then there will be answers for parents and children, for teachers, communities, and for those who influence the lives and the environment in which our children live, including those of us in government, religious leaders, the entertainment and Internet communities, those who produce explosives and weapons, and those who use them lawfully.

I am inviting representatives of all these groups to come to the White House on May 10th for a strategy session on children, violence, and responsibility. The First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore, all of whom have

worked for years to give our children the childhoods they deserve, will join me. I ask everyone to come to this meeting with ideas about how we can move forward together.

As Hillary said yesterday, we need nothing less than a grassroots effort to protect our children and turn them away from violence. If citizens, parents and children alike, working together in their communities, can reduce teen pregnancy, reduce drunk driving, make seatbelt use nearly universal, then working together, we can protect our children.

I want to briefly set out a framework for how this challenge can best be addressed. The push and pull of modern life adds incalculable new burdens to the work of parents. We must strive to find ways to bring parents and children together more, to get parents more involved with their children's lives, to get negative influences and guns out of the lives of our children, and to give families the tools to meet these challenges.

First, we must help parents to pass on their values to their children in the face of a blizzard of popular communications that too often undermine those values. For young people who are particularly vulnerable and isolated, the violent video games they play can seem more real than conversations at home or lessons at school. We've been working to give parents stronger tools to protect their children, and we must do more.

The V-chip will be included in half the new televisions sold this year. And together with the voluntary rating system adopted by broadcasters, it will give parents a new ability to screen the images their children see. Meanwhile, we've launched the most ambitious media plan ever to educate our children about the dangers of drugs.

The Vice President and Internet service providers have given parents the ability to block access to violent or otherwise inappropriate websites. The Vice President will continue to work with industry to find ways to help parents guide their children through cyberspace, and we'll have more to say on that in the days ahead.

We have worked to give our parents the tools to protect children from violence and to take

guns out of the hands of children. The policy of zero tolerance for guns in schools led to 6,000 expulsions or suspensions in the last year alone.

This week I proposed new measures to keep guns away from criminals and children; requiring background checks for buying guns at gun shows, as they are required at gun stores now, and background checks for the purchase of explosives; banning handgun ownership for people under 21; and restoring the Brady bill's cooling off period; and closing the loopholes in the assault weapons law.

Even on these contentious issues, I believe we can reach across party lines and find common ground. I hope that sportsmen, gun manufacturers, and lawmakers of all parties will see these steps for what they are, commonsense measures to promote the common good. We all love our children. I respect the rights of hunters and sportsmen. Let's bury the hatchet and build a future for our children together.

We must help parents fulfill their most important responsibilities. We all say we want parents to talk to their children more, but we all know that too many families have too little time even to have dinner together.

Because parents too often have too little time, we've passed the Family and Medical Leave Act, and we're working to expand it. Because too many children leave school at 3, with nowhere to go and no adult to talk to, we've giving a quarter-million kids access to after-school and summer school programs, and we're working to triple that number. Because many parents need help in recognizing the signs of illness in their children, we're working to expand access to mental health care for children of all ages. Next month, Mrs. Gore will host the first White House Conference on Mental Health. We are also working to expand counseling, mentoring, and mental health services in our schools.

Most important of all, and perhaps most difficult, parents must be more active participants in their children's lives. It is not for us to pass judgment on how those two young men in Colorado descended into darkness. We may never know what can be or even what could have

been done. But this should be a wake-up call for all parents. We can never take our children for granted. We must never let the lines of communication, no matter how frayed, be broken altogether. Our children need us, even if they don't know it sometimes.

This terrible tragedy must not be an occasion for silence. This weekend I ask all parents, if they have not already done so, to sit down and talk to their children about what happened at Littleton and what is happening in their schools and their lives.

If we are not careful, when our children move through their teen years and begin to create their own separate lives, the bustle and burden of our daily lives can cause families to drift too far apart, to ignore the still-strong needs of children for genuine concern and guidance and honest conversation. This is sometimes the hardest thing of all, but it is vital, and lives depend on it.

Finally, I ask students to do more to help each other. Next week, if you have not already done so, I ask every student in America to look for someone at school who is not in your group. You know, there have always been different crowds in schools, and there always will be. This, too, is an inevitable part of growing up and finding your own path through life. But it should not be an occasion for disrespect or hostility in our schools. After all, our children are all on the same journey, even if they're trying to chart different paths. And this can be profoundly important in building a safer future.

The spirit of America can triumph in this troubling moment, and I am convinced it will. But we must build the energy and will and passion of our country and the fundamental goodness of our people into a grassroots movement to turn away from violence and to give all our children the safe and wholesome childhoods they richly deserve.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Columbine High School gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.

Statement on the National Economy *April 30, 1999*

Today we received more good news for America's working families about our economy. In the first quarter of this year, the U.S. economy expanded at a robust 4.5 percent annual rate. Driven by high investment and vigorous consumer demand, America's expansion continues to grow steady and strong.

Strong growth, high investment, low inflation, and low unemployment are a winning combination and more evidence that we should stick with an economic strategy that has helped usher in a new era of prosperity for the American people.

Memorandum on Emergency Refugee Admissions Consultations Relating to Kosovars *April 30, 1999*

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: FY 1999 Emergency Refugee Admissions Consultations Relating to Kosovars

In accordance with section 207(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157(b)), you are authorized to consult with the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning the authorization of 20,000 emergency

refugee admissions during FY 1999, which would be allocated to Europe for the purpose of admitting Kosovar refugees to the United States.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on International Travel Expenses of Executive Branch Agencies *April 30, 1999*

Dear _____:

I am transmitting the following information on international travel in accordance with provisions of section 2505(g) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FYs 1998 and 1999, as included in Public Law 105-277, the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999.

The estimated total obligations for international travel by executive branch agencies in FY 1998 were \$311,261,371. This number excludes obligations for civilian/military relocation expenses due to a permanent change of work station and the deployment of military units. Of that amount, the Department of State accounted for \$112,000,000 or 36 percent. Additionally, the Departments of Agriculture, Com-

merce, Defense, Health and Human Services, Justice, and the Treasury, as well as the U.S. Information Agency and the Agency for International Development all reported obligations close to or in excess of \$10,000,000. In total, these eight agencies account for 51 percent of obligations for international travel during FY 1998. The estimated total number of individuals who traveled was 57,142.

The details of this report are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on

International Relations; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks at the Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies Dinner *April 30, 1999*

Well, let me say to all of you, first, welcome. I want to thank Jo Carole Lauder, Robin Chandler Duke, Ann Gund, everyone else who has worked on this program.

You know, I look forward to this every year. This is a night when I can appreciate what is constant about our Embassies, rather than what is changing in our relationships with the countries involved. *[Laughter]* And I must say that tonight is especially important. I want to welcome the artists, those who have made such generous gifts. Any number of representatives of the governments of other nations are here tonight, and we welcome them, as well. I want to say a special word of thank you to Joel Shapiro for helping to make our new Embassy in Ottawa a showcase of the best in American art.

The Arts in Embassies program is quite a success all around the world. And as you might imagine, Hillary and I, because we have had the opportunity and the responsibility to travel quite a lot, have seen more of the fruits of your labors than almost any other Americans. I can tell you, having spent the night in any number of Embassies, held any number of receptions, one of the things that people always comment on is the art. And many, many people come to see the President when I'm in a given country who don't know anything about our Arts in Embassies program, and so I have become one of your better ambassadors of good will—*[laughter]*—in explaining how we come to have all this magnificent art in our Embassies throughout the world.

Senator Specter, I have never claimed that Congress spent taxpayers' money on it, but neither have I denied it. *[Laughter]*

And as all of you know—and Hillary was talking about some of the art we have in the White House—one of the great pleasures of living here

is just living around the art that is here. And to all of you who have contributed to the art in the White House, many over several decades, I am profoundly grateful for that, as well.

Robin mentioned that this is not the easiest of moments for our country because of what we are trying to achieve in Kosovo. And she said that it was, therefore, especially appreciated that Hillary and I would have you here tonight. I would argue that it's especially important that you be here tonight. And I'd like to read you something that I hope makes the point.

In the springtime of 1941, as fascism spread across Europe, destroying lives and liberties, President Roosevelt spoke at the dedication of the National Gallery here in Washington. His words seemed to me particularly relevant today, and I'd like to share a few of them with you.

He said, "Art is part of the present life of all the living and creating peoples—all who make and build. These paintings are symbols of the human spirit. To accept this work today is to assert that the freedom of the human spirit shall not be utterly destroyed."

All around the world, our American Embassies are helping people to follow the path of freedom and democracy. Our efforts and those of our NATO Allies are standing for that freedom and against the principle of ethnic cleansing, racial and religious exclusivity as a basis for killing and uprooting people and destroying their cultures.

This is a particularly painful thing for any American with any sense of history, for the Serbs were our grand allies in World War II. They stood against Hitler, and they fought bravely. And they have their legitimate historical grievances, as do most ethnic groups in Europe, Asia, Africa, or any other part of the world. We hope to be reconciled with them.

But one of the things we all have to learn is to affirm our common humanity, even if it means setting aside our legitimate historical grievance. And that is what we are working for. That is what art, the advancement of art, the defense of the freedom of expression and creativity represent—our common humanity, the triumphs over all the differences that, when contained, make life more interesting; when unleashed as a weapon of war, make it unbearable.

So I ask you to stay with this program long after Hillary and I leave the White House, as the best expression not only of artistic creativity

but the universal rights of human beings to be free.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jo Carole Lauder, chair, and Ann Gund, president, Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies (FAPE); Robin Chandler Duke, co-chair, FAPE Millennium Project; and sculptor Joel Shapiro. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Message to the Congress on Additional Economic Sanctions Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

April 30, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In response to the brutal ethnic cleansing campaign in Kosovo carried out by the military, police, and paramilitary forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the NATO allies have agreed to buttress NATO's military actions by tightening economic sanctions against the Milosevic regime. Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) (50 U.S.C. 1703(b)), I hereby report to the Congress that, in order to implement the measures called for by NATO, I have exercised my statutory authority to take additional steps with respect to the continuing human rights and humanitarian crisis in Kosovo and the national emergency described and declared in Executive Order 13088 of June 9, 1998.

Pursuant to this authority, I have issued a new Executive order that:

- expands the assets freeze previously imposed on the assets of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro subject to U.S. jurisdiction, by removing the exemption in Executive Order 13088 for financial transactions by United States persons conducted exclusively through the domestic banking system within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) or using bank notes or barter;

- prohibits exports or reexports, directly or indirectly, from the United States or by a United States person, wherever located, of goods, software, technology, or services to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) or the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, or the Republic of Montenegro;
- prohibits imports, directly or indirectly, into the United States of goods, software, technology, or services from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) or owned or controlled by the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, or the Republic of Montenegro;
- prohibits any transaction or dealing, including approving, financing, or facilitating, by a United States person, wherever located, related to trade with or to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) or the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, or the Republic of Montenegro.

The trade-related prohibitions apply to any goods (including petroleum and petroleum products), software, technology (including technical data), or services, except to the extent excluded by section 203(b) of IEEPA (50 U.S.C. 1702(b)).

The ban on new investment by United States persons in the territory of Serbia—imposed by Executive Order 13088—continues in effect.

The Executive order provides that the Secretary of the Treasury in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall give special consideration to the circumstances of the Government of the Republic of Montenegro. As with Executive Order 13088, an exemption from the new sanctions has been granted to Montenegro. In implementing this order, special consideration is also to be given to the humanitarian needs of refugees from Kosovo and other civilians within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

In keeping with my Administration's new policy to exempt commercial sales of food and medicine from sanctions regimes, the Executive order directs the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to au-

thorize commercial sales of agricultural commodities and products, medicine, and medical equipment for civilian end use in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). Such sales are to be subject to appropriate safeguards to prevent diversion to military, paramilitary, or political use by the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, or the Republic of Montenegro.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 30, 1999.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 1. The Executive order of April 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Additional Economic Sanctions Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

May 1, 1999

At the NATO Summit, the 19 Allied leaders agreed to intensify economic pressure on the Belgrade regime, in support of our united effort to stand up to ethnic cleansing and restore the people of Kosovo to their land with security and self-government. Today I have signed an Executive order strengthening economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The measures included in the Executive order buttress U.S. sanctions already in place against the Milosevic regime. Under the expanded sanctions, we will, among other things, ban exports and re-exports to and imports from the FRY, including petroleum and strategic goods, and freeze all property and property interests of the FRY Government in the United States or controlled by U.S. entities.

We will retain the current exemptions for Montenegro, because of our strong support for its democratically elected, multiethnic government. And we will apply these sanctions with consideration for the humanitarian needs of displaced people in Kosovo and other civilians and consistent with our new policy of exempting from sanctions commercial sales of food and medicine.

With these strengthened sanctions, we will diminish the Belgrade regime's ability to continue its campaign of repression and defiance, while allowing needed supplies to reach victims of its reckless and brutal conduct, whatever their ethnicity or faith.

NOTE: The Executive order of April 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address *May 1, 1999*

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about one of the most important steps we can take to clean the air we breathe and protect the health of all Americans.

Over the past generation, our Nation has made enormous progress in improving the quality of our air. In the late 1960's carbon monoxide, lead, and smog levels were so high in several major cities that walking to school in the morning could be almost as harmful for young children as smoking cigarettes.

Today, people are breathing easier all across our country. Thanks to engineering breakthroughs and bipartisan environmental stewardship over the past three decades, we have reduced the annual emissions of harmful pollutants by a remarkable 70 million tons.

Over the past 6 years alone, even as our Nation has produced the most dynamic economy in a generation, we have improved air quality in every single State. We've reduced toxic air pollution from chemical plants by 90 percent. We've set the toughest standards in decades for smog and soot, which will prevent millions of cases of childhood asthma. Just last week the Vice President announced a new effort to clear the haze and restore pristine skies to our national parks. But we must do more.

Americans love to drive, and we're driving more than ever. But the emissions from our cars, particularly from the larger, less efficient vehicles, threaten to erode many of the air quality gains America has achieved. As a result, many of our States and cities are no longer on course to meet our vital air quality goals.

So last year EPA Administrator Carol Browner sat down with members of the oil and auto industries, environmental and public health groups, and State and local governments to study how we can stay on track. The level of cooperation was unprecedented, and so was the result.

Today I am proud to announce the details of this EPA proposal. The proposal would achieve a dramatic reduction in air pollution for the 21st century, and it would do so in the most cost effective and flexible ways. For the first time, we would require all passenger vehicles, including the popular sport utility vehi-

cles, to meet the same tough pollution standards. And for the first time, our plan addresses not only the cars we drive but also the fuel they use. Because sulfur clogs and impairs anti-pollution devices, we're proposing to cut the sulfur content of gasoline by about 90 percent over the next 5 years.

Beginning in the year 2004, manufacturers would start producing vehicles that are 75 to 95 percent cleaner than those rolling off the assembly lines today. And the health benefits would be enormous. Every year we can prevent thousands of premature deaths, tens of thousands of cases of respiratory illness, and hundreds of thousands of lost work days. According to some estimates, the benefits of the proposal may outweigh the costs by as much as 4 to 1.

In designing this proposal, we've taken great pains to make sure these new standards will not cause hardship for industry or reduce consumer choice. In many cases, existing technology will allow manufacturers to meet the new standards and still offer the same models popular with consumers today. To accommodate manufacturers of sport utility vehicles and others who face special challenges, our proposal provides extra time to meet the new standards.

We will spend the next several months getting comments and suggestions on the plan. Now that the EPA has published its proposal, a 60-day period of public comment and public hearings will begin. With the help of interested citizens, industry, and public health and other groups, we believe we can finalize this proposal by the end of the year.

Ever since the days when thick smog was choking our major cities, pessimists have claimed that protecting the environment and strengthening the economy were incompatible goals. But today, our economy is the strongest in a generation, and our environment is the cleanest in a generation. Whether the issue was deadly pesticides, fouled rivers, or polluted air, the American people have always proved the pessimists wrong.

With the EPA's new clean air proposal, we will prove them wrong once again. Not only will we enhance our long-term prosperity, we

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will ensure that our children inherit a living, breathing Earth, our most important obligation of all.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:49 p.m. on April 30 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 30 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner May 1, 1999

Thank you very much, Stewart, Susan, Brian. You all were pretty tough on the Times for boycotting this dinner tonight. I understand they wanted to protest the increasingly circus-like atmosphere. Why are they doing it? I'm the guy who shows up every year and gets shot out of the cannon. [Laughter]

You really made me feel like I'm on the downhill slide—Brian spent all this time dumping on the Vice President. [Laughter] You know, you were really rough on him. That riff was pretty funny. I mean, you gave him credit for everything. I think since you pointed out that he went to the Kentucky Derby today, I should say, he claims no credit for siring the winner. [Laughter]

I know that this dinner has gotten out of hand in recent years, but I see a lot of familiar faces out here. And I want you to know that I really appreciate all these Hollywood celebrities inviting the work-a-day Washington press to join them tonight. [Laughter]

Now, you know I, on occasion, have my differences with the New York Times. But they've taken a principled stand. [Laughter] And I support them. In fact, I feel so strongly about it that I challenge the Washington Times and the Weekly Standard to follow their example next year—[laughter]—and the year after that, and so on. [Laughter]

I know there was some talk about my not coming this year, and I admit, the thought did cross my mind. [Laughter] But then I heard if I didn't attend, Aretha might not attend, and that would break Brian's heart, because we couldn't bear the thought of having Scott Pelley sing "R-E-S-P-E-C-T." [Laughter]

I hope you'll all enjoy Aretha, but you know—and I love her, and I will certainly enjoy it. And I want to see you later—I like to come

here because there are those other parties later on. Now, last year Sid Blumenthal swore he could get me into the Vanity Fair party. [Laughter] What a difference a year makes. [Laughter] This year I have to take him. [Laughter]

I love seeing all the White House correspondents in this room tonight. For me, it's a rare treat to see you outside the White House gates—and notwithstanding what Susan said, get used to it. [Laughter] You know that the National Park Service is planning this long-range plan to relocate the White House Briefing Room to a larger facility, outside the West Wing—which I think is too bad. I mean, Helen was just starting to get comfortable. [Laughter] And she's still mad about the last time the White House Briefing Room was moved—that's when the Capital moved to Washington from Philadelphia. [Laughter]

But look, this is going to be hard on us, too. It's going to be really hard on the White House if they move the Briefing Room because then the leakers will have to start dialing 10-10-321. [Laughter]

Speaking of big moves, I saw yet another journalist commenting today that if Hillary runs for the Senate, she'll have to deal with the New York press, and that will be hard, because they're even meaner than you are. I want you to know something: We are not scared of them; we're scared of the co-op boards. [Laughter] Have you ever seen one of those applications? I've been filling one out—look, here's my answer to some of the questions. You tell me what kind of chance we've got.

Question 2, anticipated employment? Unknown. [Laughter] Question 3, anticipated earnings? Unknown. [Laughter] Question 5, current residence? Public housing. [Laughter] It gets better. References? Nelson Mandela, the Dalai

Lama, Steven Spielberg. [Laughter] Outstanding debts? Williams & Connolly—[laughter]—and the House Democrats. [Laughter]

I know these are really busy times for all of you in the press corps. I appreciate your hard work. But what I really appreciate is all the commentary. I hope the NATO commanders videotaped this morning's briefing by retired General Howard Fineman. [Laughter] I wonder how in the world the Allies ever managed to pull off D-day without "Talk Back Live." [Laughter]

Press coverage has really changed a lot over the years. You know, during the Hundred Years War, the European press corps didn't even start second-guessing until 1370. [Laughter]

Now, just imagine if today's press corps covered yesterday's wars. Here are a few headlines. Paul Revere's warning: "Too Little Too Late." [Laughter] Lincoln speaks at Gettysburg: "Fails To Articulate Exit Strategy." Teddy Roosevelt leads charge up San Juan Hill: "GOP Divided." [Laughter] McArthur to Philippines: "I Shall Return—Refuses To Set Specific Timetable." [Laughter]

This is the last White House correspondents' dinner of the millennium. Frankly, I'm surprised you see any news value in all this millennium stuff. I mean, after all, we've known about it for 1,000 years now. [Laughter] I think history will record that the world spent the last days of this millennium compiling lists. You may have seen a list compiled by the Newseum of the top 100 news stories of the century, everything from putting a man on the Moon to the polio vaccine, ranked in order of importance.

I don't mind telling you, I made the Newseum list—something about the events of last year, number 53—53! I mean, what does a guy have to do to make the top 50 around here? [Laughter] I came in six places after the invention of plastic, for crying out loud. [Laughter] And I don't recall a year of 24-hour-a-day saturation coverage on the miracle of plastic. [Laughter] And I guess the strongest economy in a century was number 101.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think it's really good for us to step away from the work we do for an evening and laugh a little. I thought Brian was really funny, and I like laughing at somebody else for a change. [Laughter] But I hope you'll forgive me if I sort of stop it now and say a few serious words, for these are not usual times. While we've got a lot to be grateful for,

in rising prosperity, and falling unemployment, poverty, welfare, and crime, you all know we have real challenges.

All Americans are still hurting for the families of Littleton and seeking ways that each of us can help to give our children less violent, more wholesome childhoods. And our thoughts are in Kosovo, where America and our allies are engaged in a difficult struggle for freedom and human rights and against the destruction of other human beings because of their ethnic and racial heritage.

The roots of violence at home and ethnic cleansing and racial hatred abroad are of great complexity and difficulty. But we know that our country is strong enough and good enough to meet these challenges.

There was a reference to this before, but I want to say a special word about the three servicemen and their families. Our prayers have been with them for the past month, and there are indications that they may soon be released to Reverend Jackson and his interfaith group. We certainly hope that this will occur.

But let us remember tonight also what is at stake for more than a million other people who have been involved in Kosovo—a very great deal. What is at stake there, what was at stake in Bosnia, and what will doubtless be at stake elsewhere in the world in the years ahead is whether Mr. Milosevic's vision of ethnic cleansing, with its uprooting, its raping, its killing, its destroying every record and remnant of culture and history—or our democratic vision of ethnic tolerance and political pluralism, of affirming our common humanity—whether his vision or ours will define the beginning of the 21st century. On this there can be no compromise. And therefore, our determination must be unwavering.

I thank you, the White House correspondents, for making the donation to help the refugees of Kosovo. That is a welcome and valued contribution. So are the reports you and your colleagues file every day, often at great personal risk for those in the region.

As our prayers are with our military personnel and our allies tonight, they're with the Kosovars—indeed, with all innocent people who are caught up in this grievous affair. I again ask Mr. Milosevic to let the Kosovars come home, with the Serb forces out, and an international force in to protect all the people, including the Serb minority who live in Kosovo.

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And I ask the American people to remember what it is we are fighting for: a world in which the dignity of humanity counts for more than the differences of humanity. For human differences, when celebrated but contained, can make life a lot more interesting, but when unleashed as weapons of war, soon make it unbearable.

The 20th century has seen altogether too much of this. If we and our allies, indeed, if you and I as citizens, and each in our official capacities, all do our job, the world of our children will be better. It will be not only more prosperous but more peaceful, not only more diverse but more unified, not only more human but more humane. Let that be our prayer to-night and our determination.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:20 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to White House Correspondents' Association outgoing president Stewart Powell, Hearst Newspapers, and incoming president Susan Page, USA Today; dinner emcee Brian Williams, NBC News; Scott Pelley, CBS News; entertainer Aretha Franklin; Helen Thomas, United Press International; President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; movie director and producer Steven Spielberg; Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen in custody in Serbia; civil rights leader Jesse Jackson; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Statement on the Release of American Infantrymen Held Prisoner by Serbian Authorities

May 2, 1999

I am pleased that our three American servicemen who have been held as prisoners by Serbian authorities have today been released and that they are now safely out of Serbia. I am grateful to Reverend Jackson and his delegation for helping to secure their freedom. All of America is anticipating their safe return.

As we welcome our soldiers home, our thoughts also turn to the over one million Kosovars who are unable to go home because

of the policies of the regime in Belgrade. Today we reaffirm our resolve to persevere until they, too, can return with security and self-government.

NOTE: In this statement, the President referred to civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, whose personal appeal won the release of Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan

May 3, 1999

Prime Minister Obuchi, Mrs. Obuchi, members of the Japanese delegation, my fellow Americans. Mr. Prime Minister, we welcome you to America and to the White House, and to greet you in the spring when the cherry blossoms every year remind us of the generosity and friendship of the Japanese people.

The cherry blossoms—or in Japanese, *sakura*—have made it through changing times, environmental challenges, and even most recently, the attention of our local population of beavers. [*Laughter*] They have endured, as our friendship has endured and will continue to endure forever.

For a half century, our friendship has been a bedrock of security in Asia. It remains so. But now it is proving itself in the face of new challenges, as well, from protecting the environment to fighting AIDS to stopping the spread of deadly weapons. We are allies today because we share common values and a common vision of the future, rooted in democracy, human rights, and political pluralism.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have been in office less than a year, but already you have taken important steps in meeting the challenges that face you and reaching the goals that unite us. Our nations are proud to reaffirm our partnership for the new century. We value our security relationship, what it does to build peace in northeast Asia, our common efforts in Indonesia, and Japan's consistent contributions to relief efforts so far from your shores, from Central America to the Middle East and, now, to Kosovo.

The economic difficulties of recent years have been a challenge to many people in Japan and throughout Asia. But with the right choices, Japan—and Asia—will emerge stronger, more open, more democratic, better adapted to meet the 21st century.

In just a few years, we will mark the 150th anniversary of our relationship. The Japanese

and the American people have come a great distance in that time together. We work together; our children study together; our Armed Forces have served together. We even share a national pastime. In fact, just last Saturday, at a time when American Major League Baseball teams all across the country are competing for Japanese pitching talent, a new pitcher from across the Pacific threw out the first ball at Wrigley Field. Mr. Prime Minister, you did a fine job. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Prime Minister, the Japanese-American friendship is testament to the basic truth that with trust and understanding and genuine partnership, we can meet the challenges of the new century and give our children a more peaceful and prosperous future.

Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Obuchi, you honor us with your visit and, again, we welcome you to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Obuchi was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Obuchi's wife, Chizuko. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the Prime Minister.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan May 3, 1999

President Clinton. Good afternoon. Please be seated. It is a great honor to welcome my friend and a friend of the American people, Prime Minister Obuchi, to Washington. I want to say a few words about our meeting today, but first let me say how very pleased I am that our three servicemen are coming home from Serbia, and to express my thanks to Reverend Jackson and his entire delegation for their hard work in securing their freedom.

While we are very thankful for their release, let me be clear why the military operations must continue. Three Americans are home. Their families, their friends, and the American people whom they have served faithfully must be grateful. But nearly 1½ million Kosovars are not

home. In fact, 2 days ago, as our prayers for our soldiers were being answered, Serbian soldiers were entering the Kosovar town of Prizren, going door to door, ordering everyone to leave or be killed. In a few hours, all 10,000 who lived there were forced to flee. When will these people see their homes again, with the safety and rights Mr. Milosevic has often pledged but never delivered?

Remember, what is going on in Kosovo is part of a decade-long policy of ethnic and religious subjugation and cleansing, involving expulsion, destruction of records and symbols of history and culture, and ultimately, rape and murder.

Our conditions for ending the bombing are not complicated. The Kosovars must be able to go home with security and self-government. Serbian security forces must leave Kosovo. An international security force must deploy with the power not just to monitor but to protect all the people of Kosovo, Albanians and Serbs alike. Our air campaign cannot stop until Mr. Milosevic shows he is ready to end the nightmare for the people of Kosovo.

I want to thank Prime Minister Obuchi for Japan's strong support of our efforts in Kosovo and for its contribution of \$200 million to aid the Kosovar refugees and to help them rebuild. All freedom-loving people are grateful to Japan for this generosity.

Underlying this act and, indeed, all the policies we discussed today are two basic facts: First, the United States and Japan have common ideals, common interests, a common purpose in the world. Second, as the world's two largest industrial democracies, with less than 10 percent of the world's people, we produce about 40 percent of the world's wealth. We have unique responsibilities. We discussed them today, beginning with our security alliance.

We in America are gratified that the lower house of Japan's Diet now has approved a new set of U.S.-Japan defense guidelines to allow us to respond with flexibility and speed to any regional crisis in Asia.

We spoke about North Korea and the concerns we share about its missile and nuclear programs. We're grateful for Japan's continued support for the Korean Energy Development Organization, which is critical to our effort to diminish the threat of proliferation on the Korean Peninsula.

We spoke about the difficult but profoundly important transition to democracy in Indonesia. Our countries have pledged around \$30 million each to support elections there in June. We applaud President Habibie's commitment to give the people of East Timor a free choice in determining their future. We should support a meaningful U.N. presence in East Timor so its people can make their choice in safety and peace.

Finally, we had a good discussion about Japan's economic situation and its strong efforts to build a stable, growing economy for the next century. I want to commend the Prime Minister for taking a number of very strong steps to restructure Japan's banking system and stimulate its economy.

No one should underestimate the challenges the Prime Minister is facing. The Japanese people are going through a period of wrenching change. This dislocation, however, is not the result of reform; it is the reason reform is necessary. All of us have to change. And we also respect the deep desire of the leaders and the people of Japan to go through this change in a way that leaves no one behind and brings their people closer together.

Until lasting recovery is at hand, we hope Japan will use all available tools to restore solid growth. I'm very pleased that we have reached agreement under which Japan will take steps to deregulate and to open its medical device, pharmaceutical, telecommunications, housing, and energy sectors, as well as agreements to enhance antitrust cooperation between our countries and make it easier for foreign companies to invest in Japan. We agreed today to work toward a third deregulation report by the end of March next year.

We must also fully implement our trade agreements, including critical sectors such as insurance, flat glass, government procurement, autos, and auto parts.

On the profoundly important issue of steel, we have made progress. But I reiterated that we will take action if steel imports do not return to their pre-crisis levels on a consistent basis. Playing by the rules of trade is the best way to sustain a consensus for open trade. I have fought for both objectives. It will help Japan adapt to the challenges of the new global economy.

Last week the Prime Minister wrote a remarkable article in the *New York Times* in which he said something I believe. And I quote: "When Japan overcomes its current economic difficulties, it will emerge a more vibrant and flexible society and in an even stronger support—position to support the values we share so deeply with the United States."

Mr. Prime Minister, that is a goal we will advance together, as allies and as friends. Again, I welcome you to the United States, and the floor is yours.

Prime Minister Obuchi. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I'd first of all like to express my sincere gratitude to the President for inviting me to pay an official visit to the United States, and to the Government and the people of the U.S. for their very warm welcome.

Prior to my arrival here in Washington, I visited Los Angeles and Chicago and met many American citizens from all walks of life who also extended me a very, very warm welcome. I was impressed through these meetings by the great progress that has been made in the exchanges between our two peoples, as well as the solid mutual trust that so strongly binds our alliance and partnership.

Earlier today, during the luncheon hosted by Vice President Gore, we shared our views that we'll further expand our bilateral relationship by encouraging the two peoples to join in through such organizations as NGO's.

In my discussions with President Clinton, we both confirmed as allies—we share the common values of freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights—that our two countries will cooperate toward our common goal of building a peaceful and prosperous world for the 21st century.

Regarding the problem in Kosovo, let me first join the American people in rejoicing for the release of three U.S. servicemen. I stressed that it is important for the international community to act in concert, through diplomatic efforts, to find a political solution. I welcome the dialog between the U.S. and Russia, which is going on today, and I pay respect to the efforts made by President Clinton.

From the viewpoint of supporting the U.S. effort, among others, I decided before departing from Japan on an aid package for refugees in the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Albania, as well as for other purposes, which brings the Japanese pledged contribution to a total of \$200 million.

Regarding the Japanese economy, I explained to the President that Japan is swiftly and boldly taking every measure in order to address the difficulties we are facing and to achieve Japan's economic recovery. Referring to specific measures aimed at the revitalization of the Japanese economy and structural reform, I also explained that we'll pave a solid path for recovery within fiscal year 1999 and will continue our effort with unwavering resolve to ensure positive growth. Japan's economy and society are already experiencing broad-based change, and by continuing to advance structural reform, I firmly believe that Japan will soon regain its vitality.

We reaffirmed the importance of ensuring the effectiveness of the guidelines for Japan-U.S. defense cooperation. To resolve the issues involv-

ing Okinawa, we shared our views that we would continuously strive to steadily implement the recommendations in the final report of SACO, Special Action Committee on Okinawa, while giving due consideration to the situation in Okinawa.

We also discussed our cooperation to secure peace and prosperity in Asia. Regarding our policy toward North Korea, Japan supports the comprehensive and integrated approach currently being worked out by North Korea Policy Coordinator William Perry. We shared the view that, based upon close coordination among Japan, the United States, and the Republic of Korea, we would continue our policy toward North Korea while striking a balance between dialog and deterrence.

Public opinion in Japan is very negative due to problems related to North Korea, such as the missile launch, suspicion of abductions, and spy ship activity. But Japan considers KEDO to be important for its national security, because it provides the most realistic and effective framework for preventing North Korea from developing nuclear weapons. With this in mind, the Government of Japan has signed the KEDO-Government of Japan loan agreement earlier today, that is, the 3d of May.

Moreover, we affirmed the importance of further developing the bilateral cooperative relationships between Japan, the United States, and the Republic of China, respectively. I emphasized the importance of China's early accession to the WTO and shared the view with President Clinton that our two countries will cooperate toward achieving China's accession within this year.

With regard to Indonesia, I told the President that Japan is making its utmost effort to support reform in Indonesia, including the holding of general elections in June. In response to the Asian economic crisis, we shared the view that our two countries will cooperate from the vantage point of helping out the socially vulnerable in Asian countries.

In addition, we affirmed that we will cooperate even more closely toward the early realization of the United Nations Security Council reform and to improve the ability of the United Nations to cope with disputes.

On the economic front, we shared the opinion that both Japan and the United States should

play leading roles in strengthening the international financial system and in initiating the next round of WTO negotiations.

Both the President and I welcomed the following achievements through the Japan-U.S. dialog on deregulation and investment: the efforts by the Government of Japan and other entities to promote investment; substantive meeting of minds on agreement between Japan and the United States concerning cooperation on anti-competitive activities; and significant progress in Japan-U.S. Y2K cooperation.

Japan and the United States first met in the mid-19th century. Since then, the Japan-U.S. relations have seen sunny, cloudy, and some stormy days. Due to the untiring efforts of our two peoples over the last half century to advance mutual understanding, we have succeeded in building a solid relationship of trust.

Since I first traveled to the United States 36 years ago, I've visited the United States almost every year through a congressional exchange program to promote friendly relations between Japan and the U.S. As the world now stands ready to embrace a new century, we share the view that it is the mission of Japan and the United States to take the initiative and put our heads together in cooperation so that the peoples of more countries can enjoy increased security and prosperity. Clarifying this shared vision, I believe, is the greatest achievement to come out of this summit meeting.

Thank you very much.

President Clinton. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, all of the recent public statements from the White House indicate that there's no room for negotiations. Are you asking for total capitulation, total victory, or is there any flexibility in negotiations, say, in the makeup of the international peacekeeping force?

President Clinton. Well, let me answer the question, but, first of all, let me say, I don't think you can characterize it as total victory. That's not what I'm asking for. What I'm asking for are the minimal conditions necessary for the Kosovars to be able to go home and live in security with self-government. That is, they won't go home unless the Serb security forces are withdrawn, and they won't go home unless there is a credible international security force, in which NATO plays a role.

Q. But does America have to be a part of it?

President Clinton. Now—well, I don't think that a lot of the Kosovars will go home if we're not a part of it.

On the other hand, I have always said, from the very beginning, that the United States was open to a broad security force. We would welcome the United Nations embrace of such a security force. That's exactly what we did in Bosnia; the Russians were there. I personally think it's quite important that the Russians, perhaps the Ukrainians, perhaps others who come from the Orthodox tradition, who have close ties to the Serbs, be a part of such a mission. That's one of the reasons that it has been as successful as it has in Bosnia, and one of the reasons there's been as little violence as there has been there.

And I have been quite encouraged by President Yeltsin's involvement here, by Mr. Chernomyrdin's involvement. I look forward to seeing him later in the day.

And I'd like to also remind all of you, and the people in Serbia as well, that perhaps the most important new element to come out of the NATO meeting last week was that all the NATO Allies, which means, in effect, the EU, recognize that it was important not just to bring this terrible episode to an end on satisfactory terms that clearly reverse ethnic cleansing, and repudiate that policy, but also to give the people of Kosovo, the people of the Balkans, the people of southeastern Europe a larger future together than they have by continuing to fall out with each other and fight with each other, and than they would have if Mr. Milosevic continued to pursue his policies of ethnic and religious cleansing.

So it seems to me that given those two things, there's plenty to talk about, to work on, to engage not only the Serbs but the other people of southeastern Europe. But on the basic core conditions, that's not a prescription for a victory by NATO or the United States; that's a prescription for what it will take for the Kosovars to be able to go home and live safely and have a measure of autonomy. That is what is necessary.

Mr. Prime Minister, would you like to call on a Japanese journalist?

Japan's Role in the Balkans

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, on the Kosovo situation, the Government of Japan has decided to provide \$200 million, basically for supporting the refugees. Now, in connection with this, I wonder for a political solution, is there any attempt by the Japanese Government to consider any role it could play?

Well, I think there is some expectations that Russia might play a role here, and in view of relations with Russia, I wonder if there is any possibility Japan might seek a role to play through Japan-Russia relations. And I wonder if, Mr. President, you have any expectations that Japan play some role here with regard to Kosovo.

Prime Minister Obuchi. Well, I wholeheartedly support and agree with the basic philosophy of President Clinton that efforts be made to achieve a peaceful and democratic society in Kosovo, in which all ethnic groups will equally share rights and freedom. And I would like to pay respect to the United States for all the efforts it has been making for a political solution of the problem.

Now, Japan certainly intends to provide not only financial cooperation of, say, \$200 million but also, as a member of the G-8 countries, would like to make efforts towards a political solution. And in this connection, at the meeting today as well, I mentioned to President Clinton that it is important to form a common stand amongst the G-8 countries and asked President Clinton to engage in even closer consultations with the Russians. Certainly also intend to take every opportunity available to work on the Russians.

Now, my supreme foreign policy adviser and my predecessor, former Prime Minister Hashimoto, visited Russia quite recently and, of course, discussed Japan-Russia issues very candidly with President Yeltsin. And on that occasion, he also exchanged views very candidly with Mr. Yeltsin on the Kosovo situation as well. So as a member of G-8, Japan also wishes to study and consider actively what role it can play with regard to a political solution to the situation.

Now, with regard to this support, assistance for the refugees in Kosovo, we have had numerous telephone conversations, or I've had numerous telephone conversations with Madame Ogata, who heads the United Nations High Commission of Refugees, and we very much

hope that we could provide this support which will enable their early return and peaceful life back in Kosovo, and also for supporting in the time being the refugees that have to stay on in Macedonia and Albania.

In addition, we see that increasingly Japanese NGO's are becoming active, visiting Kosovo or the neighboring areas, and trying to glean information on the ground, and we, therefore, would like to support their activities as well.

President Clinton. In response to the question you directed to me, I guess I do see the potential for Japan to play a very constructive role here by working with the Russians and by working through the G-8.

And I think that one aspect of the Japanese aid package, which I did not mention earlier, although the Prime Minister did, is the fact that they have also set aside funds for Macedonia and Albania. And this is quite important because stabilizing those countries is critical to having a long-term vision of a united, not a divided, Balkans and southeastern Europe, driven by common economic and political interests, not divided by ethnic and religious differences.

So yes, I believe that Japan can play a very constructive role here, and I think its influence will be enhanced considerably by the generosity of its gift and by both the humanity that it reflects and the political understanding it reflects by allocating some of the funds to Macedonia and to Albania.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Release of U.S. Infantrymen From Serbia

Q. Mr. President, Reverend Jackson seems disappointed that NATO did not suspend its bombing after he won the release of the three American servicemen, even calling it an arrogance of power. Do you think that the release of the three POW's suggest that Mr. Milosevic is looking for a way out? Or are you concerned that he might be trying to use this for a propaganda victory to exploit and divide the NATO Allies?

President Clinton. Well, the truth is we don't know; maybe a little of both. But I think that one of the things we've learned in dealing with Mr. Milosevic now for, on my part, over 6 years, is that you have to judge him by what he does, and what he does in this case, not just with the soldiers.

Remember, these soldiers were not involved in our action in Kosovo or over Serbia. These

soldiers were stationed in what was, until the time ran out, a United Nations mission in Macedonia to stabilize that country and help those people stay out of this conflict. They were not in any way, shape, or form involved in this conflict. So I'm grateful for their release.

But we have made it clear all along that the bombing campaign was our effort to reverse what has been done to the Kosovars and our effort to act more quickly than Europe and the United States acted in Bosnia so that we wouldn't have twice as many refugees and many times as many deaths, where a quarter of a million people died in Bosnia.

So we have to look at that from that point of view. And in terms of words, we had words last October and before where Mr. Milosevic made certain commitments and then they were abandoned. We have tried diplomacy. We have said that under the right circumstances we would be willing to have a bombing pause. But we would need an acceptance of the basic principles and at least the beginning of withdrawal of Serb forces. And I don't believe that we should change that position.

Helen asked me the question about, you know, where was there room for discussions, and I think there's room for discussion, within limits, about who's in this force and all of that. And I think the most important discussion is, what do we do for Serbia, for Macedonia, for Albania—including, obviously, Kosovo and Serbia—and all the rest of the Balkans and their neighbors in southeastern Europe when the fighting is over?

So I just have a different view here. I think that—I am very grateful that these people have been let go—very grateful. But we have to have some indication, other than the uprooting of another 10,000 people, that the release of the pilots is somehow related to a general change in the human attitude toward the people of Kosovo. And we don't have that yet. The two things are completely separate so far.

I hope we will have soon. I think the American people know me well enough now, after all these years, to know that I do not enjoy sending young Americans into harm's way. I do not enjoy operations that I know will inevitably, from time to time, no matter how good our equipment and how brilliant our pilots, lead to unintended casualties of people who, themselves, did not perpetrate these terrible conditions.

But let me remind you: We have lived through now nearly a decade of a systematic attempt to uproot, subjugate, and destroy people because of their ethnic and religious heritage. That is what we have to reverse; that is what we are trying to stop. And we can have a bombing pause if it's clear that it will be in aid of that larger purpose.

Japanese Economy

Q. Prime Minister Obuchi, two questions: One on the Japanese economy and the other on Kosovo. On the Japanese economy, I believe in the morning meeting you had with President Clinton, President Clinton asked that it is important to maintain the economic measures in place, or that these measures not be withdrawn. And I wonder, you are advancing the implementation of public investment, and I think it is conceivable that these measures will run out of steam, say, in coming autumn. So including the possibility of drawing up a supplementary budget, I wonder if you have any thoughts about further fiscal measures.

On the Kosovo question, NATO has been saying that after the Yugoslav security forces withdraw from Kosovo, peace should be maintained by sending in international peacekeeping forces, or forces for international supervision. And I wonder if Japan considers it possible for a Self-Defense Force participation.

Mr. President, on the Japanese economy, I wonder if you do hope Japan to mobilize further fiscal and other measures to stimulate the economy.

Prime Minister Obuchi. Let me first handle those questions. On the future questions regarding the Japanese economy, at the meeting we had this morning, President Clinton referred to the various measures that I've instituted since I took office, and he indicated very high appreciation for that and also indicated his hope and expectation that these measures will be kept up.

The greatest problem for the Japanese economy was the financial sector problem—the financial system problem. And with the two laws being put in place, I believe we now see the financial system moving ahead towards regaining international confidence. Unfortunately, earlier this year, some major banks faced financial difficulties and were placed under tentative government or public administration. But through this somewhat hard landing, I believe that international confidence has been rising toward the

Japanese financial system. And I believe that with the achievement of greater stability in the financial system, the Japanese economy will be able to make a major turnaround.

At the same time, with regard to fiscal mobilization, or fiscal spending, we froze the fiscal structural reform plan or the law, and we also started the budget for the new fiscal year that mobilizes a very positive stimulation fiscally, and also emergency economic measures adopted last year are also being implemented. The budget for the new fiscal year that started on the 1st of April has been implemented very smoothly.

I think the question—perhaps because as so many measures have been instituted—that you were asking if there would be additional measures ahead, and also with a fear that these measures might run out of steam. But I'll squarely watch how things develop in this quarter—April, June—and should tangible results emerge from the measures we've already put in place, then I trust that the Japanese economy will turn around to a positive growth, somehow, following negative growth for 2 years back-on-back. So I believe there is full confidence in the measures in place today.

Now, it is true—well, I think the question was whether President Clinton has indicated any desire to see further measures, stimulus measures. No, I don't think that is the case. I believe we have adequate policy measures in place.

Needless to say, we have to pay utmost and elaborate attention to the ongoing situation. And I therefore am not suggesting, by saying things that I mentioned earlier, that what we have today would suffice. We certainly would continue to turn adequate attention and utmost care to the developments as they transpire. Having said that, at this moment I don't think the President suggested any additional fiscal stimulus.

With regard to your question on Kosovo—well, as far as Japan is concerned, as I mentioned earlier, it is, in the first place, important to consider how best we could help out the refugees, who are in a very unhappy state of affairs from a humanitarian point of view. Now, we certainly have to watch how things will transpire in Kosovo, what sort of international military presence will be organized. At this very moment, I certainly have no idea how things will shape up. And also inclusive of the discussions, consultations between U.S. and Russia, of course, the entire world is watching how things will go.

And I believe it is up to the negotiations amongst the countries concerned as to what sort of substance and composition this international military presence will take place, and therefore, I'm not in a position to discuss in any way participation by the Japanese Self-Defense Forces.

President Clinton. The question you asked me, let me just try to repeat the points I made. I'll do it as briefly as I can. First of all, I think the Prime Minister has been very aggressive on the economy over the last year, and he deserves a lot of credit for that, he and those who have voted with him in the Diet.

I made the following points: First of all, I hope that these stimulus measures would remain intact—not new ones but the ones on the books now—would remain intact until the economy clearly showed signs of sustained growth. I made that point because I would imagine this would be difficult since the Japanese people and their Government have clearly shown a commitment to long-term fiscal responsibility and don't like running deficits. And I don't blame them.

But the great threat of the world today, and particularly the great economic threat in Asia, is not inflation caused by deficit spending and printing too much money; it's deflation, contraction, caused by a lack of economic activity and frozen assets. So that is why I made that point, in the hope that I could be helpful to the Prime Minister in pursuing his policy and staying with it.

The second thing I would like to say is, I think that Japan has adopted very farsighted, even though expensive, legislation to reorganize the financial institutions and get them back to health. Our experience in the United States, when we had a similar but smaller problem with our savings and loans, is that the quicker you can take the assets that are tied to bad loans out from under the bad loans and therefore out of paralysis and put them back into the economy, the quicker you can see growth again. And I think that is important.

And then the third point I made, which I mentioned in my remarks, is that I think that together we should continue to push restructuring, and we committed to another round of deregulation. So those were the points that I made.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, you mentioned the bombing pause. Could you elaborate on the conditions for a bombing pause and what Mr. Milosevic needs to do at a bare minimum to achieve one? And will you be talking to Mr. Chernomyrdin about this tonight?

President Clinton. Yes—the second answer is yes. And the first answer I will repeat—it hasn't changed: I think there has to be a clear commitment to let the Serbs come home—I mean, the Kosovars come home; to withdraw the Serb security forces and permit an international security force that has a mandate to protect both the Kosovar Albanians and the minority Serbs who live in Kosovo; and an understanding that the Kosovars will have a self-government, an autonomy, as they had under the previous constitution.

Now, what I said is subject to negotiation is who's going to be in the security force, how is it going to work, and all of that—except I do believe that the NATO group has to be a big part of it, because otherwise the Kosovar Albanians won't want to go back; neither will the armed groups among the Albanians readily lay down their arms.

That's another thing that often gets overlooked here when people say, "Well, what difference does it make if NATO is there? What difference does it make if the United States is there?" Because we stood up for the rights of those people to be free of ethnic cleansing, to live on their own land, to have their autonomy, we have some claim of credibility in a peace process which we believe will enable us to be successful in getting them to agree to the terms of the peace, just as they did in France.

Secretary Albright was there. Keep in mind, a lot of people have forgotten that they agreed not only to go home and to have an international security force but to disarm and not to engage in further military operations themselves. And that is very, very important, if we're going to have a peace there.

So, if those conditions—and in terms of the bombing pause, that the withdrawal of forces must at least begin, so we know that we're not just stopping based on someone saying something, because he's said things to us before that didn't come to pass. So we want to see some action.

Now, beyond that, there is a great deal to be decided and a lot to talk about. And particularly, what are we going to do in the long term to develop the whole region?

But these basic conditions—it's not, to go back to what Helen said, it's not so the United States or NATO can say, "We won a victory." It's so we can meet the need, the fundamental need of the situation to have a human, secure existence for the Kosovars when they go home and so that we do not spawn yet another different war in the aftermath of the bitterness of this conflict.

North Korea

Q. I'd like to ask a question of the President and the Prime Minister. First question for the President. In your earlier meeting with the Prime Minister, I believe on the question of North Korea, Prime Minister Obuchi referred to the problem of abductions of Japanese nationals by North Korea, asking for U.S. cooperation. Now, you place much emphasis on human rights issues, and as President, how would you respond to address this request of cooperation on the abduction issue?

A question for the Prime Minister. You visited Korea recently, and now you're here in the States. On the question of Korean Peninsula situation and North Korea, I believe you have agreed to maintain close coordination among the three countries, U.S., Japan, and South Korea, vis-a-vis North Korea. I wonder if, more specifically, how would you respond to the North Korean situation?

President Clinton. You have asked me a very specific but a very important question. First of all, I don't believe that Japan should abandon this issue until it is resolved. In my Presidency, we still had people in Vietnam looking for our prisoners of war and for their remains. And if you believe that there are Japanese people who were abducted and taken to North Korea, I think you should keep working on it and looking until you find them alive or you know where they're buried. And I will support that very, very strongly.

My position is that if we can find a way to work with the North Koreans to remove the nuclear threat, to remove the missile technology threat, and ultimately to remove the threat of conflict on the Korean Peninsula, it is more likely that other matters will also be resolved. But that's why I think it's so important that

we work together and with the Chinese and with the Russians on this issue.

North Korea is still a very isolated country. Even China now does about 10 times as much business every year with South Korea as with North Korea. So I think you ought to stay at that. I have discussed this issue, actually, because it's so important to the Prime Minister—and it has been important to his predecessors—I have discussed this issue with the leaders of Russia and China and have made it clear that we would support the Japanese position that there had to be somehow an accounting for these people. Insofar as is humanly possible, we need to try to resolve their fate. And I think that is the right thing to do.

Prime Minister Obuchi. Thank you very much, Mr. President. North Korea is a neighbor of Japan, just across the water. And amongst the 180-odd member countries of the United Nations, North Korea is the only country with which we have not normalized diplomatic relations. And therefore, we need to engage in efforts to realize that as early as possible.

And to that end, as I've been saying from time to time, we believe both dialog and deterrence will be necessary. The North Koreans launched their missile over Japanese territory. They also have this problem of suspicious nuclear facilities and then also these cases of abductions of Japanese nationals. These being the case, we believe it is necessary for Japan to cooperate with the United States and the Republic of Korea to engage firmly in efforts at deterrence, but at the same time strive towards dialog.

Between the United States and North Korea, there already exists a channel for dialog, and also between North Korea and the United States—and also for Korea and China—there is a framework for discussions. Unfortunately, between Japan and North Korea, there is no such channel for dialog. So we would like to work on that actively.

On the KEDO question which I referred to earlier, as I mentioned, we were able to sign the KEDO-Government of Japan loan agreement today. So, financially, I believe KEDO has been able to make a major step forward towards building light-water-reactor-powered nuclear stations.

Now, William Perry, North Korean Policy Coordinator, has visited Japan twice and has advocated that Japan and the United States together

work on a comprehensive and integrated approach towards North Korea. So under coordination and concerted efforts of the three countries, Japan would like to continue to make efforts.

President Clinton. We'll do one more each, maybe.

Scott [Scott Pelley, CBS News].

Situation in the Balkans

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Three related points, if I may. First of all, what must Mr. Milosevic do to articulate this clear commitment that you seek? Second, what do his forces on the ground have to do? And how quickly would a NATO bombing pause follow?

President Clinton. Well, I don't know how else I can say what I have already said. And we will discuss—I mean, I hope I'll get a chance to get into some of this with Mr. Chernomyrdin today, and I expect I will. We want to be clear that all the Serbs can come home—I mean, all the Kosovars can come home; that the Serb security forces will leave; that we will have clear and unambiguous evidence that a withdrawal is underway; and that the other conditions I mentioned in terms of self-government and especially the international security force have been accepted. Then we could have a bombing pause.

I will say again: I do not relish every night sending young Americans and our NATO Allies up in planes, flying very fast under very hazardous circumstances in which their safety is at risk. I do not relish the continuing burdens on the people of Albania and Macedonia. I am eager to get the Kosovars out of the camps and on their way back home and rebuilding. I do not relish the thought that, inevitably, some of those bombs will go astray and some Serbian civilians or some Kosovar civilians could be killed.

I am not trying to drag this out, but I am determined to pursue our policy until we know that we have a chance to do what has to be done in order for this to work, as a practical matter; and in order, finally, to clearly and unambiguously reverse the policy of ethnic and religious cleansing.

We are standing—I think that is quite simple, and I don't believe that I've been very complicated or hard to understand here.

Q. No, sir, but is it as simple as a telephone call, sir, to Mr. Solana or to yourself? Or does there have to be a negotiation of some kind?

President Clinton. Well, we have—the diplomatic efforts are ongoing, and I think we should allow them to go on and encourage them. But it's not for lack of clarity of conditions here. We're quite clear. I don't think there's any ambiguity here.

China and Taiwan

Q. A question for President Clinton. As a result of the passage of the new defense cooperation guidelines, I think the major question now is, how—in case a major regional conflict occurs, how Japan will cooperate. And I believe for Japan a major delicate issue will be in case a conflict occurs between China and Taiwan. So, Mr. President, in case that sort of conflict occurs between U.S. and China, what sort of support will the United States give to one of the parties? And in that instance would you request Japan's cooperation under the new guidelines?

President Clinton. Well, let me reiterate our policy. I think the best way for me to answer that question is to reiterate our policy. Our policy is that we support “one China,” but we also support China and Taiwan resolving their differences by peaceful means. And we have done everything we could for many years now, including during my time here in office, to take preventive action when we were afraid the peace might be broken. Our policy is to have a vigorous engagement of China so that we can reiterate both our “one China” policy and our conviction that the differences between Taiwan and China ought to be resolved peacefully.

I have found that as long as that is our clear policy, and as long as we demonstrate our determination to do everything we can in terms of the moves we make and the words we say to avoid a break in the peace, that that is a better policy than answering hypotheticals, like the one you asked me.

I think that—in a larger sense, what I would like China to know, and what I believe, is that both the United States and Japan would like to have a 21st century in which we work together and cooperate and there is no fighting. The three of us, together, could do great things in the Asia/Pacific region. We also, however, would like to be together based on shared values. And I think that is important for me. I worked very hard to convince President Jiang Zemin of that, Premier Zhu, and the people of China when I was there.

China is a very great country, and there need not be that sort of conflict over this issue. And I think that our strong defense cooperation—Japan and the United States—should not in any way be seen as directed against China. It is in favor of advancing both the security interests of our two countries and the values we embrace.

And we hope—I'll let the Prime Minister speak for himself—but I think I'm quite sure in saying that both of us hope that our successors in the 21st century will see China as a great partner, and the three of us will be working together for peace and stability, prosperity, and freedom in the Asia/Pacific region.

Prime Minister Obuchi. Well, I believe the question wasn't directed to me, but—well, I believe with regard to the new defense cooperation guidelines, this is to more steeply and effectively put in operation the Japan-U.S. security treaty, and this certainly would further strengthen the ties between Japan and the United States. Should the relevant bills pass the upper house as well, before long, then I believe the Japan-U.S. relationship will become even more firm.

Thank you very much.

President Clinton. Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 174th news conference began at 3:10 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. Prime Minister Obuchi spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, the President referred to Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Specialist Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen released from custody in Serbia, and civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, whose personal appeal won their release; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); President B.J. Habibie of Indonesia; President Boris Yeltsin and Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; and President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Zhu Rongji of China. Prime Minister Obuchi referred to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata. A reporter referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Statement on the Tourist Boat Tragedy in Hot Springs, Arkansas
May 3, 1999

Hillary and I were heartbroken to hear this weekend of the 13 people killed when a tourist boat sank in my hometown of Hot Springs, Arkansas. I know Lake Hamilton well, and I am terribly saddened that this beautiful lake has become the site of such a tragedy. I commend all those Hot Springs residents who worked cou-

rageously to save lives in the moments after the sinking. Hillary and I send our thoughts, prayers, and deepest sympathies to all those families mourning their loved ones. As it is written in the Bible, God "will not in any way fail you, nor give you up, nor leave you without support."

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia
May 3, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to sig-

nificant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia that was declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 3, 1999.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan
May 3, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to

Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 3, 1999.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan
May 3, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, Prime Minister and Mrs. Obuchi, members of the Japanese delegation, and all our distinguished guests. It's a great pleasure for Hillary and for me to return the

hospitality that the Prime Minister extended to me when I visited Japan last November.

In 1963, as a high school student, I first came to this house. There I heard President Kennedy

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challenge a group of us to make the world a better place. A year earlier a young Japanese graduate student walked straight into the office of Attorney General Robert Kennedy and asked for a meeting. He left a letter saying he was deeply impressed by a speech Kennedy had given at Waseda University.

Keizo Obuchi apparently made his own impression, because a week later he got his meeting with Robert Kennedy. He has said often since then that that meeting helped kindle within him a desire for public service. I understand, Mr. Prime Minister, that the Attorney General's graciousness also impressed you. We see it today reflected in your own decency and generosity.

I treasure the bonsai tree you gave me last year, a tree you tended yourself. I was honored when you presented me with *sake* that came from His Majesty, the Emperor. And you were kind enough to write this warning: Be careful, because overall, *sake* will result in dancing and singing. [Laughter]

Well, many people were dancing and singing, with or without *sake*, when this year the young Japanese filmmaker Keiko Ibi won an Academy Award for her film on the lives of elderly New Yorkers. Her acceptance speech pointed to the possibilities for understanding and friendship between people of different cultures.

That spirit is more important than ever today, as the world community works to end the ethnic and religious cleansing in Kosovo. I am grateful to Japan for supporting NATO's efforts and for

its aid to refugees in frontline states—part of Japan's broader commitment to relieve human suffering and support peace and freedom around the world. You have helped survivors of Central America's hurricanes, supported the peace process in the Middle East, promoted democracy in Indonesia and stability on the Korean Peninsula. Ratifying the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, fighting deadly disease in Africa, protecting endangered forests and oceans—Japan truly is a world leader for all that is best in humanity.

The whole world looks to Japan—and to you, Mr. Prime Minister—for that kind of leadership. And we are pulling for you and working with you for economic policies to lift the lives of Japan's citizens, as well as the people in your region.

We share the same dreams for a better future. We are united in an alliance of fundamental importance to peace and freedom. As I said to you in Tokyo, all is possible when our countries join hands.

I ask all of you to join me in a toast to the Prime Minister, to Mrs. Obuchi, and to the people of Japan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Obuchi's wife, Chizuko; and Emperor Akihito of Japan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Obuchi.

Remarks Announcing the Financial Privacy and Consumer Protection Initiative

May 4, 1999

Thank you very much, Mari. I just wish we could have found someone with a little energy to make this presentation. [Laughter]

Hillary and I are really delighted to have all of you here and delighted to be a part of this announcement today, because it's so important. And I would like to say a special word of appreciation to Secretary Rubin. You know, most people think of the Treasury Secretary as someone who's out there trying to keep the economy going, and he's done a reasonable job of that, I think. [Laughter] And they think of Bob Rubin

as this sort of big Wall Street-type brilliant person.

But one of the reasons that I wanted him to come and work here is that he actually understands how big economic decisions affect individual people at all levels of income and all different circumstances in life. And I think it's a good thing for a country to have a Treasury Secretary that understands the big issues and then cares about how they impact individual citizens. And I'm very grateful for that.

I want to thank Senator Bryan and Congressmen Bentsen, Gonzalez, Inslee, Kanjorski, Markey, Lee, Roybal-Allard, and Waters for being here; and Senator Sarbanes, who can't be here; and Congressman LaFalce, who's done so much on this, who is here today. And I thank Chairman Levitt, Chairman Pitofsky, Commissioner Thompson, Assistant Attorney General Jim Robinson.

Tornado Damage in Oklahoma and Kansas

Before I get into the substance of our proposals today, I would like to say just a few words about the terrible tornado devastation in Oklahoma and Kansas, which I'm sure all of you have seen the reports of and perhaps even the gripping pictures of.

Some of the most powerful tornadoes ever recorded swept through these States last night. At least 45 people are dead, and the wreckage is still being examined. Whole communities have been leveled. Homes and possessions have been turned into splinters and rubble.

I have already spoken with the Governor of Oklahoma, Frank Keating, to tell him that I've declared Oklahoma a Federal disaster area. And we have just completed a similar declaration for the State of Kansas, and I look forward to talking to Governor Graves later today. I had a good talk with James Lee Witt, our FEMA Director, who is now in Oklahoma with Buddy Young, his Regional Director. And they are working on what we can do to provide all the necessary support for people.

We have to make sure everyone's accounted for and that the beginning cleanup can start. Local and State officials, fire and police, emergency services, National Guard personnel have already worked through the night and are doing a terrific job of dealing with an incredibly difficult situation. We're here talking about how people feel when something has been stolen from them. A lot of our fellow Americans have had everything taken from them in those two States, and I know that they will be in your prayers.

The people of Oklahoma City, in particular, have suffered too much devastation in recent years, and they've been hit very, very hard by this. So we'll have more to say about that in the days ahead.

Financial Privacy and Consumer Protection

I would like to just put this issue briefly into historical perspective, to emphasize the importance that I feel the entire Congress, without regard to party, should attach to this matter.

We've been at this experiment in Government for 223 years now. We started with a constitution that was rooted in certain basic values and written by some incredibly brilliant people who understood that times would change and that definitions of fundamental things like liberty and privacy would change and that circumstances would require people to rise to the challenges of each new era by applying the old values in practical ways.

This happened at the dawn of the 20th century. Mari mentioned Justice Brandeis. He said when we change from being an agricultural to an industrial society, that laws built under simpler conditions of living could not handle the complex relations of the modern industrial world. He and the leaders of the Progressive movement, about 100 years ago, therefore, fought to adapt our institutions to new markets, to update vital protections for our citizens, to uphold the right to privacy, which Brandeis said was the right most valued by civilized men.

Now, that's what's happening today; we're in the midst of another vast economic transformation. Once again, the laws that govern dynamic markets—markets so dynamic they could not have been imagined 200 years ago—are out of date.

I just read—just parenthetically—I read yesterday a quote that said that 60 years ago the prices in London for most basic commodities were the same that they were in 1660, before the outbreak of the great London fire. In the last 60 years, most of us have seen prices go up a thousandfold. Thank goodness it hasn't happened in the last 6 years; we're—[laughter]—maybe in a different thing.

But the pace of change is very different—not just the nature of change but the very pace of it. So once again, we have to respond, applying our oldest values in practical ways that allow them to be preserved and enhanced in modern times.

We all know that technology and competition have revolutionized the financial services industry. I think most of us believe that, by and large, these changes have been very good. But many people, as you've heard, don't have the

knowledge to properly evaluate what is truly a dizzying array of options. Some are falling victim to new abusive practices. Others are being left out of the financial marketplace altogether.

That is why today I am proud to announce our new Financial Privacy and Consumer Protection Initiative, to give all Americans both the tools and the confidence they need to fully participate in a thriving but highly complex 21st century economy.

This initiative is based on five key principles, and it draws on several important proposals developed by the Members of Congress who are here today, and some who are not, whom Hillary mentioned.

The first, clearly, is that we have to do more to protect every American's financial privacy. The Vice President led our efforts to identify areas where privacy is at risk, and financial areas came up over and over and over again as a matter of great concern.

The technological revolution now makes it easier than ever for people to mine your private financial data for their profit. While some of your private financial information is protected under existing Federal law, your bank or broker or insurance company could still share with affiliated firms information on what you buy with checks and credit cards or sell this information to the highest bidder. This law, to put it mildly, is outdated and should be changed to give you the right to control your financial information, to let you decide whether you want to share private information with anyone else. I look forward to working with Members in the House and the Senate on this issue.

To enhance financial privacy, we must also protect the sanctity of medical records. With the growing number of mergers between insurance companies and banks, lenders potentially can gain access to the private medical information contained in insurance forms. So we propose to severely restrict the sharing of medical information within financial services conglomerates. You should not have to worry that the results of your latest physical exam will be used to deny you a home mortgage or a credit card.

There are many other important protections for medical records that ought to be put in place. Because Congress has given me the authority to act if it does not do so by August, one way or another, we will protect the privacy of medical records this year.

Second, we must require greater public disclosure and enhance every consumer's right to know. As the First Lady just pointed out—although every time I hear it, I shake my head—consumers received nearly 4 billion credit card solicitations last year.

Some offers contain new traps for the unwary. For example, sometimes credit card companies advertise low interest rates known as teaser rates, to reel in consumers who then are surprised with unexpected interest rate hikes. We believe any marketing of teaser rates for credit cards should include equally prominent notice of their expiration date, their eventual annual percentage rate, and any penalties that apply.

Millions of consumers have also found out the hard way that making only minimum payments rarely helps retire a debt and almost always results in very large interest payments. So we will require clear notice of how long and how costly repayment would be if the consumer makes only the minimum payment.

Third, we have to do more to combat consumer fraud. As Mari Frank discovered the hard way, it is remarkably easy now for a thief to take out huge loans in someone else's name, run up enormous credit card debts, and tap into bank accounts. Last October Congress passed—and I was pleased to sign—the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act. It's a good law, but we need to give it sharp teeth. So today I'm instructing the Treasury and Justice Departments to give higher priority to cases involving identity theft, particularly those involving organized crime groups, with the goal of increasing the number of prosecutions, both at the State and Federal levels. And Treasury will convene a national summit on identity theft and work with the private sector to make it harder to steal someone else's identity in the first place.

We'll also crack down on fraud committed over the Internet. If we want to seize the Internet's full potential, we have to stay ahead of those who would use this open medium to manipulate stock prices, commit fraud in on-line auctions, or perpetuate any other type of financial scam. That's why I've asked the Justice Department to step up prosecutions, to develop a national center for tracking Internet fraud, and to train State, local, and Federal law enforcement officers on how to recognize and root out these schemes.

I find that law enforcement, compared to people who are doing criminal activity in this area,

are rather like parents trying to keep up with their children on the computer. [Laughter] It is an endless effort, and we need to organize and systematize a continuous training and re-training effort so that we can stay ahead of the curve.

Chairman Levitt is launching an expanded effort to arm investors with the information they need to protect themselves against on-line securities fraud. Listen to this: Complaints of Internet fraud have tripled in the past 6 months—just in the last 6 months. Therefore, I will work with Congress and Chairman Levitt to provide the additional resources for the SEC necessary for enforcement, beyond what I have already requested in our balanced budget.

Fourth, we must provide financial services for those who have been denied access to credit and basic banking services for too long. Today I'm proud to announce that the Treasury Department will soon make available, through private banks, low-fee bank accounts for those who receive Federal benefits like Social Security.

Unfortunately, there are some in Congress who would have us effectively limit rather than expand access to financial services in underserved communities. As the Senate debates this issue this week, I want to reiterate what I said in my veto letter to Congress. We will oppose any effort to weaken or undermine the continued relevance of the Community Reinvestment Act.

While that act has been on the law for well over 20 years now, over 90 percent of the lending under it has occurred in the last 6 years, in our administration. I'm very proud of that. It has not done anything to hurt bank profits, and we ought to stay with it. I know that leaders of the civil rights community spoke today on this subject, and I just want to applaud them and to encourage them to stay at it.

Finally, as has already been said, we have to increase the financial literacy of the American

people. It's not enough to know how to balance a checkbook anymore. Even those fortunate enough to have the help of accountants sometimes have a hard time understanding all the ins and outs of investing in an IRA, paying off credit card debt, or refinancing a mortgage.

So today I'm directing my National Economic Council—Gene Sperling is here today with us—to work with our agencies to develop a plan to help all Americans improve their financial literacy. I think Hillary said it adds a year of income to people if they have this kind of training in high school.

School is, of course, the best place to start learning about personal finance. The Department of Education will help all our schools find effective lesson plans and other tools to integrate financial literacy into their basic curriculum.

So that's what we're trying to do: protect privacy, enhance disclosure, combat fraud, increase access, expand education. These principles are the same ones we used to harness the power and benefits of the Industrial Revolution. They are just as vital today, if not more so, than they were a century ago. It's time now to use them to seize the enormous potential of the information revolution for every American citizen.

If we work together, we can help all our families have the benefits of new choices and new technologies. We can help our people thrive in the 21st century, and all we have to do is to remember how we got here over the last 200-plus years.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks he referred to attorney Mari J. Frank, privacy rights advocate; Gov. Bill Graves of Kansas; and Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VI Director Raymond Lloyd (Buddy) Young.

Remarks on Departure for Europe and an Exchange With Reporters May 4, 1999

Situation in the Balkans

The President. Good afternoon. As you know, I am leaving in a few minutes for Europe. But

first, I would like to say just a few words about what we've been doing on Kosovo in the last

24 hours and what we intend to do over the next few days.

Yesterday I met with Mr. Chernomyrdin, the Russian envoy. I reaffirmed our support for his efforts and our willingness to seize every diplomatic possibility for Serbian authorities to meet the requirements that NATO has articulated. I reaffirmed what all the Allies have agreed those requirements are, including withdrawal of Serbian security forces from Kosovo and the deployment of an international security force with NATO at its core. Only then will the refugees have the confidence to return, which is, after all, what we are working for. Only then will the KLA have an incentive to demobilize, which will contribute to peace and stability for all of Kosovo's people, including its ethnic Serbs. Only then will we have a chance to achieve a durable solution to the problem of Kosovo.

Tomorrow I will meet with Secretary General Solana and General Clark. We will discuss the progress of NATO's air campaign, which continues to grow in intensity and impact. I will speak with the airmen who are flying missions over Kosovo and Serbia out of Spangdahlem, Germany, and visit our humanitarian relief operations at Ramstein. Our men and women in uniform are doing their jobs with uncommon courage and skill. They have the support of the American people. They should hear unqualified support from their leaders in Washington.

On Thursday I will meet with Chancellor Schroeder and go to a refugee reception center in Ingelheim, Germany. We will hear the stories of the people fleeing the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. We will assure them of our determination and resolve to see them return with security and self-government. That is what our effort in Kosovo is all about.

We need to remember that there is no middle ground between returning these innocent people to their homes and turning away from their faith. Whatever can be negotiated, it is not that. They have to be able to go home safe and secure. We cannot see what we have seen with our own eyes and take refuge in the false comfort of indifference or impatience. We have to take a stand. We have done that. We have to see our effort through. We will do that.

I want to thank again all of our allies for the steadfast support that we are jointly giving to our common efforts. We will continue to do that until our simple and plain objectives are met.

Q. Mr. President, what can you negotiate without giving up your core demands?

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—any indication at all from Mr. Chernomyrdin that President Milosevic is prepared to move toward NATO's demands at all?*

The President. Well, I don't know what he's prepared to do. I appreciate the fact that he let our American soldiers come home. That was the right decision. They weren't even involved in the operation.

It seems to me that if he asked the question, what is best for the Serbian people over the long run? What is most likely to preserve the territorial integrity of Serbia over the long run? What is most likely to give us a result where Serbia can join with its neighbors in a common endeavor to promote prosperity and peace and, therefore, the natural strengths that Belgrade and Serbia have because of the size of their country and the abilities of their people? What is most likely to promote that? Then the answer will clearly be: letting the Kosovars come home, having an international force to protect them and the Serb minority in Kosovo, and then getting on about the business of building a better future for all the people of southeastern Europe.

So, I think if the right questions are asked, then this is not a defeat for Serbia we're seeking. What we're seeking is the simple right of the Kosovar Albanians to live in peace on their own land, without fear of cleansing because of their religious or their ethnic background, and a simple statement that in Europe there will be no more ethnic cleansing. We will not usher in the 21st century with the worst nightmares of the 20th.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:09 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Brussels, Belgium. In his remarks, he referred to Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Spec. Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen released from custody in Serbia. The President also referred to the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

Statement on Tornado Damage in Oklahoma and Kansas *May 4, 1999*

My heart goes out to the people of Oklahoma and Kansas who suffered through a night of terror and devastation. Some of the most powerful tornadoes ever recorded tore through these States last night, killing dozens of people, leveling whole neighborhoods, and leaving more than a thousand families homeless.

In the coming hours, I will declare several counties in both States Federal disaster areas, speeding the way for Federal aid. James Lee Witt, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is now on his way to the region to assess the damage and to assure the

people of Oklahoma and Kansas that the Federal Government will provide whatever support is necessary to help them begin putting their communities back together.

Right now, our top priority is to make sure people are safe, that everyone is accounted for, and that initial cleanup can begin. Local and State officials, fire and police, emergency services, and National Guard personnel worked through the night and are doing an outstanding job of helping people through these most difficult hours. The thoughts and prayers of all Americans are with the victims of this tragedy.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Award the Congressional Gold Medal to Rosa Parks *May 4, 1999*

I am proud to sign S. 531, a bill which authorizes me to bestow the Congressional Gold Medal to Rosa Parks.

Forty-three years ago, in Alabama, Rosa Parks boarded a public bus, took a seat, and began a remarkable journey. Her action that December day was, in itself, a simple one; but it required uncommon courage. It was a ringing rebuke to those who denied the dignity and restricted the rights of African-Americans. And it was an inspi-

ration to all Americans struggling together to shed the prejudices of the past and to build a better future. Rosa Parks' short bus trip, and all the distance she has traveled in the years since, have brought the American people ever closer to the promised land that we know it can truly be.

NOTE: S. 531, approved May 4, was assigned Public Law No. 106-26.

Message on the Observance of Cinco de Mayo, 1999 *May 4, 1999*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

It was 137 years ago today that General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguin led an outnumbered and ill-equipped Mexican militia into battle. With brave hearts, they successfully defended their young nation and set a powerful example of hope and determination for freedom-loving citizens around the world.

Well over a century has passed since this battle, but we can still learn much from the Mexi-

can patriots who fought at Puebla. Their story reminds us to cherish our own independence and to honor those who struggled and sacrificed to attain it. It encourages us to stand up against injustice and to uphold our ideals. Finally, it shows us that brave men and women can overcome great odds when they are united in principle and purpose.

As we mark this special holiday, we also celebrate the enduring friendship between the United States and Mexico and the rich cultural

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heritage that Mexican Americans have brought to our society. As we stand at the threshold of the 21st century, let us vow to work together to forge a future of peace and prosperity for our hemisphere and the world.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a memorable celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks to the Community at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany *May 5, 1999*

Thank you very much. Secretary Cohen, thank you for your remarks and your remarkable leadership. We're glad that you and Janet are here with us today and there for the men and women of America's military services every day.

Secretary Albright, thank you for being able to redeem the lessons of your life story by standing up for the freedom of the people in the Balkans.

To the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Hugh Shelton—I was looking at General Shelton standing up here—you know, he's about a head taller than I am. And I thought to myself, he not only is good; he looks good. He looks like the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But what I want you to know is, however good he looks, he's better than that in the job that he does.

I thank General Clark for his leadership; Ambassador Kornblum; National Security Adviser Sandy Berger; our USAID Director, Brian Atwood, who is doing so much for the humanitarian relief. Brigadier General Scott Van Cleef, thank you. Chief Master Sergeant Daniel Keane, thank you for making all of us feel so welcome here today.

I'd like to thank the distinguished German public officials and citizens who are here. And I'd like to thank the Spangdahlem oompah band and the gospel choir. Thank you. I thank all the men and women of Team Eifel and all your family members who are here. I am delighted to see so many children here today. And I hope this will be a day they will long remember.

The 52d Air Expeditionary Wing is crucial to our mission in Europe. There are so many to thank: the Stingers and Hawks, the Panthers, your guests here, the crews of the Flying Knights, all the hundreds of base operations and support personnel here, working day after day

and now night after night. We ask so much of you, and you never let us down.

Ever since the end of the cold war, this base has been busy with the challenges of a new era, training new allies, planning new missions, helping people in need like the earthquake victims in Turkey whom the 52d Civil Engineer Squadron assisted last summer. A few years ago, you helped to end the cruel war in Bosnia. And I'm sorry you have to do it all over again, but I'm proud of the job you're doing today in Kosovo.

Earlier this year, some of you in the 22d Fighter Squadron flew support for Operation Northern Watch. Since this conflict in Kosovo began, we have been depending on you more than ever. It's meant more hardship and more hard work for you. Many of your loved ones are right now flying out of Italy, and of course, these F-117 stealth fighters and their crew are here from Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico. And they're a long way from their families.

Night after night, crews fly out to Serbia, punching through enemy defenses; putting ordinance on target; returning home to debrief, rest, and then do it all over again. That takes courage and skill and a lot of support that we must never take for granted: refueling in midair; evading anti-aircraft fire; pinpointing targets; seeking, often at great personal risk, to avoid civilian casualties; coordinating with crews from other nations; rescuing a downed pilot, as one of your squadrons did just a few days ago; and for the base personnel and the loved ones, always the anxious waiting for the aircraft to return.

One thing I have tried to make sure the American people understand in the years that I have been President is that your jobs have inherent dangers, even when not directly engaged in conflict. As many of you now know,

just yesterday we lost two brave Americans in a helicopter training accident in Albania. And today we grieve with their families and pray for them.

I came here more than anything else to say, on behalf of your fellow Americans, we thank you for your service and your sacrifice. Though you're far from our shores, you are close to our hearts every day.

I also would like to thank the people of Germany, who are our allies in this cause and who do so very much to make all of you feel at home here in this wonderful country.

I just came from an operations briefing and a tour of the aircraft you fly from this base. I want to talk just a little bit about why you're flying. And I want all of you, particularly, who have children here, who think about the world they will live in the 21st century, to think about why you're flying.

Our mission in Kosovo has nothing to do with trying to acquire territory or dominate others. It is about something far more important, creating the kind of world where an innocent people are not singled out for repression, for expulsion, for destruction just because of their religious and ethnic heritage.

You look around today at the people we have in uniform here. We have people from all different racial and ethnic backgrounds. We have people from all different religious heritages. And I think America's military is stronger because we try to get everybody's talents and put everybody's talents to the best possible use—not weaker. And I can tell you for sure that our country is stronger when we reach across all the lines that divide us and celebrate our differences but say that what unites us is more important.

All the differences that exist among people in the world, especially differences of religion, make life more interesting and more enlightening when they are limited by an understanding of our common humanity. But when people throw away that understanding of our common humanity and make differences the only thing that matter and make them so important they justify literally dehumanizing other people so that their lives, their children, their property, their history, their culture, even their faith in God do not matter, that makes life unbearable, and it makes civilization impossible.

And that is what we are fighting against in Kosovo, the same thing we fought to stop in

Bosnia. And if we want Europe to be undivided and democratic and at peace for the first time in history, and if we don't want your successors to have to come to this continent and fight another bitter war, then we must stand in Kosovo for the elemental principle of the common humanity of every breathing, living person in this continent.

The Alliance in which we are privileged to serve, NATO, is comprised of 19 democracies with 780 million people, tied together by a respect for human rights and the richness of all people, tied together in a conviction that we will build a Europe that is for the first time in history undivided, peaceful, and free. Kosovo is an affront to everything we stand for.

Two months ago there were 1.8 million ethnic Albanians living there; now nearly 1½ million have been forced from their homes, their villages burned, their men often separated from their families and killed, some of them bundled and set on fire, the records of their family history and property destroyed.

The number of people dislodged there in 2 months is equivalent to the entire population of the State of Nebraska—kicked out of house and home without warning at gunpoint. It is—and those of you who were involved in Bosnia will remember this very well—it is the culmination of a deliberate, calculated, 10-year campaign by Mr. Milosevic to exploit the religious and ethnic differences in the former Yugoslavia, to preserve and enhance his dictatorial power.

His so-called ethnic cleansing has included concentration camps, murder, rape, the destruction of priceless religious, cultural, and historical sites, books, and records. This is wrong. It is evil. NATO, after the cold war, said that we would stand for the freedom and unity of Europe. This is occurring in the heart of Europe on NATO's doorstep. We must repudiate it. We must reverse it. And we intend to do that.

Now, when Mr. Milosevic started this campaign against unarmed people in Kosovo, with 40,000 troops and nearly 300 tanks, he may have thought our Alliance was too divided, our people too impatient, our democracies too weak to stand against single-minded despotism. Every day, you prove him wrong.

NATO is now more united. Our objectives are clear and firm; Secretary Cohen said them. I want to say them one more time. This is not complicated. The Kosovars must be able to go home, safe and with self-government. The

Serbian troops must be withdrawn, and instead there must be an international force with NATO at its core, but hopefully with many other nations participating, to keep the peace and protect all the people of Kosovo, Albanians and Serbs alike.

We have no quarrel with the Serb people. I say that again. We do not want to be guilty of the sin we are standing and speaking against. We have no quarrel with the Serb people. America has many great Serbian-Americans. They were our allies in war. Our quarrel is with ethnic cleansing and systematic killing and uprooting and the bigotry and death brought on by religious hatred. That is what we stand against and what we seek to reverse.

But for that to happen and for those people to go home and have self-government, there has to be an international security force with NATO at its core that will protect everybody there. We will continue to pursue this campaign in which we are now engaged. We will intensify it in an unrelenting way until these objectives are met.

You know, the gentle hills of this region, the Eifel region and the Mosel Valley, are peaceful today, thanks in no small measure to 50 years of alliance and commitment, of which you are the most recent manifestation. But we mustn't forget that here, where we now are, there was a landscape of violence for thousands of years, from the time Trier served as a Roman capital just south of here. For two millennia, Europeans fought each other in the contested terrain around this base—two millennia.

Now, when you drive across these beautiful hills and you see these beautiful fields, war is unthinkable here and in most of Europe because of what your forebears did. And you can now look forward to a day not long from now when, in the Balkans and throughout southeastern Europe, human rights are respected and the men and women of Spang are honored for doing your part to turn the dream of peace and human rights into an everyday reality.

This base was built in the aftermath of the Second World War, at the dawn of the cold war. Because of Allied vigilance, the war we then feared would occur never happened. Now, planes are actually flying into combat from this base for the very first time to protect the future your forebears worked so hard to build.

I know this is hard. I know too many of these pilots are flying long hours with too little rest. I know the stress and anxiety must be unbearable. But when you wonder what it is like, next time you're in a meeting of American service personnel, look around at your differences, at your racial differences, the differences of background, the men and women together, the differences of religious faith, and thank God you live in a society that honors that, because we are united by things that are more important. And look at these little children here and think how terrible it would be for them to live in a world where a person could gain, increase, and keep political power by teaching young people like them to kill other young people because of their religious faith or their ethnic background. That has no place in Europe or any other civilized society.

And you have a chance to prove the dreams of the people that fought World War II and that held together during the long cold war—to prove those dreams can be realized in Europe in your lifetime. And if you do, the people who wear the uniform of the United States military 10 or 20 or 30 years from now will not be called upon to spill their blood in another war because of some dictator's mad schemes to dehumanize a whole people. That is what you're fighting for, and that is what you will be grateful that you did for your children and the children of this continent.

Thank you so much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:36 p.m. in Hangar One. In his remarks, he referred to Janet Langhart Cohen, wife of Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen; General Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; John C. Kornblum, U.S. Ambassador to Germany; Brig. Gen. Scott Van Cleef, USAF, Commander, 52d Air Expeditionary Wing; Chief Master Sergeant Daniel M. Keane, USAF, 52d Fighter Wing; Apache helicopter pilots CW3 David A. Gibbs, USA, and CW2 Kevin L. Reichert, USA; and President Slobodan Milosevic, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Team Eifel Amateur Radio Society.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Released U.S. Army Infantrymen at Ramstein Air Base, Germany May 5, 1999

Q. Mr. President, would you favor releasing the Yugoslav soldiers, now that the U.S. soldiers have been released?

The President. I think Secretary Cohen answered this earlier today, but several days ago I raised this issue with our national security people, asking them if they would look at it and make recommendations, and I expect to get it in a couple days. And right now I'm just glad they're home, or they're halfway home, anyway—a couple days they'll be home.

What I think all Americans want for these fine soldiers is what we also want for the over one million people of Kosovo. We want them to go home, too.

And their families—I want to tell you, I had occasion to talk with their families on a couple of occasions, and they were concerned, loving, and they were vigorous advocates for their loved ones. And I was very proud of the way they conducted themselves during this incredibly difficult time for them as well. And I want to thank them for the loyalty they had for their

children, husbands, nephews, brothers and for the love they have for their country. I was also very moved by them.

Q. Why do you think Milosevic let them go, sir?

The President. I think he had a number of motives. The important thing is that he did let them go. They were in a peacekeeping mission in Macedonia; they had nothing whatever to do with this. They never should have been taken in the first place. I appreciate what they were doing in Macedonia and their service to our country, and I'm glad they're free.

NOTE: The exchange began at 5:53 p.m. at the air base. In his remarks, the President referred to Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, USA, Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, USA, and Spec. Steven M. Gonzales, USA, infantrymen released from custody in Serbia; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Following Dinner With the Troops at Ramstein Air Base May 5, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. General Jumper, General Wooley, ladies and gentlemen, let me first of all say that I know I speak for all the people in our group—the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, General Shelton, and others—in saying that we are delighted to be here and very proud of you.

I have been to Ramstein at least three times since I've been President. I was trying to think; it may be four. But I feel a special affinity for this base. I flew from here into Bosnia in 1995, when the people who were stationed here then did so much to restore freedom and peace to the people there.

There are a lot of things I'd like to say, as briefly as I can. First of all, I'd like to tell you I had a real good time tonight taking all the pictures and—[laughter]—I like having the

opportunity to look our men and women in uniform in the eye and see where you're from and hear a little about your views. I thank especially the people who had dinner with me at the table over there tonight. I got questions about the Middle East peace process and the situation in Iraq and the long-term prospects in Kosovo and—

Audience member. Pay raises.

The President. —and pay raises, that's right. [Laughter] And they did a very good job. I want you to know, the guys at the table, they did a good job, because we talked a lot about how the Air Force and the Navy and this year probably the Army will be down on their recruitment goals and the reenlistment problems and how we face the converging pressures of

a very, very strong economy in the private sector—the strongest it has been maybe ever, certainly in a generation—and a very much increased operations tempo for people in the military, taking people away from their families more frequently and often for extended periods of time. And if that results in—those two things result in our not meeting our enlistment or reenlistment quotas, obviously, that only aggravates the up-tempo problem further.

I think there is strong, overwhelming bipartisan support in the Congress this year to make some changes in pay, in retirement, in enlistment and reenlistment bonuses. And those three things, plus some other things we're going to do, I hope will help to keep more of you in the service, and I hope will help to get more young people coming in.

The job market is very, very strong out there, as all of you know. And particularly after you've been in the service for a while and you've gotten the invaluable training that you get, I understand the temptations and the lures of taking those offers which wouldn't require you to be away from home so much and so far.

But I can tell you this: The United States military, because of people like you, can do things for a troubled world that no one else can do. And I am profoundly grateful. You're taking those supplies into the refugees in Macedonia and Albania—you must have talked to some of them. You must know what they have been through. And if you were involved in the operation in Bosnia or you talked to anybody else who was, you must know what they were put through and what it is that NATO is trying to stop in the heart of Europe.

At the end of the cold war, the question was, do we need a NATO? And the 19 Allies decided that, yes, we did; that if we wanted Europe to be free and united and at peace, we needed NATO, and that would be our mission. And I wish there had been nothing for us to do—nothing for you to do. I wish none of you reservists or guards people had to be called up or had to volunteer. But it happened. And it is truly ironic that after all the wars in the 20th

century, that here in Europe we would still be fighting over religious and ethnic bigotry, being used to dehumanize people to the point of justifying killing them, burning them, looting their homes, running them out, burning their villages, eradicating every last vestige of historical, cultural records, burning their houses of worship. And that's not the world I want your children to live in.

And if your children are wearing the uniform of our Armed Services, I don't want them to have to fight a war because we didn't nip in the bud a cancer that can never sweep across Europe again.

So this is profoundly important. And the humanitarian aid you're taking to those desperate people is profoundly important. They are good people. They have their dignity. You are enabling them to keep what they can when most of them are running out of their country with nothing but the clothes on their back.

I just want you to know that back home people do know what you're going through; they do know what a sacrifice it is. We will do everything we can to make it better. In the Congress this year, I do believe there was overwhelming bipartisan support to respond to the problems you face and the challenges you face and the private market you face.

But nothing can ever compensate or take the place of the profound sense of satisfaction you must get when you go to bed at night knowing that you did something that was good and decent, not because your country wanted to dominate another people or control land but because we want our children and their children to live in a decent world.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. in Hangar 3. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John P. Jumper, USAF, Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Allied Air Forces Central Europe; and Brig. Gen. Michael W. Wooley, USAF, Commander, 86th Airlift Wing and Kaiserslautern Military Community.

Interview With Tom Brokaw of the National Broadcasting Corporation
Aboard Air Force One
May 4, 1999

Russian Peace Initiative for Kosovo

Mr. Brokaw. Mr. President, diplomatic flurry may be an overstatement—there's something percolating, obviously. Is there anything that you find encouraging at all in what we've seen in the last couple of days with the Russian connection?

The President. Yes. I am encouraged because, first of all, I think it's a good thing for the Russians to be aggressively involved in trying to find a diplomatic solution, as long as it's a real solution to the problem. The conditions that we and our NATO Allies have laid out are not designed to win some victory over Serbia; they're designed to establish the minimum necessary for the mission to succeed, for the Kosovars to go home to live in security and autonomy.

To do that, you've got to get the Serb forces out, and you have to have an international force there with NATO at its core, so it will work, so the Serbs will come back, so the armed elements within the Kosovar Albanians—excuse me, so the Albanians will come back, the Kosovars will come back, and so the armed elements there will disarm and will accept the peace.

Now, that's what's necessary to happen. And I think if the Russians get to the point where they can truly embrace that position and argue it to the Serbs, I think that will be very helpful.

Mr. Brokaw. But does Chernomyrdin buy your scenario?

The President. Well, what he's tried to do, obviously, is to assess what he thinks Mr. Milosevic will buy. But there's a subtext here I think is important to get out, too, which is this shows that the Russians are more than willing, themselves, to be involved in a peace-keeping force, and that others coming out of that neck of the woods who share religious and ethnic ties to the Serbs may be willing to participate, as well, which will give the right feel and look and substance to this. You know, I've always said we would only go in there if we were permitted to protect the Serb minority as well as the Kosovar Albanians.

So I think that this is basically helpful. But I don't want to oversell it because there's been no kind of diplomatic breakthrough here. It cannot be a bad thing to have a man of Mr. Chernomyrdin's stature, his obvious closeness to President Yeltsin, vigorously doing what he's doing out there. I think that's important.

Mr. Brokaw. But there's not even a small light at the end of the tunnel at this point?

The President. I wouldn't say that. I think the Russians have a much clearer understanding of why we have taken the position we have taken. And as they've gotten into the details of it, I think they understand what it would take actually to have this work. As I said to Mr. Chernomyrdin, I said, "You know, if we try to do this the way Mr. Milosevic originally said he wanted it done, we'd be back here in 8 months having the same meeting all over again."

Mr. Brokaw. If you were an Albanian refugee—and there are now about a million, we think, altogether—would you go back home without the United States as the guarantor of your safety?

The President. No. I wouldn't go back home without the United States and NATO, without our allies being involved there, not after what they've been through.

And it's very important—I keep saying this to the American people—it's very important, you can't divorce what happened in Kosovo from what happened for 4 years in Bosnia. These people know what not just ethnic cleansing but religious cleansing is. The Muslims know what they've been subject to. And they want to go home, and it's soon enough from the expulsions that they will go home eagerly if they know they're going to be safe, if they know they're going to have their autonomy.

And I think it's just imperative to the Russians, the more they come to grips with what it would take to make this work—instead of thinking about winners and losers—what would it take to make this work? Because they say they're for having the Kosovars go home, being safe, having autonomy—they understand that—

then these conditions are what is necessary to make it work.

You say, well, what's in it for the Serbs? Well, first of all, they shouldn't be rewarded for ethnic cleansing. But secondly, there is something in it. What's in it is that the Russians and others can be involved in the peacekeeping force, so it's not just the United States and NATO. Secondly, there's going to have to be a huge effort not only at rebuilding but at building a whole different future for the Balkans and southeastern Europe that bring these folks together around common economic goals. None of that can happen until this gets done.

Expenses Incurred in Kosovo Action

Mr. Brokaw. Do you think that the United States—do you think that the American people have a full appreciation of just how long and expensive now our investment in the Balkans will be as a result of what's happened just in the last few months?

The President. Well, I believe that they—first of all, the lion's share of our expense is being borne out because they're carrying a majority of the military burden, and we're paying quite a lot for the humanitarian assistance, which I think the American people want us to do, and the American citizens have been very generous in their private donations. I believe that the Europeans will carry the lion's share of the burden, the rebuilding and building an economic unit there that can relate to the EU and grow together.

But it's in our interest to participate in that. That's a lot cheaper than having another European war. This is a lot cheaper than having another European war of the kind that we saw in the 20th century. And so I wish we didn't have to spend the money on this. I'll be happy to support contributing to the reconstruction of the area, and I think it will repay itself many times over in avoided problems and in new economic partners.

Mr. Brokaw. A lot of people in the United States are now saying, how in the world can we have the Russians represent our interests there? We've spent 50 years trying to keep them out of the Balkans; now we're inviting them

in. It's not in the interest of the United States to do that, they say.

The President. But it is, if we all have the same goals. The Russians have worked with us side-by-side, our militaries, in Bosnia. We have worked well there together. We have served in the same area. The Russians have been willing to work with an American commander; they have related well to each other. The Russians have a relationship with NATO. We've done joint training exercises together.

So if the Russians, who, after all, are now a democracy, will embrace the same objectives and will go in there in a way that ensures that there's no discrimination against the Serb minority in Kosovo, we can make a lot of progress, and we can work together.

That's what we want. I've been working for a partnership for a democratic Russia since the day I got here, and I believe before I was here—I think that's what President Bush wanted to achieve with President Yeltsin. That enables us to keep reducing our nuclear stockpile. That enables us to secure the safety of their nuclear weapons. That enables us to work with them in positive ways to keep the transfer of dangerous technology from countries that shouldn't have it.

So all these things I think are very important. There is a way that we could get a very large benefit here by strengthening our partnership with Russia over the long run. But the basic conditions have to be met, because without the basic conditions being met, the mission will not succeed; we'll never get the Kosovars back home; we'll never have real security and autonomy. We'll have continuing military uprisings among the Kosovars, unless the basic conditions are met.

NOTE: The interview began at 6:36 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route to Brussels, Belgium. In his remarks, the President referred to Viktor Chernomyrdin, Special Envoy and former Prime Minister, and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 6. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Tom Brokaw of the National Broadcasting Corporation in
Spangdahlem, Germany
May 5, 1999

Appreciation of the Military

Mr. Brokaw. What do you get out of a trip like this, when you come over here and see these people and all the armaments and all this emotion that you, as Commander in Chief, obviously are responsible for?

The President. Well, first of all, it's very reassuring because you see how hard they train, how hard they prepare, and how well they execute. So, in that sense, it's reassuring.

Secondly, I get to thank them and to tell them that the American people are with them and grateful for what they're doing. And of course, this morning I got the very important briefing from General Clark and General Naumann about where we are in this campaign, what we need to do, and what their recommendations are.

So from a purely military point of view, in addition to trying to solidify the unity of our coalition—meeting with the Belgian and the German Prime Ministers—and looking at the humanitarian effort and seeing the refugees, seeing the service people is very, very important. And of course, by coming here, the American people see what they're doing more because of your coverage of it.

Mr. Brokaw. This is a real evolution for you. Like so many people in your generation, you came of age when there was an unpopular war, and you had mixed feelings at best about the role of the military in our lives and so on. Did you ever think that you would find yourself running a war as Commander in Chief in those days?

The President. No. Of course, I never thought I'd be President, and I certainly never thought, therefore, about this. But when I became President and because I hadn't been in the military myself and because I'd been a Governor and, therefore, had never been on the Armed Services Committee in the Senate or the House or otherwise directly dealt with defense policy, I determined to spend an awful lot of time on it. And I have spent major, major chunks of time on bases all over the world and all over the United States and at the Pentagon in briefings learning about how the military works,

learning about how these weapon systems work, learning about the human challenges of military life today, and trying to make sure that these people have the support they need to do their job. I think the American people almost universally do understand that they're not only very admirable people but they are very, very good at what they do.

Success of Kosovo Action

Mr. Brokaw. Military people talk about the fog of combat when they're fighting. Isn't there also a kind of fog of running a war? Didn't you expect to be farther along at this point? We're now 6 weeks into the operation.

The President. Well, I didn't really have expectations about the timing because I think the timing depends upon things that are, to some extent, beyond our control. That is, the timing depends upon the weather. Even though we've now flown 15,000 sorties, not all of them could deliver their payload because of the weather. The timing depends upon the extent to which Mr. Milosevic is willing to see his country and his military broken and taken into the ground in order to maintain this campaign of ethnic cleansing.

I was just convinced that we had a strategy that would work, that we could do it at an acceptable cost, and that we had to stay with it until it did work. And I still feel that way. I feel quite good about it. And I feel more strongly that way, now that I had a long and detailed briefing from General Clark and General Naumann today. And that was certainly their recommendation and their feeling, that the campaign is working, that we are making progress on the military front, that the targets are being hit, and that they're having an impact, and that we need to stick with it. And that's certainly what I believe.

Mr. Brokaw. General Clark was very upbeat. He said we're winning, and then he said General—then he said that Milosevic is losing his leadership capability. Did you get real evidence of that?

The President. I think he has, first of all, concrete evidence of the things that are being

destroyed there, the ammunition capacity, the repair of weapons capacity, the energy capacity, and any other number of targets. And they're beginning to have more success now going after the Serb military, even though they're pretty clever at hiding.

But I think also, these people hear things. You know, they're here on the ground; they're in combat; they're also in contact with people all over this region; and they just have a sense that it's beginning to change things. And I believe that to be true. But I also believe that we have to stick with the strategy.

I think the fact that our soldiers were released, and then Mr. Rugova was released today, is an indication that Mr. Milosevic hopes to, by doing this, put some daylight among the Allies, split us apart a little bit, and hopefully to have some sort of an interruption of this campaign on terms that he can still claim some victory for this ethnic cleansing. And I'm determined to see that that doesn't happen.

Mr. Brokaw. But do you have any hard evidence that he is losing in any way the grip that he has on power in that country?

The President. I don't think he's—no, I do not think he's losing his grip on power within Serbia, and I don't think that's what General Clark meant. I think what General Clark meant was that he was losing his ability to be certain that he could continue to control Kosovo. I do think we have some evidence of that, yes.

Kosovo and Vietnam

Mr. Brokaw. Defense Secretary Cohen said on "Meet The Press" on Sunday that they're prepared to go all the way until September if necessary in this campaign. That brings to mind what they were saying during Vietnam: It became necessary to destroy the country to save it. I mean, how much more damage can be done and still have something left?

The President. Well, I don't think we're going to destroy the country. We're doing our very best, and these pilots have risked their lives on more than one occasion to avoid doing collateral damage. Very often, for example, the weapons fired at the airplanes are fired from heavily populated urban areas. And in former times, without a second thought, our planes would have fired right in there at those weapons, knowing that they would kill a lot of civilians. They don't do that. They really risk a lot to

avoid destroying innocent civilians and to avoid destroying the country.

But I do believe that we now have 10 years of evidence—this is not the same thing as Vietnam—we have 10 years of evidence that this man has built a power base on convincing the Serb military that they have the right to kill, rape, destroy, and uproot the history and culture of the Muslim people in Kosovo and in Bosnia, and to a lesser extent, the Catholic people in Bosnia. And we stopped it in Bosnia, but we can reverse it in Kosovo, and the people can go home.

I think that—I realize that the average citizen in the street in Belgrade doesn't know what he's done. I don't believe they do. I believe that the truth has been kept from them. But we have to be prepared to pursue this campaign until it is clear that sticking with the strategy he has is more costly to him than meeting the conditions that we have laid down and looking forward to a different future for Serbia.

So it's not a conventional thing where there's one side's going to win and one side's going to lose because one faction will control a whole country. It's not Vietnam. It's not a civil war. It's not communism versus noncommunism. It's about one dictator's ability to throw a whole region in turmoil over the principle of ethnic cleansing. And it is a problem around the world. We have the capacity to stop it and reverse it here, and I think we have to do it. It's not just the United States; it's 19 countries.

Duration of Kosovo Action

Mr. Brokaw. But based on what you heard here today, do you think that this war will have to go all the way through until September?

The President. I think that the clearer we are in our determination to do that, the more likely we are to see it terminated before then. But I'm perfectly prepared to do it. When we started it, I never thought it would be a 3-day wonder. I only—the only way this conflict could ever have been over in a few days is if Mr. Milosevic had seen that NATO was prepared to do this and, therefore, imagined what it would be like a month or 2 months or 3 months hence and decided to spare his people and his military and his political and economic apparatus that burden. He made a different calculation. He was always capable of doing that, and so we have to do what we have to do.

But I think—I have always been—relaxed is the wrong word—but patient about the timetable. And I'm looking forward, frankly, to May and June and July, where the weather is much clearer and we'll be freer to pursue our strategy.

Mr. Brokaw. In the meantime, more refugees are coming out; we're getting closer to the cold-weather months. That's going to be an enormous problem, not only in the prosecution of the war in the meantime but what happens after that.

The President. Well, it is, but I think that—look at the difference in the timetable of what we're doing now and what happened in Bosnia, where it took NATO navigating—with difficult circumstances with the U.N. for a long time—from at least 1991 until 1995 to act. And by the time we acted, it was a good thing we did—we saved a lot of lives—but a lot of the refugees didn't come home or haven't yet.

Because we're moving now, I think the refugees will go home almost immediately when this is resolved. And that's a very good thing. That's a very important thing. And meanwhile, we're going to have to—all of us, the Europeans and the United States and Canada—we're going to have to spend the money and make the arrangements to care for the refugees. And we're going to have to be very sensitive not to put undue pressure on the daily life of Macedonia or of Albania, and we're going to have to work at it.

I already this morning, since NATO is heavily involved in the refugee issue—and you and I are going to see evidence of that in our next stop—we talked quite a lot about what we have to do on that. This is going to be a huge challenge for NATO, for the U.N. High Commission on Refugees, for the NGO's around the world that are helping us.

Espionage/European Stability

Mr. Brokaw. Let me ask you a couple of concluding, tough questions. Your critics say the Clinton doctrine is: We bomb the small countries, Iraq and Kosovo, but when the big countries begin to give us trouble, we turn the other way. China and nuclear secrets is the most recent example of that. Isn't that a bigger risk, really, to the long-term history of the United States than Kosovo?

The President. Well, first of all, I think that's apples and oranges. The Soviet Union spied on us all during the cold war. I don't recall President Truman or President Eisenhower or Presi-

dent Kennedy or President Johnson or President Nixon ever considering bombing Russia because of espionage. We didn't break off relationships with Israel when Israel was involved in espionage in ways that could have been quite damaging to us.

So I think that's a foolish thing. We should handle this espionage case the way we've handled every other espionage case since spying began. I believe that we have more to gain from working with the Chinese than from totally divorcing ourselves from them. So I don't think—that's apples and oranges.

NATO here has the capacity to stop and, I believe, to reverse ethnic cleansing. I believe that the threat that presents to the stability of Europe is very considerable. I believe the promise of a Europe that's undivided and at peace is what people have worked for for the last 50 years. And unless we fix the Balkans or at least give them a chance to fix their own future, not only by ending this terrible conflict and ethnic cleansing but also by building the region, then we won't have the Europe we want, and someone like you may have to write another book like you just wrote 50 years from now. So I consider this to be a very large issue.

I also believe that we have to increase the capacity of the world to stand against this. You know, after the horrible thing that happened in Rwanda, we've worked very hard to develop the African militaries and their capacity to cooperate and work with us and others to stop anything like that from happening again.

I think this whole, you know, hatred based on race, tribe, religion, ethnicity, is going to dominate a lot of the world in the next 30 years, and the United States has a deep interest in trying to stand against it.

President's Leadership

Mr. Brokaw. I have a question, Mr. President. It's not an easy one, but based on what we're seeing on Capitol Hill and other signs of it as well, in 1998, your job approval rating remained very high, but there were real questions about trustworthiness and credibility and so on even in the public. Has that made running this kind of operation more complicated for you?

The President. No. No. You know, the people on Capitol Hill will have to decide how they respond as Americans to their obligations here. But it hasn't been a problem. And the American people made clear in the election in 1998 who

they trusted and for what reason and what their priorities are. They hired us all to do their work, and they want their lives and their children and their future and their national interest put first. And that is what I have done, and that's what I'm doing today and what I intend to continue to do until my last day in office. And I think that those who do it will be supportive, and those who don't will have to deal with the consequences.

Quality of Life in the Military

Mr. Brokaw. Do you have anything else you want to say?

The President. No. I don't think so. He wanted to know if we wanted to say anything else. One thing that I think you might want to emphasize, and I don't know if you want to do it now or later, is there is one legitimate concern I have, which is that these people—ironically, the good economy has made it harder for us to keep a lot of these folks in the Air Force and in the Army.

Mr. Brokaw. Right.

The President. And there are so many opportunities for them, and they serve their country, and then it's easy for them to go out and make a lot more money doing something else. And one of the important things that I believe will be done, on a completely bipartisan basis, this year in the Congress is to raise pay, to improve retirement, to have reenlistment bonuses, to try to make sure that we can keep the good people we have. And we have downsized the military, but as a consequence, they have to do more missions in closer sequence, and they don't get the time off they used to get, so they work under enormous pressure.

Now, you could see from that crowd today, there's not a morale problem at this base. These people have high morale. They're proud of what they're doing. But they also have—I think the general here said, General Van Cleef said about 80 percent of these people are married. Many, many have small children. And so one of the concerns I have and one of the reasons I wanted to come out here and listen and talk to these folks is that we're working very hard—and as

I said, I don't think there's any partisan difference here at all—on a completely bipartisan basis, to try to give these folks the income, the quality of life, the stability that they need and to find ways to get more of those who do join to stay and more to join, even though there's a good economy and a low unemployment rate.

So that is a genuine challenge for us, but one that I have so far had only the highest compliments for the Congress and the members of both parties about how they're meeting it, because everybody knows it's a big issue.

Mr. Brokaw. It would be a huge item on the agenda, I would think, in 2000; don't you think?

The President. It depends on—well, it will be unless we are able to—

Mr. Brokaw. Head it off first—

The President. —yes, adequately address it now. But there has really been no partisan difference here. I mean, I proposed the first substantial increase in defense spending since, oh, the middle of President Reagan's second term, this year, largely to address not only some of our equipment needs but mostly the people needs. And you know, you get the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years and you get incomes rising at the highest rate in 25 years, it's hard to keep folks, and you have more competition for people coming right out of school. So we're just going to have to work at it.

NOTE: The interview began at 2:50 p.m. at Spangdahlem Air Base. In his remarks, the President referred to Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; Gen. Klaus Naumann, chairman, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Military Committee; Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene of Belgium; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Ibrahim Rugova, leader, Democratic League of Kosovo; and Brig. Gen. Scott Van Cleef, USAF, Commander, 52d Air Expeditionary Wing. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 6. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With European Journalists at Rhein Main Air Base, Germany May 6, 1999

Objectives in Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, let me first say, thank you for coming. It's great to have you here. We understand you do have a very tight schedule. For NATO it is a difficult and challenging time, so we do very much appreciate that you join us and discuss these matters and questions with us and we share your views on it.

Just last week you said, "We know what the final outcome in Kosovo will be. Serbian forces will leave. An international security force will be deployed. Refugees will return with security and self-government." Why are you so optimistic? Have we actually come closer to that prospect?

The President. I believe we have. First of all, we still have an Alliance that, if anything, is more unified than ever, after we met in Washington. I was yesterday in Brussels to get a report from General Naumann and General Clark on the progress of the campaign. I'm convinced that we are making good progress, that we are coming closer to our objectives. I think that Mr. Milosevic's military and economic apparatus of control in Yugoslavia has been weakened.

I believe we're coming closer on the diplomatic front. I met for a long time with Mr. Chernomyrdin, and he met for several more hours with Vice President Gore in Washington this week. Russia had previously accepted the political terms of the agreement in Rambouillet that there ought to be security and autonomy for the people of Kosovo.

So we're not there yet, but I think it's important, too, for the world community, and especially for the people of Europe, to have some perspective here. The campaign that Mr. Milosevic has carried out in Kosovo was meticulously planned many months in advance. It was almost implemented in October last year. He decided not to do it then in the face of the NATO threats, but he had 40,000 troops on the ground and almost 300 tanks. So he could have done what he did at any time.

What we have to do is to reverse the ethnic cleansing, and I believe it can be done. I am absolutely confident that as long as we all stay together, which we seem determined to do—

I certainly am, and I feel very good about where the other European leaders are—this will prevail. It will happen. And it's just a question of our being patient and persistent and understanding what we're up against and what we have to do.

Responsibility for Ethnic Cleansing

Q. Mr. President, we're going to take it in turn, so it will swing back and forth. My question is about your attitude, your thoughts about President Milosevic in Belgrade, and it's in a couple of parts. My first simple question is, do you believe that Milosevic should be held personally, directly responsible for the ethnic cleansing that you've described many times and for the massacres that you've described many times?

The President. Well, of course, that ultimately is a decision to be made by the war crimes tribunal itself. It's a legal question—

Q. But morally, as well as legally.

The President. But I think, morally, there is no question that, not only here but earlier in Bosnia, what happened was the direct result of a carefully calculated campaign to first of all bring Mr. Milosevic to power and then to enhance his power based on an idea of Greater Serbia, which required the dehumanization, the delegitimization of the Muslim people, first of Bosnia and then of Kosovo; and that, following from that, there are lots of records that the International Red Cross and other humanitarian agencies have amassed, that the U.N. has amassed about the practices of Serbian troops, of the paramilitaries. Just in Kosovo, we have story after story, horrible stories of people being—men being tied up together and burned alive. And there has also been, beyond the murder and the rape and the dislocation, there's been a determined effort, first in Bosnia, now in Kosovo, to destroy the personal records of people's presence on their land, as well as the historical and cultural records and obviously the religious sites of a people. So I think we have a big record here.

Q. But Mr. President, if that is the record and ultimately it lies at the doorstep of Mr. Milosevic, how can there be even an imagined settlement in which Mr. Milosevic essentially

climbs down, accepts the conditions that you've laid out, and is still the President of Yugoslavia and, ultimately, still holds sovereignty over Kosovo and the people who will return to Kosovo? Because you say you want them to live with security and dignity, but how is that conceivable?

The President. Well, if there is an international force that has NATO at its core, but also has other countries—I would welcome the Russians' participation there; I think it's important—so that there is genuine protection for the people of Kosovo, and they have the genuine autonomy that they enjoyed under the constitution that Mr. Tito put in and that was taken away by Mr. Milosevic 10 years ago, I think they can plainly do that.

Q. Even with Milosevic in power?

The President. Yes. Now, as long as he and Serbia pursue the course they have pursued and basically assert the right to destroy people's lives and heritage because of their religious and ethnic background, they will never be full partners in Europe. But we can protect the Kosovars, just as we have worked out a solution in Bosnia.

And I think the alternative to your suggestion, sir, would be something that no one has suggested, and that is that the international community, in effect, declare war on Yugoslavia and march on Belgrade. If that is not to happen—and our goals never entailed that—our goals were bring the Kosovars home, let them live in security, let them live with the autonomy that clearly they deserve and have to have now to have any sense of a normal life—then those goals can be achieved with an enforceable agreement with Mr. Milosevic in Belgrade.

To what extent he bears personal responsibility as a matter of law, that has to be dealt with by the tribunal. But the main thing that I would like people to understand is that throughout history we have had examples, throughout all history, of ethnic cleansing. In my own country, we had horrible examples of Native American tribes being moved off their land and killed in large numbers, with people claiming a religious mandate, over 100 years ago. And we're still paying for it; we're still trying to overcome it. We had the example of slavery that we're still trying to completely overcome.

But this is the end of the 20th century, a century in which, if we didn't learn anything, we learned that we cannot tolerate this kind of behavior. We all have to learn to live to-

gether, to cherish each other's common humanity and celebrate our differences, not use them to exterminate each other. No modern country can define its greatness by its ability to dehumanize a group of people. And I think we can achieve what we're trying to achieve here if these conditions can be met.

You know, people ask me all the time how this can be done, but we eventually—it took too long, and it's one of my great regrets that it did take so long in Bosnia, but it was done there. And we're acting far more quickly in Kosovo. And I think as a consequence of that, even though now it seems agonizingly slow, I think when this is over and you look back at it, you'll say it happened more quickly, and therefore, a higher percentage of the people did go home and went home much more quickly than has been the case in Bosnia.

Serbian Release of Ibrahim Rugova

Q. Mr. President, I have a longer question than my colleague from the BBC. It's a four-part question. Obviously, the subject is Mr. Rugova. Mr. President, were you consulted by the Italian Government prior to this initiative? And how do you consider this Italian initiative, as a positive development? Are you interested in meeting Mr. Rugova, and is Mr. Rugova at this point the best political interlocutor for the Allies? And finally, do you see Rugova's departure from Pristina as a good will gesture by Milosevic that should be reciprocated by the Allies?

The President. Well, first, let me say Prime Minister D'Alema attempted to call me yesterday when I was making my rounds with the American troops, and I spoke with him early this morning. We had a very good talk, and I think he will have more to say later today.

I have also met with Mr. Rugova in the White House, and I have a very high opinion of him, so I was very pleased that he was released.

Q. What did you say to Mr. D'Alema, Prime Minister D'Alema?

The President. That I was very pleased that he was released; I felt good that he had come to Italy; that Prime Minister D'Alema has been a very strong partner in what we have tried to do together; that I think that this could turn out to be quite a positive development, because I believe Mr. Rugova will again affirm his desire to see Kosovo be autonomous, be secure. I think he understands the need for an international

security presence. So I see this as a positive development.

I think—now, you asked me what were the motives; one of your questions were, why did Mr. Milosevic do this? I think for two reasons, probably. One is, he may be moving closer to accepting the basic conditions necessary to resolve this matter. And if so, he may want as many leaders as possible with whom to deal, and Mr. Rugova is known for his devotion to nonviolence, and therefore, he may see that as a positive event if he is going to make an agreement.

Secondly, I feel the same way I did when the American soldiers were released. I think this should be evidence to all of you that the determination and unity of NATO to persist until this matter is resolved is having an impact in Belgrade.

Q. So should this good will gesture be reciprocated by the Allies?

The President. Well, I don't know that it's a good will gesture to release a nonviolent leader of a country who never did anything wrong in the first place and shouldn't have been, in effect, under house arrest. I think that Mr. Milosevic did this because he thought it was in his interest. And I'm glad Mr. Rugova is free, but I want over one million Kosovars to be able to go home.

And I think we should do what is necessary—the most important good will gesture NATO can make, and the European allies, the United States, and Canada can make, is to do whatever is necessary to resolve this as quickly as possible. That's the most humane thing we can do, and that's what I intend to do.

Q. And will you meet Rugova again?

The President. If he would like to, I would be happy to meet him. I like him very much. I appreciate what he's tried to do. He's been through a lot. I think that there are—you asked another question that I don't think is for the United States to answer, or even for NATO to answer, which is whether he or anyone else should be the designated spokesperson for the Kosovars. That is for the—we believe in democracy. We believe there has to be some way for the people themselves to decide who speaks for them.

And let me remind you, the thing that was important about the agreement that was reached in France is that all the elements of the Kosovars said, "Okay, we'll lay down our arms.

We'll stop the fighting. We will live in peace if we have the security of an international force to protect our autonomy and to protect our safety." If all elements do that—that is, if they also are still willing to meet our conditions, then the position of our country should be that we're trying to make self-government possible for these people, not to tell them who should govern them. That's not the right thing to do.

Q. Mr. President, as you know, they are divided, the Kosovar Albanians are divided—

The President. Of course, they are.

Q. The KLA already said that Mr. Rugova has no mandate to negotiate. So whom do you regard as an interlocutor and as a representative of the Kosovar Albanians who will have to negotiate?

The President. My position is that all the elements of leadership in Kosovo took a position at Rambouillet, and what we're trying to do is to fulfill the minimum conditions for that. After that—there is plenty of time after that for them to decide how to organize their internal political life, as long as all the parties remain committed to the principle that they will lay down their arms and they will be nonviolent if we have return of refugees, the security of an international force, and the withdrawal of the Serb forces. If those conditions are met—and then the other thing—I want to remind everyone of this—the other thing NATO committed to do, which is why I would welcome the Russians and others to participate, is we committed to protect the security and physical and personal integrity of all the people who live in Kosovo, including the Serb minority. Now, if everybody still wanted to live by that, then the Kosovars themselves will have to decide how to organize their political life after that is over. Our objective is to get them back, to get the Serb forces out, the Kosovars back in, and have the international security force there.

International Security Force for Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, you are here as the Commander in Chief of the last, if only one, superpower. Can you assure us today that there will be an international security force in Kosovo, and when? How many soldiers do you need to be in that force, whoever they are? Do you agree with Jacques Chirac that this force should be under the mandate of the U.N. Security Council? And last, who will be the lead for the force;

will it be a U.S., an American general to lead the force in Kosovo?

The President. First, I think it's important that there be an international security force, that NATO be at the core of it, because otherwise, I don't think the Kosovars will go home. And it would be a terrible thing to set this up and not have it work.

I think other nations should be involved because of all the historical, cultural, religious elements involved in this region. I hope the Russians will be there, and I hope others will be. I would welcome a U.N. sanction. It would be far better if the United Nations embraced this. And it would be most likely to work, I think, if it worked something like what has happened in Bosnia.

So, in terms of how many and who does what, those are things that would have to be worked out by the people who are in a better position to do that and particularly the military people who would know what is necessary to maintain security not only for the Kosovars but for the people who will be asked to go there and whose lives will be put at risk. But I think that could be worked out rather easily if we can get broad agreement that it will be done, that there will be broad participation. And I think, if that can happen, then I believe the United Nations Security Council and the U.N. as a whole would endorse it.

Group of Eight Agreement

Q. But when you will leave Germany tonight, can you be determined and can you assure us that there will be in agreement today? As you know, there will be a G-8 meeting. Do you think there will be an agreement on the principle of that force and that this force will go to Kosovo at some point before the end of the summer or even earlier?

The President. Obviously, I don't know exactly what day it will occur, because that depends upon what happens in the days ahead, on the diplomatic front, on the military front, and that depends in part on what happens in the weather, in the skies above us. But I can tell you this: I have no intention of changing policies until the basic conditions are met.

I will stay at it for as long as it takes. And therefore, I can tell you that, insofar as the United States and our Allies have anything to do about it, the Kosovars will go home.

Now, you asked me today, can I assure you that the G-8 will make an agreement today? I think they're getting closer. Obviously, it depends upon where the Russians will be today and because they're part of the G-8. But they've worked very hard to reach a common understanding. They're getting closer. And I wouldn't be surprised if it happens today. If it doesn't happen today, I think it will happen soon. I think we're working very hard to work through this.

And the thing I have asked the Russians to consider is not to treat these basic conditions of ours as if they are negotiable, because they are basically what is—it's not about politics. This is about what would be necessary to actually have this thing work. You have over a million people who have left their homes. Why would they go back? What will it take to get them back? What will it take to relieve the pressure on Macedonia, on Albania, on the other front-line states? What would it take, once they got back, for people to actually live in peace? That's all these conditions do. There are lots of other things that we can talk about, but these basic conditions are necessary to make it work.

And since it is obvious that politically it would work better if the Russians were a part of it, just as they have been an integral part of what happened in Bosnia, giving real credibility to the international force there, I think there's a good chance we can get a G-8 agreement.

NATO Conditions for Bombing Pause

Q. There would be no pause then before this force will go to Kosovo in the bombing—there will be no pause in the campaign of bombing until there is agreement for that?

The President. Well, at the NATO Summit we adopted a position on that, and I think I should just simply repeat our position. Our position is that in order to have a pause in bombing, there would have to be an agreement to an international force with NATO at the core, an agreement for the Serb forces to withdraw, for the refugees to return, and the beginning of a withdrawal. That is the position that NATO adopted. And I want to just restate what our common position is. Nineteen countries took it, and I have to honor it.

Vision for Southeast Europe

Q. Mr. President, you are fully right saying this is not about politics. Something about politics, sir: People in Macedonia, both Albanians and Macedonians, are very much concerned for their future. And I think all nations from the Balkans are very much concerned for the perspectives of the region. We are seeing that you're confronting Mr. Milosevic for almost a decade on the tactical level. What we are not seeing is that anyone is offering to the region any kind of a plan for a wider integration.

It's not only of money; it's not only a Marshall plan; it's something that people will have to hope for, something which will show their perspectives as a region. Do you think about some kind of developing of a plan?

The President. Yes.

Q. Will you elaborate a little bit, sir?

The President. Yes. As I have worked on this over the last 6 years, first in Bosnia and then in Kosovo, it has become clear to me that the United States and Europe have spent perhaps—well, I wouldn't say too much time because we had to do it, but we have spent most of our time trying to keep bad things from happening, or if something bad happens, to try to either reverse it or minimize it. We have spent too little time imagining how to make good things happen in the Balkans and in southeastern Europe. And yet, much good has happened.

The President of Bulgaria said at the NATO meeting, he said, "The problem we have is that we have freedom, but we have no prosperity, and we don't have a vision of where we're all going together in the future." And I think that there are a lot of myths about your part of the world that have caught on in Europe and in the United States—you know, that, "Well, the Balkans people have fought for centuries, and there will always be contention, and it's just a problem to be managed." And that, I think, is a violation of, first of all, the accurate history of the region and, secondly, of the integrity and potential of the people.

So several weeks ago, for about a week before the NATO Summit, I went out to San Francisco and talked to the American newspaper editors and said that we could never hope to have the right sort of future for all of Europe until we had a positive vision for southeastern Europe that included not only an economic revitalization package that would embrace, obviously, the peo-

ple who are in conflict today but the larger region of southeastern Europe, but a political package that would both tie the free nations closer to the rest of Europe and bring them closer to each other.

I think that one of the things we have learned in the aftermath of the cold war is that there are plenty of things, forces that will pull people apart if they're exploited—religious and ethnic differences—and it's no good for me or anyone else just to stand up and keep giving a sermon about how, well, people should be nice to each other and they should pull together. There needs to be a magnet, a stronger force pulling people together than the forces pulling people apart. That means there has to be an economic revitalization program that embraces the region. That means there has to be a political strategy to integrate the region more closely to Europe and to bring people together.

Think about it. Think about Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia, Albania, all the countries of the former Yugoslavia and the independent republics within it. If you think about it, if they were working together, think how much better they would all be, including the Serbs, if they were working together and if they were making money together and if they thought they had a future with Europe, with the United States, and with Russia. If there was some integrated vision, then you would fight this total rush to disintegration we've seen over the last decade.

Q. Are there any deadlines in this kind of vision—

The President. Well, I think, first of all, to implement it, I think we should begin as soon as possible. And the Europeans are working on it now. We have to decide what will the role of the EU be, what will the role of the OSCE be, what will the role of the United States be. But I feel very strongly about it.

You know, we spent—the United States has invested, just in the last month, almost \$90 million in humanitarian aid. And we have a package moving through the Congress now that has about \$700 million more. And I believe we should do this. And I worry very much about the burdens that this crisis impose on Macedonia and Albania in particular. But the truth is that it would be better for all of us if we were free to spend the money to build a long-term economic future for Macedonia, a long-term economic future for Albania. Especially—

Macedonia has recently resolved a lot of its difficulties with Greece; there is more trade and investment going on here. This is the direction of the future.

So when we get the Kosovo crisis behind us, we should be focusing much more on the future we imagine for southeastern Europe. This is also—to go back to your question—this is particularly important for Italy, because Italy has paid a big economic price for this crisis.

Q. Is the plan going to include Serbia? Are you going to offer some kind of perspective for Serbia, as well, because it seems to be important?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it would be better if it did, long-term, because Serbia is a big part of southeastern Europe and a big part of the Balkans. I think the extent to which the plan can include Serbia depends almost entirely on how the Serbians behave.

You're not going to have—let's just take Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania—and Bosnia is still in a lot of trouble. Just take those countries. Here they are without anything like the industrial base of Serbia, anything like the wealth. And they're struggling to be democratic, to be free. Romania solves its problems with Hungary. They make their border and their ethnic resolution and under much more adverse circumstances. And the Serbs are continuing to promote ethnic cleansing when these other countries are promoting diversity, respect for human rights, democracy.

Now, it would be much better—how can you have the Balkans without Belgrade? It would be much better if they were a part of it. But it depends on their conduct. They cannot be part of something that they don't share the values of. The principles of this cooperation have to be respect for the independence of countries, respect for the integrity of people, respect for human rights, respect for religious and ethnic diversity, and then a common respect for economic cooperation, and then some framework for it.

But I would far rather be in a position to see the United States investing in the growth and prosperity and cooperation of the region than building temporary housing for a million refugees. And unless we have a positive vision for the Balkans, we will be back with a crisis like this again in a few years.

Q. In 5 years.

The President. Yes.

Future Political Status of Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, how does the American administration see the future political status of Kosovo? Do you still oppose independence?

The President. The NATO Alliance voted to support, in effect, an international protected autonomous status for Kosovo. And I believe that that is the best thing to do now, because I believe that it would be very difficult—I see the struggles of Albania, I see the struggles of Macedonia. I think it would be even more difficult for Kosovo to be economically and politically self-sufficient. And I think that if there were a big independence movement now, you would have this whole counterfear that, "Oh, well, we used to be worried about Greater Serbia; now is it Greater Albania?" You would have all these arguments back and forth.

And I believe the best outcome for Kosovo, the best outcome, would be to prove that the people of Kosovo could live together in peace and harmony and security. There is a Serb minority in Kosovo, as you know. I think this will be hard now because a lot of the people will go home, and they will say their neighbors turned their backs on me when I was run away. And the Kosovars will have to find a lot of forgiveness in their heart to live with their neighbors. I'm sure of that. But if you accept the vision for the future that we just discussed, that we want to try to bring the people of the Balkans and southeast Europe together and then to bring them closer to the rest of Europe, economically and politically, I think we can more likely further that vision if Kosovo is protected by an international force in its integrity as an independent or an autonomous part of Serbia. That's what I believe.

Now, again, what happens over the long run in Kosovo will depend a great deal on how the Serbians behave and how the government behaves. But I believe that the position that the NATO Allies unanimously took to support autonomy and a protected status is the better course, based on where we are now and the kind of future we're trying to build. Whether it can be sustained over the long run—and I know what you're thinking by the implication of your question—whether it can be sustained over the long run will depend upon how the Serbs conduct themselves.

Q. Mr. President, I understand, unfortunately, our time is up. So let me say thank you for

joining us and answering our questions. And have a good day and a great visit.

Objectives in Kosovo

The President. I would just like to say one thing before I close, because you all represent, well, a broad spectrum of European opinion, and I know this has been a frustrating and difficult thing for Europe, as well as agony for the people of southeastern Europe. But I think there are a lot of things to be hopeful about here. After all, this endeavor in which NATO has been involved, we never had to do anything like this before. We had to do something like this in Bosnia, but not so much was involved by the time we actually moved in '95.

I think that all of us felt when the Kosovo situation came up, we had our nightmares of Bosnia. And we all wondered if we had moved more quickly, if we could have saved more lives and avoided more difficulty there. And so here you have this unusual situation where you're trying to get 19 countries, all with their own political situations, all with their own dynamics in the country, all with their history of relating to the various countries in the region, to get together and pursue a common policy consistent with the facts on the ground. And I don't think you should be discouraged by the fact that instant results were not obtained.

But we are fighting for a very important principle. The 21st century world will either be dominated by greater economic and political cooperation and harmony among peoples of different backgrounds, or it will be dominated by a disintegrationist vision of religious and racial and ethnic exclusivity. And you see it in most of the conflicts in the world today.

So this is a very important thing that is being done here. And we have to prevail because I would like the troubles of the Balkans to be viewed as the last typical conflict of the 20th century, rather than the first typical conflict of the 21st century. So we have to be patient and firm and understand that this is a highly unusual thing for 19 countries to be trying to work their way through this.

Q. When do you see the end of the war, Mr. President? Everybody is worried in Europe, when is the war over?

The President. Well, that's the wrong worry. That's the wrong worry. What the people of Europe need to know is that their governments are doing the right thing and that it will be

over, and that when it finishes, it will finish in a way that will permit Europe to be united and democratic and free for the first time in the history of the continent. Now, that is quite an achievement. And it is worth waiting for.

It will not drag on for years. We're not talking about endlessly. But we cannot expect an instantaneous result. This is worth—I would say to the people of Europe, support your leaders. After all, look at this: We have the governments of the left and governments of the right and all coming together to support this, because they understand they can make this the last war of Europe's 20th century, not the typical conflict of the 21st century. This is very important. It's worth waiting for. I'm not talking about years, but we shouldn't say, "Well, it's not finished by next Wednesday, we want to quit." We can't do that.

Q. Mr. President, some people would say it's worth not only fighting for, because of the principles you've outlined, but also fighting very hard for. And some people wonder if you have the right strategy and the right contingency plans if Milosevic proves more difficult to move.

The President. Well, we're updating our contingency plan. We authorized the military committee of NATO to upgrade their assessment of what would be required if we had to send in forces in a nonpermissive environment, and what is happening.

Q. You mean that's the ground force debate that everybody constantly talks about?

The President. Yes. We authorized that. But you have to understand, we believe, I believe this strategy will work. This is not something, "Oh, we're doing this because we can't do that." And there are—what the NATO powers are struggling for is to achieve our objective in Kosovo, to do it in a way that brings Europe closer together and, as I said—I think it's helpful to think—makes this the last typical conflict of the 20th century, not the first representative conflict of the 21st century.

That means we're trying to do it in a way that preserves our unity to the maximum extent possible. Keep in mind, we have Greece still in NATO. This is a very difficult problem. It's hard in Italy, but it's really hard in Greece. And they are staying in NATO, right there, going along here. And we are working with Russia to try to effect through diplomacy these basic conditions and then something like what we had in Bosnia. So the strategy we are pursuing is

not because the United States or Britain or some other country says, "Oh, we're afraid of ground forces." It's because we believe, A, it will work, and B, if it works, this is the method most likely to assure long-term European unity.

And so again I say, be patient with your leaders and be persistent and be determined. This will work. And it is worth paying the price of a little time, because the stakes are very high.

Q. Mr. President—

The President. I've got to go.

Q. —thanks a lot.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 9:23 a.m. at the air base. In his remarks, the President referred to Gen. Klaus Naumann, chairman, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Military Committee; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy; Ibrahim Rugova, leader, Democratic League of Kosovo; President Petar Stoyanov of Bulgaria. The President also referred to the European Union (EU); and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Remarks in a Discussion With Kosovar Refugees in Ingelheim, Germany May 6, 1999

The President. First of all, let me say that I realize that all of you have been through incredible times and that it must be even harder to talk about. But I want to thank Chancellor Schroeder and the people of Germany for providing a place for you to be and for their support for our united action to reverse what has happened in Kosovo, so that you can go home again and be safe and free.

Just today my wife met the first group of refugees from Kosovo coming to the United States. They will stay there, as you are staying in Germany, until we can provide the conditions that are necessary for people to go home.

Most people in the world would have a hard time believing what has happened to you and that it has, in fact, happened. So far we have been very fortunate, Chancellor Schroeder and I and all of our Allies in NATO, in having our people, by and large, support what we are doing to try to stop what happened to you and to reverse the conditions so that you can go back.

But it is very important that your stories be told. What Chancellor Schroeder said is right. In places where people who have different religions and different ethnic groups, different racial groups, where they get along together, where they work together, where they help each other, people find what has happened to you to be literally almost unbelievable. And so the world needs to know the truth of Kosovo. And

we need to make sure that we are all strong enough to stay with you and to support you until you can go home.

So again I say, I know this must be hard for you to be here talking to us and to all of us strangers here. But we appreciate it, and we would like to hear from you, to say whatever you wish to say to us about where you are now and what happened in Kosovo, any questions you wish to ask. We just want to be with you and to hear from you. And we thank you for taking the time to be with us.

[At this point, the discussion proceeded. Several of the Kosovar refugees described their experiences, and another asked what NATO was doing to help people left behind in Kosovo.]

The President. It is a very hard problem, helping the people who are left behind, because if they send planes in there to drop supplies, they could be shot out of the sky. And it's also hard to drop the supplies and know that the Kosovar Albanians will get it, instead of having the Serb military or the paramilitary pick it up. So it's a problem.

I can say that we have been working very hard to try to find some neutral country that we could get agreement to ship in food and medicine and tents, whatever is necessary for people to have some place safe to sleep. And we are exploring every conceivable alternative. We're even looking at whether we can do some

airdrops, even though there may be some risk there, to try to get the food there. It is the biggest concern we have.

Mr. Schroeder and I were just talking on the way in. For the refugees that are in Albania, we need to give them more money; we need to give the Albanian Government more money. The people are welcome there, but it's a poor country, so we have to help them. For the refugees in Macedonia, we have to have more money, but also we have to help more people get out of Macedonia because of the problems within Macedonia. There's a lot of tension there. And so there's only so many refugees that the country can take without having the democratic government of Macedonia threatened. So we have to work on that.

So we have refugees coming to Germany and coming to the United States and elsewhere. But the ones that it's so hard for is the people who are still there. Now, in the last couple of days there's been a big increase again in the number of people coming out, so it may be that more people are more free to come out now. But we—I wish I could give you an easy, simple answer, but we are working very hard to get what supplies we can get into the country in way that is, A, as safe as possible for the people delivering the supplies and, B, is likely to be effective, instead of just taken over by the Serb military people on the ground there.

I would like to ask a question. I would like to ask all of you in your lives to go back before these last terrible days, before the military and the paramilitary started to run you out of your homes and turn you out, when you were living before under the tensions and the prejudice of normal—more normal existence, but you were subject to this feeling that you would never be treated fairly. I would like to know more about that period.

And when we walked in here today, I looked at all of you—there's a young woman back there with a shirt on from the Olympics in Atlanta in 1996—and I could imagine that any of you could be my neighbors in America. Or if I visited a German city and I saw you, I would not know that you weren't German citizens. And I would like to know how you proceed with the prejudice or the hatred of the Serbs toward you. Do you think they hated you because you were Albanian? Do you think they hated you because you were Muslim, overwhelmingly? Do you think that they hated you because they were

raised by their parents to hate you? Do you think they hated you because Mr. Milosevic was using that as an excuse for power? Do you believe what they really want is your land and your wealth, or do they really want the pleasure of persecuting you? How do you perceive this?

This is very important for us because we—you have to understand, we spend all of our time fighting against much smaller versions of this in our own country. So it's important that we understand how you have received this in your life. Would anybody like to talk about this? Go ahead.

[A refugee described the history of Serbian hatred of Albanians.]

The President. Would you like to say something?

Q. Mr. President, they were thinking of something else—Kosovo supplies Serbia with a lot of agricultural products. Serbia without Kosovo cannot exist. The natural resources of Kosovo are very precious, and that is the reason why they are trying to hold to Serbia, to Kosovo.

The President. You think that they have treated you this way because they want the wealth of Kosovo?

Q. Yes, of course. Naturally, yes.

The President. Well, what about the younger people, how do you feel?

[Several young refugees commented on their experiences with Serbian hatred, and the discussion continued.]

The President. The Chancellor is asking another question. In your whole life did you never have one good, positive encounter with a Serb, someone who treated you as a human being, someone who was decent to you? Has this ever happened to you?

[A refugee responded that as a young child it was possible to play with Serb children, but later it was difficult to be friends. Others then described the ordeal they had experienced in being forced to leave their country.]

The President. I would like to, first of all, say again to Chancellor Schroeder how much I appreciate Germany's leadership in this whole endeavor and making this place for you to live.

And I would like to again say to all of you, I am very grateful that you came here and said what you did today. I know it was hard. But I listened very carefully to every one of you.

And I wish that I could hear from the small number who have not spoken yet. Even the young man here who said he couldn't talk, the way he said it spoke a lot, because we could tell when he couldn't talk.

I think it is very important in these days for us to do everything we can to find out what happened to your relatives, if you don't know what's happened to other family members. And as you can imagine, this is difficult because the camps in Albania and in Macedonia, they're growing so fast, so it's very hard to keep up with everyone and then have a register. But we will get this done. Eventually, we will have records of everyone and where they are, and then we can check on these matters for you. And I know that's hard, and we will work on that.

But I also think it's important for you to do everything you can to support each other and to give opportunities to get your feelings out, because it is easy for the spirit to be broken in an environment like this, after all you've been through. And then, even if you got to go home, you would never be the same again, and you would be giving the people who have oppressed you a victory.

And I ask you not to give them that victory. Don't let yourself be broken by this. Find a way to be glad that the Sun comes up in the morning and that you have the people around you you do. And we'll look for your students, and we'll look for your family members. But remember, you cannot give a victory to the kind of oppression you have been subject to. We cannot see these children robbed of their childhood. And the adults, the older among you, you must not let the younger people lose heart. And we will stay at it until you can go home again.

Thank you.

NOTE: The discussion began at approximately 12:24 p.m. at the Refugee Reception Center. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany and the Kosovar refugees. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Kosovar Refugees in Ingelheim

May 6, 1999

Good afternoon. Let me begin by thanking Chancellor Schroeder, the representatives of his government who are here, and all the people of Germany for their strong, strong leadership in NATO in defense of the people of Kosovo and for making this place of refuge and shelter for people in need.

I thank Minister-President Beck and the government of Rheinland-Pfalz and the townspeople of Ingelheim for making this center available, as well, and for supporting your presence here. Most of all, I would like to express my respect to the families who are here today from Kosovo, and my very special thanks for those who met earlier with Chancellor Schroeder and me. To those of you who told us the stories of your lives—the heartbreak, the nightmare, the cruelty, the uncertainty—those who are young, those who are old, and those who are in the

middle of their lives, I listened very carefully to all of you.

I hope that as you mustered the courage to meet with us, you know that because you have done so, the world will hear your stories. It is very important that every freedom-loving person in the entire world know the story of Kosovo. It is important that people not forget that what is called ethnic cleansing is not some abstract idea; it is real people with real families and real dreams being uprooted from their homes, their schools, their work, their children, their parents, their husbands and wives. NATO has acted in Kosovo because we believe ethnic cleansing must be opposed, resisted, reversed.

We are doing all we can to bring aid to the victims of the violence. We are helping as many as we can in Albania and Macedonia. Both Germany and the United States and our other Allies

are taking refugees out of the camps in Macedonia into our nations. We are helping relief groups to improve their registration systems so those of you who have missing family members can find them and so that we can restore identity papers.

I know you will understand what a difficult task this is. More people are pouring into Macedonia every day. More people are pouring into Albania every day. And then we are taking some people from the camps into Germany, into the United States, into other countries. But we know this is an agony for those of you who do not know what has happened to your family members, and we are working on it. Just this week, we will begin to put in computer terminals here and in other refugee centers so that you can constantly get news in your own language on the situation in Kosovo and the status of the NATO campaign.

Let me say on a very personal level, Chancellor Schroeder and I understand that what has been done to you and your children and your homeland cannot be undone. But you must know that you have not been forgotten or abandoned. Mr. Milosevic has not succeeded in erasing your identity from the pages of history, and he will not succeed in erasing your presence from the land of your parents and grandparents. You will go home again in safety and in freedom.

Now in closing, I would like to ask of all of you something I asked of the smaller group

with whom I just met. When you have gone through something as awful as this, it is very easy to have your spirit broken, to spend the rest of your life obsessed with anger and resentment. But if you do that, you have already given those who oppressed you a victory.

I am of Irish heritage. The great Irish poet William Butler Yeats once said this; I hope you can remember this. He said, "Too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart."

I ask you all to work with each other, to support each other, not to let your hearts turn to stone, to be determined to go home to a Kosovo where all the children can go to school and all the children can laugh and play and we can have a future that is not only free of the bad things that have happened to you but is full of hope and opportunity, where you're a part of Europe and a free world, where all the children can pursue their faith, their religion, and their dreams. We are working hard for that day.

God bless you, and thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. at the Refugee Reception Center. In his remarks, he referred to Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; Minister-President Kurt Beck of Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters in Bonn May 6, 1999

Situation in Kosovo

Chancellor Schroeder. Ladies and gentlemen, we had a very intensive discussion together, the main emphasis, of course, having been on the crisis on Kosovo. We basically agreed regarding all of the questions that were discussed. And when I say "we agreed," then I'm talking about the two of us but also about Germany and the United States of America.

There is no reason whatsoever to go in and change our jointly adopted strategy. We very much welcome the initiative taken by the for-

eign ministers today, the G-8 conference. We have noticed from looking at the results that some strong movement has happened there. We have also conjointly decided that it is very necessary to support the frontline states of the region and particular Macedonia and Albania, the two countries that at present are shouldering the vast burden regarding the refugee problem.

We very much have to go in and make sure that the earmarked 250 million euro as support have to be channeled into those frontline states

and really get there. You might know that Germany has earmarked 60 million German marks as support there. We have to make sure that those supports and that money speedily flows into the region.

I personally had the opportunity of talking to the Prime Minister of Macedonia today, and we also agreed that we were trying to spur matters in this very way.

The President of the United States of America has emphasized the fact that the United States will take on a large number of refugees. You know that we here in Germany have already taken on quite a few, and we hope that in taking these actions, both America and Germany will set an example also for other European countries to follow up and to take on refugees themselves. We hope that as a consequence, that they will follow suit.

Germany itself is continuing to think about whether they could potentially take on even more. And if you hear the most recent news today, yet again, another 10,000 refugees have flooded into Macedonia yet again and in addition. And if you then bear in mind that soon the border might be closed off, sealed off, in fact, altogether, then really urgent action and consideration is needed here.

We have also discussed the possibilities of having some influence on the discussions taking place at the Club of Paris, where thoughts are ventilated about a potential suspension or a relief of debt for the frontline states involved, and we have decided that we conjointly support a debt relief or at least a suspension of debts for Macedonia and Albania.

And I think all of that—and I think that goes without saying—should be independent of the necessity of continuing our actions, continuing the NATO actions and the measures taken so far. But one point that was strongly emphasized was the necessity of giving a more comprehensive economic and political perspective for the Balkans.

President Clinton. If I could just say very briefly—Chancellor Schroeder has faithfully summarized the items we discussed and the conclusions that we drew. And I would just like to say on behalf of the United States how much I appreciate the leadership of the German Chancellor and the German people in dealing with the refugee crisis, in trying to relieve the pressure on Macedonia and provide for the economic needs of both Macedonia and Albania,

and in looking to the long-term development of the Balkans and southeastern Europe, which is critical if you're going to avoid future incidents of this kind.

And on all those scores, both as the German Chancellor and as the present leader of the EU, I think he has done an outstanding job, and I am personally very grateful for it.

Cooperation of Russia and China

Q. Mr. President, how important is it in your view to get the U.N. behind the principles on Kosovo, and what do you intend in order to get not only Russia but also China into the part?

President Clinton. Well, I believe it would be very, very helpful if the United Nations would endorse a peace process if it is a peace process that will work, meaning that the refugees would have to be able to come back with security and autonomy, and the Serb forces would have to be withdrawn, and there must be a multinational security force there that NATO is a core part of.

Now, the U.N. did so in Bosnia. We were there as—under the umbrella of the U.N., NATO was there; Russia was there; Ukraine was there. It worked. And it will work again, and obviously would be much better.

With regard to the Chinese, of course, the Chancellor is going to China in a couple of days, and he will have fresh news when he comes back. But I believe if the Russians support this, the Chinese will support this. And I think they believe that this is something the U.N. should do.

Q. Mr. President, what's the significance of the agreement or statement that Russia—[*inaudible*—initially today?

President Clinton. I think the Chancellor might want to comment on that as well. The significance is that as far as I know, this is the first time that the Russians have publicly said they would support an international security as well as a civilian force in Kosovo. This is a significant step forward, and I was personally very pleased by it.

Balkan Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, what is your personal impression? Do you think there is a message you can convey to the German people that there is a longer period of blood, sweat, and tears that you have to look forward to or to look

at in the near future, or do you think that there is a real peace process underway?

President Clinton. I think there is a real peace process underway, but it has no chance of reaching a satisfactory conclusion unless we maintain Allied unity and firmness. I don't think the process is long, but I don't think we can afford to be discouraged or be impatient. We need to stay with the strategy we have and continue to aggressively support our air campaign and to aggressively support any diplomatic initiative that will secure the conditions necessary for a lasting peace in Kosovo.

Group of Eight Statement on Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, and Chancellor, do you think that the agreement, the statement that was issued today by the G-8 and Russia, will do anything to hasten the end to the conflict?

Chancellor Schroeder. I can only repeat and emphasize what the President of the United States of America has just said. I consider it as truly substantial progress which has been made there. There has been open talk about the presence and the necessity for the presence of international troops there, and I think things will continue along that way.

I would also very much like to emphasize the fact that I agree that there is no reason

whatsoever to now think about a change in the NATO strategy now that the strategy does seem to work, and I'm talking about military as well as political initiatives undertaken therein.

President Clinton. Let me just say very briefly, I agree with what the Chancellor has said. I do believe it's an advance because you have to see the G-8 resolution here, the statement, in the context of Mr. Chernomyrdin's efforts. I mean, here is a man that served as Premier of Russia twice; very highly regarded, I think, by all of us who have ever dealt with him on all sides of this issue. And this statement, plus his ongoing effort, I think you have to read this as a move forward and increasing the likelihood that there will ultimately be a resolution of this that will actually work.

Thank you.

NOTE: The remarks began at 5:45 p.m. in the Office of the Chancellor at the Chancellory. In his remarks, the President referred to Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia. The President also referred to the European Union (EU). Chancellor Schroeder referred to Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski of Macedonia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Memorandum on Assistance for Federal Employees Affected by the Tornadoes in Oklahoma and Kansas May 6, 1999

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Assistance for Federal Employees Affected by the Tornadoes in Oklahoma and Kansas

I am deeply concerned about the devastating losses suffered by many as a result of the tornadoes in Oklahoma and Kansas. Multiple parts of the Federal Government have been mobilized to respond to this disaster.

As part of this effort, I ask the heads of executive departments and agencies who have Federal civilian employees in designated disaster areas resulting from the tornadoes in Oklahoma and Kansas and their aftermath to use discretion to excuse from duty, without charge to leave

or loss of pay, any such employee who is prevented from reporting for work or faced with a personal emergency because of this disaster and who can be spared from his or her usual responsibilities. This policy also should be applied to any employee who is needed for emergency law enforcement, relief, or clean-up efforts authorized by Federal, State, or other officials having jurisdiction.

I am also directing the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an emergency leave transfer program, which would permit employees in an executive agency to donate their unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who were adversely affected by the tornadoes and who need

additional time off for recovery. In addition, I am directing OPM to provide additional information and assistance to agencies on the program's administration.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Congress Reporting on the State of Small Business May 6, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to present my fifth annual report on the state of small business. In 1996, the year covered by this report, more than 23.2 million small business tax returns were filed. A record 842,000 new small employers opened their doors and new incorporations hit a record high for the third straight year. Corporate profits, employment compensation, and proprietorship earnings all increased significantly. Industries dominated by small firms created an estimated 64 percent of the 2.5 million new jobs.

Small businesses represent the individual economic efforts of our Nation's citizens. They are the foundation of the Nation's economic growth: virtually all of the new jobs, 53 percent of employment, 51 percent of private sector output, and a disproportionate share of innovations come from small firms. Small businesses are avenues of opportunity for women and minorities, first employers and trainers of the young, important employers of elderly workers, and those formerly on public assistance. The freedom of America's small businesses to experiment, create, and expand makes them powerhouses in our economic system.

An Unprecedented Record of Success

Looking back to the 1986 White House Conference on Small Business, one of the top priorities on the small business agenda was deficit reduction. Small business capital formation efforts had been undermined by interest rates driven sky-high by the demand for funds to service the growing national debt. Today I'm proud to say we've done what was thought nearly impossible then. This year we have converted the deficit to a surplus—and the budget deficit is no longer the issue it once was.

And my Administration is committed to continuing the dramatic growth of the small business sector. We continue to pay close attention to the perspectives and recommendations of

America's small business owners. The 1995 White House Conference on Small Business sent a list of 60 recommendations to my Administration and the Congress—the result of a year-long series of conferences and a national meeting on the concerns of small firms. In their 1995 recommendations, the small business delegates told us they need less onerous regulation, estate tax relief for family-owned businesses, and still more access to capital to start and expand their businesses.

On each of these fronts, and on many others, impressive steps have been taken. I have signed 11 new laws that address many of the delegates' concerns. In fact, meaningful action has been taken on fully 86 percent of the 1995 White House Conference on Small Business recommendations.

Easing the Tax Burden

The Taxpayer Relief Act, which I signed in 1997, includes wins for small businesses and the American economy in the form of landmark tax reform legislation. The law will provide an estimated \$20 billion in tax relief to small business over the next 10 years. It extends for three years the exclusion from taxable income of money spent by an employer on education for an employee. The unified gift and estate tax credit will increase the amount excluded from taxation on a transferred estate to \$1.3 million for small family-owned businesses.

The new law expands the definition of a home office for the purpose of deducting expenses to include any home office that is the business' sole office and used regularly for essential administrative or management activities.

And capital gains taxes are reduced from 28 percent to 20 percent. This will help small businesses by encouraging investments in businesses that reinvest for growth rather than investments in companies that pay heavy dividends. The law

also improves the targeted capital gains provisions relating specifically to small business stocks. Moreover, small corporations are exempted under the new law from alternative minimum tax calculations. This provision saves about 2 million businesses from complex and unnecessary paperwork.

Capital for Small Business Growth

One of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) highest priorities is to increase small business access to capital and transform the SBA into a 21st century leading-edge financial institution. The SBA's credit programs—including the 7(a) business loan guarantee program, the Section 504 economic development loan program, the microloan program, the small business investment company program, the disaster loan and surety bond programs—provide valuable and varied financial assistance to small businesses of all types. The Small Business Lending Enhancement Act of 1995 increased the availability of funds for SBA's lending programs. In the 7(a) program in fiscal year 1997 alone, with approximately 8,000 bank and nonbank lenders approved to participate, 45,288 loan guarantees valued at \$9.5 billion were approved as of September 1997.

My Administration developed community reinvestment initiatives that revised bank regulatory policies to encourage lending to smaller firms. When combined with lower interest rates, this led to a sizable increase in commercial and industrial lending, particularly to small businesses. And in the first year of implementation under the Community Reinvestment Credit Act, new data were collected on small business loans by commercial banks. The SBA's Office of Advocacy has been studying and publishing its results on the small business lending activities of the Nation's banks.

And the Office of Advocacy launched a nationwide Internet-based listing service—the Angel Capital Electronic Network (ACE-Net) to encourage equity investment in small firms. ACE-Net provides information to angel investors on small dynamic businesses seeking \$250,000 to \$3 million in equity financing.

Reforming the Regulatory Process

The Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA), fully implemented in 1997, gives small businesses a stronger voice where it's needed—early in the Federal regu-

latory development process. The law provides for regulatory compliance assistance from every Federal agency and legal remedies where agencies have failed to address small business concerns in the rulemaking process.

The new process is working. Agencies and businesses are working in partnership to ensure that small business input is a part of the rulemaking process. In the summer of 1997, for example, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, in conjunction with the SBA's Office of Advocacy, convened four regional meetings with small firms to discuss a safety and health program under development.

Small firms are also witnessing more agency compliance assistance once regulations are in effect. Agencies are routinely providing compliance guides and lists of telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for small business assistance.

And the law provides for a national ombudsman and 10 regional regulatory fairness boards to make it simple for small businesses to share their ideas, experiences, and concerns about the regulatory enforcement environment. The ombudsman and boards are addressing many concerns expressed by small firms in dealing with regulating agencies.

Expanding Technology and Innovation

Initiatives like the Small Business Innovation Research Program, the Small Business Technology Transfer Program, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Manufacturing Extension Partnership and Advanced Technology Program were put in place in the 1980s to channel more Federal funding to small business research and to help small businesses move ideas from the drawing board to the marketplace. Clearly, progress has been made; much remains to be done. New Internet-based initiatives like the Access to Capital Electronic Network and the U.S. Business Advisor are designed to help many more small businesses make the connections they need to commercialize their innovative technologies.

Enhancing International Trade and Federal Procurement Opportunities

During my Administration, our Nation has led the way in opening new markets, with 240 trade agreements that remove foreign barriers to U.S.-made products. Measures aimed at helping small firms expand into the global market have included an overhaul of the Government's export

controls and reinvention of export assistance. These changes have cleared a path for small businesses to enter the international economy.

To make certain that small companies can do business with the Government, my Administration and the Congress have streamlined the Federal procurement process through administrative changes and the Federal Acquisition Reform Act of 1996. The changes instituted in these reforms are cost-effective for the Government and are intended to enable businesses to compete more effectively for Government contracts worth billions of dollars.

I am pleased that the SBA has instituted a new electronic gateway to procurement information, the Procurement Marketing and Access Network, or Pro-Net. This database on small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses will serve as a search engine for contracting officers, a marketing tool for small firms, and a link to procurement opportunities.

The Human Factor

My Administration is moving to anticipate 21st century demands on our most important resource—our people. As a recent report by the SBA's Office of Advocacy points out, small businesses employed more people on public assistance in 1996 than did large businesses. Our Welfare to Work Partnership has already had positive results—we've moved two million Americans off welfare two full years ahead of schedule. And we are enlisting the help of more and more small business people to expand that record of success.

We want to educate and train a work force that will meet all our future global competition. For those in the work force or moving into it, I recently signed legislation that consolidated the tangle of training programs into a single grant program so that people can move quickly on their own to better jobs and more secure futures. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 encourages employers to provide training for their employees by excluding income spent on such training from taxation. The SBA has also increased training opportunities for businesses by funding new export assistance centers and women's business centers across the country.

Women have been starting their own businesses at a dramatic rate in recent years. More than 6 million women-owned proprietorships were in operation in 1994, a phenomenal 139 percent increase over the 2.5 million that existed

in 1980. But it is also women who are most affected by the lack of adequate child care. The SBA's Office of Advocacy has found that while small firms value the benefits of child care as much as large businesses, small businesses have been less likely to offer this benefit than large firms for a variety of reasons related to cost. The bottom line is that we've got to raise the quality of child care and make it more affordable for families. I have proposed tax credits for businesses that provide child care and a larger child care tax credit for working families.

I am pleased that so many Americans of all races and nationalities are asserting their economic power by starting small businesses. This report documents the growth: the number of businesses owned by minorities increased from 1.2 million to almost 2 million in the 5-year period from 1987 to 1992. The Federal Government has a role in widening the circle of economic opportunity. Programs are in place to ensure that socially and economically disadvantaged businesses have a fair chance in the Federal procurement marketplace. The share of Federal contract dollars won by minority-owned firms has remained at 5.5 percent for two years running—up from less than 2 percent in 1980. And recently the SBA and the Vice President announced new small business lending initiatives directed to the Hispanic and African American small business communities to give these Americans better access to the capital they need.

We have been working for the past 5 years to bring the spark of enterprise to inner city and poor rural areas through community development banks, commercial loans in poor neighborhoods, and the cleanup of polluted sites for development. The empowerment zone and enterprise community program offers significant tax incentives for firms within the zones, including a 20 percent wage credit and another \$20,000 in expensing and tax-exempt facility bonds. Under the leadership of the Vice President, we want to increase the number of empowerment zones to give more businesses incentives to move into these areas.

Future Challenges

America's small business community is both the symbol and the embodiment of our economic freedom. That is why my Administration has made concerted efforts to expand small business access to capital, reform the system of Government regulations to make it more equitable

for small companies, and expand small business access to new and growing markets.

This is an important report because it annually reflects our current knowledge about the dynamic small business economy. Clearly, much is yet to be learned: existing statistics are not yet current enough to answer all the questions about how small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses are faring in obtaining capital, providing benefits, and responding to regional growth or downsizing. I continue to encourage cooperative Government efforts to gather and

analyze data that is useful for Federal policy-making.

I am proud that my Administration is on the leading edge in working as a partner with the small business community. Our economic future deserves no less. The job of my Administration, and its pledge to small business owners, is to listen, to find out what works and to ensure a healthy environment for small business growth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 6, 1999.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Telecommunications Payments to Cuba

May 6, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104-114, 110 Stat. 785, I transmit herewith a 6-

month periodic report on telecommunications payments made to Cuba pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 6, 1999.

Remarks on Departure for Houston, Texas, and an Exchange With Reporters

May 7, 1999

The President. Good morning. Tomorrow I will be visiting some of the communities that were so terribly damaged by the tornadoes this week. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas, with the people of Tennessee who also endured terrible storms and destruction.

Before I leave, I'd like to make comments on a couple of other matters. First, on the new economic report issued today: We received more good news for our working families. Unemployment is 4.3 percent, with 234,000 new jobs added last month alone. African-American unemployment is at its lowest level on record. And real wages, after declining 4.3 percent in the 12 years before I took office, have now risen over 6 percent in the last 6 years. The American

economy continues to see a remarkable combination of strong growth, job creation, and low inflation. Our economic strategy continues to be the right strategy for prosperity, and it is the one we should follow as we work to strengthen Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century.

It's worth remembering that the move from economic stagnation to sustained prosperity is not the only turnaround our Nation has seen in the last 6 years. We also see the crime rate falling, the welfare rolls falling, the teen pregnancy rate falling, drunk driving going down, a host of other social ills now easing, even though for so long they seemed destined only to worsen.

The American people, in homes and communities all across this country, are working hard at the grassroots level to turn around every one of these social problems, and others are doing their part. That is the kind of national commitment we need to protect our children from violence. I believe, more than anything else, we need a grassroots effort which involves every single American, from the White House down to the smallest community, a national campaign that draws out everyone's commitment, all our resources, and depends upon everyone taking responsibility.

On Monday, as you know, we'll have a White House meeting here, a strategy session to seek out the best ideas for this effort, from people who can really make a difference, parents and young people, teachers and religious leaders, law enforcement, gun manufacturers, representatives of the entertainment industry, and those of us here in Government. Together, we will talk about how we can shield children from gratuitous violence, keep parents involved in their children's lives, reach out to troubled young people early enough, and do more to keep guns out of their reach. We will not ask who takes the blame but how we can all take responsibility, and I will challenge everyone there and everyone in America to do their part.

We know this kind of sustained, organized effort can work. Let me just give you one example. Four years ago, I asked for a national campaign to reduce teen pregnancy. Today, under the leadership of Governor Tom Kean, former Governor of New Jersey and now the president of Drew University, that campaign is finding what works, spreading it to other communities, working with the media to send the right message to our children.

Two years ago, I called for a national effort by businesses to hire people off welfare, to make sure the welfare reform effort would work. Today, under the leadership of Eli Segal, the Welfare to Work partnership has grown to 10,000 companies that have helped us move more than 400,000 people from the welfare rolls to the job rolls.

Time and again, we have seen when citizens, businesses, communities, nonprofits, and government take responsibility to work together, we can overcome any challenge. We are turning the tide on all kinds of social problems. Now we must turn our intense efforts to this issue of violence. We have remarkable Americans who

have been working on it for sometime now, with real success in community after community; you will hear from them on Monday. But obviously, in the aftermath of what happened in Colorado and the school shootings of the last 2 years, we have to do more. I'm very much looking forward to this meeting and to getting to work with Americans all over our country to give our children the safe childhoods they deserve.

Thank you very much.

Military Pay Raise

Q. Mr. President, will you accept a military pay raise as part of the emergency supplemental, the Kosovo emergency—supplemental bill?

The President. Well, as you know, we're supporting a military pay raise, and I don't think there's any difference in when the Congress and I think it should take effect. So there may be some—I have to get briefed on this—you know, I've been gone to Europe, but my understanding is, the only difference in the two bills is at what point they fund it and whether they take it out from under the ceilings of next year's budget, not when the military actually gets it.

So I think we're all—my view is, at least when I left to go to Europe, we were all for the same pay raise going into effect at the same time. And I understand why Congress wants to advance fund it, and I'd like to see the bill loaded up with as little extraneous spending as possible. But we are going to give a military pay raise. We're all committed to it, and we just have to work out what the best way to do it is.

Kosovo Peacekeeping Force

Q. Mr. President, do you insist that the American Commander of NATO be in charge of whatever forces wind up as peacekeepers in Kosovo?

The President. Well, I think the best thing for me to say now is what—I think it will work best if we have a system like we had in Bosnia, where there was U.N. approval; NATO was the core of the force, but there was Russian participation, there was Ukrainian participation, there was participation from a lot of other countries; and the command issues were worked out by and large in three different segments of the country, where primary responsibility was taken in one section by the United States working with Russia, in another by Britain, and another

by France. There may be some other way to do it in Kosovo; I don't want to prejudge all the details.

The important thing—I don't want neither to add nor subtract from the basic conditions that we have said we believe are necessary to make this work. That is, the refugees go home to safety and autonomy, Serb forces out, and an international security force in, with NATO at the core. Anything I say today, while we're working hard to try to push this and to try to gain more converts and get more people in-

volved in this, would be, I think, a mistake, except to say I think that what we did in Bosnia was functional.

But I think it's important for the United States and for our Allies neither to add nor subtract from the basic conditions that we have said all along are absolutely essential to make this work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:38 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Houston *May 7, 1999*

Thank you very much, Ken. I want to thank you for so many things, but particularly today for the work you have done on this. And I thank Joe Andrew for being willing to leave Indiana, a State no one thought could become a Democratic State, that just elected a new Democratic Governor and elected Senator Evan Bayh overwhelmingly, thanks in no small measure to his leadership there. And I look forward to many years of his leadership for the DNC.

I'd like to thank Molly Beth Malcolm for being here and Steve Zimmerman for providing us this modest little room to have lunch in. *[Laughter]* Someone told me that Napoleon was once in this room, but not in Texas—*[laughter]*—and Frederick the Great, and all kinds of other people. I don't know if any of them were Democrats, but we are. We may have tripled the number of Democrats who have ever been in this room in the last 300 years, just today at lunch. *[Laughter]* But I am delighted to be here, and I thank all of you for coming.

I want to talk a little today—I know several of you said that I looked tired, and I don't know whether it's just because I'm not young anymore or because I just got back from 2 days meeting with our troops and with refugees from Kosovo in Germany. But this is a rather unusual moment for our country, I think, because things are in some ways the best of times. We just saw today, again last month unemployment rate was 4.3 percent. We had another 234,000 jobs; we're up to 18,400,000 now in the life of this administration. The welfare rolls have been cut

nearly in half. We've got a 30-year low in the crime rate. The teen pregnancy rate is going down. Basically, the social indicators are good. Many of the indicators relating to drug use are moving in the right direction.

And I want to say a special word of thanks, by the way—I think he—no, he didn't leave—to Mayor Brown, who in his previous incarnation was a member of our Cabinet and led our Nation's efforts to keep our children away from drugs. And I was elated when he was elected mayor, and I hope you'll keep him here for a good long time, because I think he'll do a great job for you. And thank you, Mayor, for being here today.

Anyway, you know, we have to feel good about these things. And I do, and I feel grateful. But all of us are sobered and saddened by three events of the recent days. And I would like to mention—although they seem entirely disparate—one is the terrible tornadoes that have claimed record numbers of lives in Oklahoma and Kansas and related storms here in Texas and over in Tennessee; the second, obviously, is the heartbreaking tragedy in Littleton, Colorado—I know we were all glad to see the children go back to school this week; and the third is the conflict in Kosovo. And I would like to try, if I could, today—it's not exactly your typical party-stump speech at a fundraising luncheon—but just ask you to think with me about how we're—what lessons we should learn from those three events and how it relates to what we're

trying to do in our administration and with our party.

And I'd like to go back just for a moment to 1992 and late 1991, when I made the decision to seek the Presidency. I was in my fifth term as Governor. I was having a wonderful time. Our daughter was doing well in school and with her friends. And Hillary and I were having more fun with our friends because I was about to get the hang of being Governor, having done it for 10 or 11 years. And I really didn't want to do what I did in 1992—plus, it seemed like a fool's errand; President Bush was at, like, 75 percent approval in the polls when I made the decision to run. And I knew I was a relatively young person, and I could wait, and that was my kind of personal inclination.

But I was profoundly disturbed by two things: first, by the objective conditions in the United States. There were—unemployment was high; inequality was increasing; wages hadn't increased in real terms in 20 years; and all the social indicators were going in the wrong direction.

But the second thing that bothered me was that the debate in Washington seemed so divorced from the world, on the street in Arkansas where I lived and from the larger world beyond the borders of the United States, that it seemed to me that the parties were caught in a gridlock, labeling each other and fighting over turf in Washington that did not deal with what I thought were the two great challenges of our age: One was preparing for the 21st century by trying to take advantage of all the economic changes and the technology and globalization that was going on in a way that enabled people to build stronger families and stronger communities and left no one behind; and the second was, to find a way to deal with the dizzying array of differences in our own society in a way that respected those differences but pulled us closer together. And I didn't see much coming out that would do that.

And it seemed to me that there was a way that you could actually strengthen the economy, for example, and improve the environment. There was a way to reward entrepreneurs and still reach out to people who were being left behind and let them go along for the ride in this new economy. There should be a way to reduce the deficit and still increase investment and education and health care. There should be a way to help people succeed at home as parents and succeed at work. There should be

a way that we could glorify the individual, as we always have in America, and recognize that fundamentally we'll all do better if we're one community.

And that's basically what the campaign in '92 was all about, and those words that I said, that I wanted a society that had opportunity for all and responsibility from all and a community of all Americans. And that's why I'm here today. You know, I'm not running for office, and some of the people out on the street are apparently elated about it. *[Laughter]* But that's the American way. I'm not running for office. I'm here because, while I am grateful for the role I have been able to play as President, in the 18 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years and having 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious diseases for the first time in history, opening the doors of college to all Americans with the tax credits and the improved student loan program and the scholarship programs, and all the other things we've done—the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; we've set aside more land to be protected than any administration in history, except those of the two Roosevelts—I am grateful for all of that.

But this is not a matter of personality. We had ideas that we turned into policies. We changed the role of Government. We have a smaller Government. There are fewer people working for the Federal Government now than in any time since John Kennedy was President. And yet, it's more active. We focus less on telling people what to do and more on giving people the tools to solve their own problems and creating the conditions in which Americans could thrive in the world. And the ideas matter. And the values, the principles of opportunity and responsibility and community matter. And the Democratic Party, therefore, matters.

These ideas have benefited every people in every State. They have benefited Republicans and independents as much as they have benefited Democrats. They are capable of unifying the country at a time when so many continue to seek to divide it. And they also give us a clue about what we should do.

We've still got big challenges out there. It would be a big mistake for us not to deal with the challenges of Social Security and saving Medicare and to do it in a way that will enable us now to reduce the debt of this country over the next 15 years to its lowest point since before

World War II. Did you ever think you'd hear anybody stand up and talk about doing that?

It would be a great mistake for us not to continue to push for education reform, to put more teachers in the classroom with modern facilities, to finish the job of hooking all our classrooms up to the Internet, to end the practice, nationwide, of social promotion, but not to label the kids failures, to give them the after-school programs and the summer school programs they need to have higher standards around the country. It would be a mistake for us not to continue to do this just because times are good here. It would also be a mistake for us not to continue to try to give opportunity to people who still don't have it. There are still places in Texas, with all the economy booming, that haven't felt this recovery.

Just a few days from now the Vice President is going down to south Texas to have our annual empowerment zone conference. And I'm very proud of the fact that one of the things that we have worked hard to do in the last 6 years is to leave no one behind, to give tax incentives and other investments to poor communities to try to induce people to start businesses there and put people to work there. And I'm very proud of the fact that one of the major initiatives before the Congress this year, my so-called new markets initiative, would give people loan guarantees and tax credits to invest in the poor neighborhoods of America and urban and rural areas—like they can get today to invest in poor neighbors overseas.

I think we ought to give people the same incentives to invest in Americans who don't have jobs and opportunity that we give them to invest elsewhere. I don't want to take the others away. I just want our folks to have the same chance.

So there's a lot to do. And it would be a mistake, just because of our prosperity or because people are already talking about the next election, to overlook the fact that we still have a lot of time between now and January of 2001, and to put a great country in idle is a great mistake.

The second thing I'd like to say is I think it is a mistake to forget about our continuing obligations in the face of the problems of the moment. But I think there are lessons in each of these three things that I mentioned that we're all very much preoccupied about now.

What is the lesson of the tornadoes? This maybe belongs more in a sermon on Sunday

than a political speech, but the lesson is, no matter how well America does, a little humility is always in order. We are not in full control. And we have to be sensitive about this, especially here in this part of the country. We have to do more to try to prepare ourselves for these storms, and we have to do more to try to minimize their impact when they occur.

The Governor of Oklahoma said a couple of days ago when I called him after the tornado that—we were talking about how Oklahoma and east Texas and Arkansas are at the beginning of basically the tornado belt in America—and he said, "You know, the more growth we have, the more expansion of our communities, the more construction we're going to have in these alleys where tornadoes often hit." And we began to talk about that, about construction and safety and prevention.

I say that to point out that there are certain constants that we have to deal with in our society that call on us to be humble, call on us to be prepared and remember we're not in total control.

Now, the second thing I'd like to say about Littleton is that the lesson here is that no matter how prosperous we are economically—and this was terrible for that community; I've talked to school officials and local officials there—we have to understand that there are forces at work in our society that call on us to make an extra effort to protect our children from violence.

I think it is important not to overly politicize this in the sense of fingerpointing. I have said before, and I will say again, I think that instead of everyone saying, "Whose responsibility is that? Whose fault is this?"—I mean, instead of saying whose fault this is, we should say, "What can I do to take responsibility for it? What can I do to change it? What can I do to make it better?"

Like you, I don't know any more about what happened there than what I can read about it. But I have read voraciously. I have watched the television programs. I have listened to the townhall meetings and the other interviews that people up there have done. And you may know that Hillary and the Vice President and Tipper and I are going to have a big meeting at the White House on the 10th, next Monday. We're going to bring in people to talk about every aspect of this, including some people who have been very active in antiviolence initiatives around the country.

But I would just like to say—I ask you to think about Littleton in the following ways. Number one, no society has any job more important than raising its children well. It is the number one job of every society. And raising our children well depends upon doing our jobs as parents but also recognizing, as Hillary said years ago, it does take a village, and we need to look at the village and see what the village is like now.

And the following things occur to me, and I don't want to prejudge what we will do on Monday, but I think we need to recognize that without regard to family income, the speed and pressure of modern life increases the chances that children will become isolated and that vulnerable children, therefore, will be more likely to drift into something that's really bad for them. At any given moment in time there will always be children who are vulnerable to problems.

But if you just think about the speed and pressure and sheer movement of modern life, the speed with which people move around and the hassles that are associated with that, and the speed with which images and news and information of all kinds—positive, negative—is crammed into our lives, I think that a lot of what we have to deal with here is giving our children some breaks, some protections, and our families some breaks and protections about that.

The second thing I think is important is that we need to honestly try to challenge the families of this country not to give up on communicating with our kids when they start to drift away from them naturally and move into independence. It's still important to maintain some kind of knowledge of what's going on in there.

The third thing I'd like to tell you is I think that there are things schools can do which will at least minimize youth violence, over and above zero tolerance for guns and other things. I visited a very impressive school in Virginia the other day, in Alexandria, that has a phenomenally diverse student body. They have a very active peer mediation group where the kids try to solve each other's problems. They have comprehensive counseling services. They have access to mental health services for kids who need it.

And I think it's very important—Tipper Gore is going to have the White House Conference on Mental Health in Washington in the next few days, and she had a very courageous article in *USA Today*, today. If you haven't read it,

I urge you to read it. I was really proud of her, talking about the whole issue and how it affected her life and her family's. I think that's very important.

I'll tell you something else this school had; this school had a 1-800 hotline so that if the children suspected that some other students in school were maybe going to do something destructive or wrong, they could call the hotline and have certainty that the lead would be followed up on but that they wouldn't be outed as somebody who was talking about their classmates.

So I think we have to continue to work with the schools, as the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General have done. I think that there are challenges for those who influence our culture, including the entertainment community. When we trivialize or brutalize relationships or trivialize violence or, particularly in the intimacy of the Internet and the video games, run the risk that kids who are already isolated create a whole alternative reality that at the same time desensitizes them to violence, I think that's a problem.

And I also believe, finally, that there ought to be some more laws that will minimize the chances that the kinds of weapons those kids had will get into the hands of children who will do bad things with them. And I hope we can avoid yet another big fight in Washington between the NRA and others. This should not be the culture war we have going on. It makes common sense, it seems to me, to reinstitute the waiting period of the Brady bill, along with the insta-check. It ought to apply to people that buy explosives as well as people who buy handguns.

We ought to close the loopholes in the assault weapons ban law. We have an assault weapons ban, but it's got a couple of loopholes in it big enough to drive a truck through. We don't need—if the law is a good law, then we ought to make it work. We ought to do background checks at gun shows. I've been to gun shows in rural America. I know a lot of people that run them think this is going to be a terrible headache. It's not. The technology is there. We can fix it, so we can do it.

But the main thing I want to say is, I do not believe there is any one answer here. I believe there is a responsibility in the entertainment community. I think there's a responsibility in the Internet community. I think there's a

responsibility for the gun manufacturers and law enforcement. I think there is a responsibility in the schools. I think there is a responsibility with the parents. I think a lot of us have something to do.

But what I would like you to think about here, instead of being despondent about the magnitude of the problem, is, first of all, look at the courage and character of the overwhelming majority of the people in Littleton that we have seen manifest in so many different ways under such adversity.

And secondly, look at the example that Americans are capable of solving their social problems by grassroots movements. That's really why the teen pregnancy rate is dropping, because there's a grassroots effort, a comprehensive effort that is sweeping the whole country. That's why drunk driving went down—Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Students Against Drunk Driving.

So there is no magic bullet here, and the most important thing is having a magic attitude of not taking any solution off the table because it would require you to do something, but not falling into the easy trap of pointing the finger at someone else. But the lesson here is that if we want to be a strong and great nation, we must continue to deal with the problems, and they're not all economic problems. And there is nothing more important than the quality of our children's childhood.

Now, let me close with Kosovo. There are some people who may not understand why we would be so concerned about what happens in a small place a long way away, where hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people have been uprooted, had their homes burned, the records of their very existence burned, their religious and cultural sites destroyed, sometimes people literally wrapped in bundles and burned alive, lots of children raped, solely because of their ethnic and religious background. And it is a reprise of what happened just a few years ago in Bosnia.

Why should we care about it? First all of, because it violates our most fundamental values. And if we have the capacity to stop something like that, we ought to.

Secondly, because we have learned the hard way that people, when they behave that way, think that that behavior—if they get away with it, they think it's rewarded, and other people will follow their lead. And all over the world today, at the end of the cold war, when com-

munist is gone as a competing ideology, if there is nothing positive to organize people and pull them together, then one of the things that is most likely to pull them apart are racial, ethnic, and religious differences, used to demonize other people, almost exclusively by people who don't really believe it as much as they are trying to mobilize people to get political power or wealth or both.

Now, we fought two wars in Europe in the century that's about to end. We want Europe to be united, to be free, to be democratic, to be at peace. If they are, they'll be our friends. They'll be our partners. They'll be better trading partners. They'll also help us solve problems in other parts of the world. There are all kinds of practical reasons we should do this. There are all kinds of practical reasons.

But when you get right down to it, if we are going to say we are grateful that America has emerged from the cold war as the world's only superpower, if we're going to be grateful for the good fortune we have enjoyed in the last 6 years, we have to be willing to spend a small percentage of our good fortune and a significant percentage of our credibility to be good allies with our European friends who asked us to come and help, and do this.

I also believe in a world where religious differences have bedeviled the Middle East and Northern Ireland and so many other places, it speaks volumes that the United States and our European friends and Canada are willing to stand up for people who are overwhelmingly of the Muslim faith, and say, they have rights, too; they are people, too; they are children of God, too; and they deserve the right to have their life, to go home, to be safe, to have the autonomy that they deserve. And that's what we're fighting for in Kosovo.

If you think about—there's one little baby here, or was here a few minutes ago—you imagine that the world this baby is going to live in when she gets out of college and goes into the world. Do you want it to be a world where, frankly, more and more people have a lot of the economic prosperity we've enjoyed? I do, because that means we'll do even better if we have more partners who are doing better, which is characterized by people knowing each other across national lines, sharing economic opportunity, sharing educational opportunity, working together in common cause to deal with the continuing challenges of the world. Or do we want

it to be a world where we feel like we're under siege all the time because everywhere people are falling victim to their most primitive impulses, that they're using modern technology and modern computers to figure out how to get modern weapons to kill somebody because of some ancient hatred? I don't think it's a close question.

And one of the things that I have learned as President is that you cannot draw an easy dividing line between what is a domestic issue and a foreign issue in a world that is getting smaller and smaller and smaller. You can't just do that. You can't say, "Well, it's great that international trade helps most of us," and forget about those that are not helped by trade. You have to give them the education, the skills, the training, the opportunity so that no one will be left behind. That's a domestic and a foreign issue. And believe me, this is, too.

The greatest thing this country has got going for it today is that we have all different kinds of people that all have their chances. But we have to stand against hatred and for harmony. We have to say, "Whatever our differences, our fundamental common humanity is more important than anything else."

I was reading coming down here today that here in the legislature, Texas is debating this hate crimes law named after James Byrd. You know, for me as a white southerner, the thought that a man could be murdered because of his race in 1999 is heartbreaking. But it is a sober reminder that human nature may improve, but we'll always have problems. And it is the country's organization, the country's dominant values, the country's leadership, the country's direction that matters.

I hope that law will pass and become law here. I hope that Texas will say, "We don't

want people to be hurt because of their race, because they're gay, because of whatever. And when people are hurt in that way, we stand against it."

But in a larger sense, I hope that we will become a more effectively caring society. I hope we'll find some ways to put on the brakes when the speed's too fast for our children's childhood, and they're hurtling toward isolation in a destructive way.

And I think we can do that and still get all the benefits of this modern world that's opened up to us. But it will depend upon the right ideas and the right values. It is not dependent upon any one person.

I am so grateful that I have been the instrument, as President, of some of the good things that have happened in America. I am more grateful than you know. But what matters is that we have the right values and the right ideas, and when something works, we do not abandon it; we stick with it.

That's why I'm here. That's why I hope you will continue to support our party. Because what we have stood for has made a lot of difference, and it will make more difference in the future if you and I do our part.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in Le Grand Salon de la Comtesse at La Colombe d'Or restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to F. Kenneth Bailey, Jr., event chair, and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Molly Beth Malcolm, State Democratic chair; Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana; Gov. Frank Keating of Oklahoma; Mayor Lee Patrick Brown of Houston, TX; and Stephen Zimmerman, owner, La Colombe d'Or restaurant.

Remarks on Arrival in Austin, Texas May 7, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor. I want you to know, folks, I spent some of the best days of my life in Austin, Texas. And when Lloyd went up to make his remarks, I looked at the mayor and I said, being mayor of Austin

may be the best elected job in the United States. And he didn't dispute me.

I also want to thank Lloyd Doggett for his leadership on this and so many other projects. We've been friends for many, many years. I was elated when he was elected to the Congress,

and I can tell you he does a terrific job for all the constituents of this district in Washington, DC.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very, very sorry I had to miss the dedication. You know why. The events in Littleton, Colorado, compelled me to cancel. I do want to tell you that on Monday Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore and I are going to have a very distinguished array of people from all over the country to meet in Washington to organize a national campaign against violence involving our children. And I know it will have the support of every person here.

But I want to ask you to think a little bit about the significance of this airport not only in terms of what it means to all of you but in terms of what it means to the future of America and how we ought to do all of our business. Six years ago, when your airbase was closed, you saw that it did not have to be an economic setback. In fact, it could be an enormous opportunity. Austin-Bergstrom International Airport today is a testament to your unwavering commitment and vision.

For years, this airport had the following motto: Bergstrom Air Force Base: Global Power for America. Today this airport is still a symbol of global power for America. It's a different kind of power. Where military aircraft essential to our victory in the cold war once landed here, now boxes of software take off for markets around the world, fueling our success in the new global economy. Where once pilots flew reconnaissance missions to survey cold war enemies, now they fly planes that ferry high-tech visionaries between Silicon Valley and these "Silicon Hills."

This airport will be your gateway to prosperity in the 21st century. And I especially appreciate something that's already been mentioned, that you pay tribute to some of Texas' finest citizens. I hope every visitor will be inspired by Captain Bergstrom's courage and sacrifice, by my good friend Jake Pickle's life of service and compassion, by President Johnson's bold vision and commitment to progress for all Americans together, and by Barbara Jordan's incomparable voice for justice on common ground.

Since I'm here today, I cannot help noting that the work of Lyndon Johnson and Barbara Jordan is being carried on today here in Austin by the State legislators who are trying to pass

hate crimes legislation in the name of James Byrd. As you probably saw on the tarmac, I was honored to meet with members of Mr. Byrd's family. I know that what happened to him was anathema to every good citizen in Texas, as well as the United States.

And I ask you, as our men and women in uniform today struggle against the killing, the rape, the looting, the uprooting of people, based solely on their ethnic and religious background in Kosovo, as they did in Bosnia, as we fight to reconcile people around the world, from the Middle East to Northern Ireland, here in America, if we want to do good abroad, we have to be good at home. We have to stand up for what is right.

We have to acknowledge that there are differences among us that we celebrate. There are differences among us that are real differences, and we are compelled to disagree. But underneath it all, as the Founders of our Republic recognized, there is our common humanity and our equal dignity. And we must always stand for it. If we want to be a force against ethnic cleansing and genocide around the world, we have to be a force for harmony and community, here at home in every place in the United States.

And so I close with the point I tried to make at the beginning. I want you to think about what this represents and how you did it. What it represents is a commitment to a common future, where no one is left behind and everybody has a chance. How you did it is by working together, across all the elements of this richly textured community. If you think about it, we could solve all of our problems that way. Thanks for the model.

Good luck, and God bless you.

Wait a minute. I want to do one other thing. I want to thank the Barbara Jordan Elementary Choir and the Pflugerville High School Band. Thank you very much. How about a little more music? Let's go.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:38 p.m. at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Kirk Watson of Austin, TX; and former Representative J.J. Pickle.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Austin May 7, 1999

Thank you very much. You know, when Roy was doing that riff, you know, “Before he came, I didn’t know I needed new furniture; I didn’t know I needed new art work; I didn’t know I needed”—Mary kept getting redder and redder, and finally she says, “He may not know he needs another place to spend the night tonight.” [Laughter] I must say this is a lot better than the last hovel we spent the night in. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, I’ve had a wonderful time here tonight, seeing so many of my old friends. There are a lot of people here—the ones Roy mentioned and also Carlos Truan, Gonzalo Barrientos—a lot of other people who were with Roy and Garry and Judy and Nancy and Tom, all the rest of us, way back in 1972. And we have remained friends for a long time. And during most of that time, with the odd interruption, sometimes the odd, wonderful interruption like the reign of Governor Richards, the election of Lloyd Doggett, we’ve been in the minority.

And I want to talk tonight a little bit about—I want to have kind of a serious conversation tonight about why I really came here, because what Joe said is right. I’m not running for anything. And I would seize any excuse to come here to Austin, because I had some of the happiest days of my life here, and I have a very jealous wife who wishes she were here today.

But for the next 2 years, I’m helping the Democratic Party because I believe it’s the right thing to do for America. I hear a lot of folks on the other side kind of licking their lips and saying, “Well, wait until the next election, and we’ll have Clinton out of the way. Maybe it will be better.”

What I want to say to you is that I am very grateful that I’ve had the chance to serve you. And I am profoundly grateful that we have the lowest unemployment in 30 years and the lowest welfare rolls in forever and a day—they’re half the size they were before—and the lowest crime rate in 25 years. Roy was saying that we’ve got 90 percent of our children immunized against serious diseases for the first time in history. The doors of college are virtually open to every

American now because of our HOPE tax credit and the student loan changes we’ve made. We’ve set aside more land in perpetuity than any administration, except for the two Roosevelts, in American history. I’m grateful for all that.

But what I want you to understand is that I’m grateful because I got a chance to implement a set of ideas that now represent the governing philosophy of the Democratic Party. And it is very different from the driving philosophy of the other party. And if the American people like the results that have been achieved, then we need to support those people running for the Congress and the White House who believe in these ideas.

In 1991, when the incumbent President was at 75 percent approval and I decided to make this race when nobody but my mother and my wife thought I could win, I did it because I was worried about my country and my Capital. Because it seemed to me that there was nothing particularly wrong with America that couldn’t be fixed if we would just open our eyes and go to work. The unemployment rate was high, inequality was increasing, the social problems were worsening, and we had a lot of problems around the world that we didn’t seem to have any governing idea of dealing with. But I felt great about America. I just thought we had to change the way Washington worked.

Just go back in your mind to that period and that long period where the other party spent 12 years telling us how terrible the Government was, and a lot of our guys were sort of fighting a rearguard action defending it. But most of the ideological battles which took place in Washington were about yesterday instead of about tomorrow. And so I set off on this crazy journey with a lot of you, based on a few simple ideas.

First of all, I asked myself, what is the problem? The problem is that we have not thought about how to take full advantage of this explosion in technology and the globalization of the economy in society and at the same time figure out how not to leave anybody behind and make our families and our communities stronger and maintain our push for peace and prosperity around the world. We haven’t thought about

how to make the transition in a way that not only provides vast opportunities for people like those of us in this beautiful setting tonight, but makes America as a nation stronger.

And it seemed to me that what we had to do is to go back to some very basic things: that we had an obligation to try to have opportunity for every person who was responsible enough to deserve it; that we had to try to build a community made up of every law-abiding citizen without regard to what other differences they had; that we had to commit ourselves to be more involved in the rest of the world, not less involved, because the world is growing smaller and smaller; and that we needed a different sort of Government that could be much smaller—and it is today, by the way. It's the same size it was in 1962. That's the size of your Federal Government today. And I'm proud of that.

But what you need to know, we made it smaller but more active, focused not so much on telling people what to do or maintaining old bureaucracies but giving people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. Those were my ideas: opportunity, responsibility, community, a Government that gives people the tools to make the most of their own lives.

And I thought to myself, there are a whole lot of things people believe that I don't think are true. I believed if we work at it, we could reduce the deficit and still increase our spending in education and health care if we did it right. Well, 6 years later, we've got a huge surplus, and we've nearly doubled spending in education and health care.

I believed we could improve the economy and improve the environment. The air is cleaner and the water is cleaner than it was 6 years ago. We've reduced chemicals in the atmosphere from chemical plant emissions by 90 percent in the last 6 years.

I believed that we could help people succeed at work and at home. And I still think that's one of the biggest problems we've got in this country, people trying to be good parents and trying to meet their obligations at work at the same time.

I believed that we could promote entrepreneurialism and trade around the world and still help people who, because of their education or where they live, are at risk of being left behind. Those are the things that I believed.

I believed that we can be a force for peace and recognize that there are some times when we have to use our overwhelming military force.

I believed that in welfare we could reduce the welfare rolls, get more people to work, and at the same time help people who were on welfare to do a better job of raising their children, that we didn't have to hurt people in their responsibilities as parents to say, "If you're able-bodied, you ought to work if you can."

I didn't believe that—all those choices and all those debates that I kept hearing in Washington. And so we set out to do it, and the public responded, and the people gave me a chance to serve; and then in '96, another chance; and then in '96 and '98, kept returning more of our people to the Congress so that we're at the point where we can almost reverse the election of '94.

I think the election in '94 happened, by the way, because we made the tough decisions as a party, all alone, to reduce the deficit, without a single vote from the other party, and increase our investment in education. We made the tough decision almost all alone to pass a crime bill that put 100,000 police on the street, banned assault weapons, and required the Brady bill's waiting period. And by the election in '94—and we tried to provide more health insurance, all alone, and didn't have enough votes to do it. And by '94, what happened was people knew what we'd done on the economic plan, but they didn't feel the economy was getting better; they knew what we'd done on the crime bill, but the NRA convinced a bunch of hunters we were going to take their rifles. By '96, everybody still had their rifles and the crime rate had gone down, the economy had gone up, and we got reelected. And the Congress is doing better ever since our elections.

So now we're poised for this election in 2000. And what I want to say to you is, I appreciate what Roy said about me, and it's nice to be introduced by your old friends. They'll lie about you a little now and then. But the truth is, you must believe this, this administration has succeeded because we had the right ideas and the right approach and we're grounded in the right values, and it's what represents the heart and soul of the Democratic Party today. And that's why I'm here.

We've got a lot of big decisions to make. And you have to decide who is going to make them. We have to deal with the aging crisis—

twice as many people over 65 by 2030. I hope to live to be one of them. [Laughter] I've given the Congress a plan that will save Social Security, save Medicare, provide help for people taking care of their parents and long-term care, allow middle income people and lower income people to save for their own retirement for the first time and do it in a way that pays down the national debt by 2015 to the lowest point it has been since before World War I. And that's really important to keep the economy going, because we'll be less dependent on the vagaries of the global financial system.

I've given the Congress a plan that will improve the quality of education by ending social promotion, by providing after-school and summer school programs for our kids, by finishing the work of hooking all our classrooms up to the Internet, by modernizing a lot of these old school buildings and helping the school districts that are having kids in house trailers, by supporting better teaching, and by having national academic standards, which I hope our whole party will embrace and help us in this great battle we're in, because I think you should have local control of the school about how to implement national academic standards.

There's an international standard that all of our children need to meet if we want them to make a good living. And we're about the only advanced country in the world that doesn't have that. As a result, we've got the finest system of higher education in the world; no one believes that our system of elementary and secondary education is uniformly the finest in the world. And yet, it can be. And all the diversity we have in our schools is a great asset in a global society, but every one of those kids deserves a chance at the brass ring.

I was in the Alexandria school system the other day, across the river from the Capitol and the White House. There are kids from a hundred different racial and ethnic groups there, nearly a hundred different native languages. Every one of them can make a contribution to America if he or she gets a world-class education. And to pretend that it ought to be a local option whether they get it is, I think, obscuring what is plainly real here.

So we Democrats stand for more flexibility about how to do things, but for national standards of excellence based on international standards of what our children need to know. And

I think the American people are with us on that.

I could talk about a lot of other issues. I'd just like to mention one or two more. The Vice President is coming down here to south Texas in a couple of weeks to our annual empowerment zone conference. Since 1993, we've been trying to figure out ways to get more investment into poor urban neighborhoods and poor rural areas and poor Native American reservations, because there are still a lot of people that haven't participated in this economic recovery.

And I worry a lot about how we're going to keep America's growth going and our unemployment low without any inflation, especially if we have trouble overseas. One way is to make more markets here at home. And there are lots of places right here in Texas where unemployment is still too high, too many hardworking people still don't have the skills they need, and where if we could attract the right investment in the right way we could have dramatic growth. So this is going to be a big challenge. If we can't get around now to giving poor rural areas and urban areas that have been left behind the chances they need, we'll never get around to it.

Let me just mention one or two other things. I am very interested in this whole issue of balancing work and family. And I think there's some things we ought to do. I think we ought to raise the minimum wage again. I think we ought to strengthen the family and medical leave law. I think we ought to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. I think we ought to pass our child care plan to help lower income people with their child care costs. We have to realize that most parents have to work and every parent ought to have the option to do it, but no parent should have to sacrifice the most important job any woman or man has, which is to raise strong, good kids. There are a lot of things out there we have to do. We've got a big job to do in the world. You can see it today with some of the problems we have.

Now, I'd like to close by just asking you to think about three things and giving you examples of what my philosophy is, that I think is our party's philosophy. These are the best of times for Americans, but we're all pretty sobered up right now because of three events of the recent days. One are the terrible tornadoes in Oklahoma and Kansas and, to a lesser extent but still sad, in Texas and Tennessee; two is

the heartbreaking incident in Littleton, Colorado; and third is the continuing conflict in Kosovo. Now, let me tell you what they mean to me.

First, the tornadoes mean that none of us should get too big for our britches. We're not in control. We have to maintain a certain humility when thinking about all the problems of the world. But as our hearts go out to those people—I'm going up to Oklahoma City tomorrow to tour the damage and talk about what we can do to help them put their lives back together—I'm thinking about what we can do to try to prepare better for the next one. I'm thinking about what we can do if we know we're going to grow and expand in areas that have been tornado alleys, what we ought to do to build houses that will do a better job of withstanding them or have quicker escapes to places that will be safer. In other words, I think what we always should be thinking about is: How can we make it better? How can we deal with what is going to come?

In the case of Littleton, on Monday, Hillary and I and Al and Tipper Gore are going to sponsor a big meeting at the White House with people from the entertainment and Internet communities, people from the gun manufacturers, people from the religious communities, people who work in schools on problems of violence, students, a lot of other segments of our society, coming together to talk about how we can start a national campaign to reduce the likelihood of violence against our children.

Now, I think it is important that you know how I look at this. I think the world's worst thing we can do is to use this awful heartbreak to get into a fingerpointing session, because the truth is that not a single soul here knows exactly what triggered those kids. And we all know that in any given time there will be people who are more vulnerable than others to whatever influences to which they're exposed to. But I do think we would all admit, if we sort of take our defenses down, that the society in which our children grow up today, number one, throws things at them faster; number two, gives them even more opportunities to be isolated from their parents and from their peers; number three, exposes them at an earlier age and in greater volume and intensity to more violence and the coarsening of human relationships; and number four, it's way too easy for them get

things like Tech-9 assault pistols. And I think we can all sort of admit that.

And what I'm trying to do is to figure out what we should all do here to launch a genuine grassroots national campaign where I try to pass the laws I should pass; the gun manufacturers come forward and do what they ought to do to try to protect our kids; the entertainment community makes a contribution; the Internet community makes a contribution—they've worked hard, by the way, with the Vice President to try to give parents more screening technologies—and the religious community comes forward; the mental health community comes forward; the schools provide more adequate counseling services and peer mediation for the kids, and what some of our schools are doing now, providing a hotline so kids who know what's going on in the school can call and tell somebody without being subject to abuse.

There are lots of things to be done here. But there's also something to be said here for recognizing the incredible pressures that parents and children are under because life is so fast and so crowded. And it is easy for all of us, if we're not careful, to wind up being strangers in our own homes. And our children need to understand also that no matter how solid and rooted they are, childhood is a fragile and difficult time. Every school will always have its cliques. Every school will always have its groups. But we've got to teach our kids that they can enjoy being in their crowd without looking down on the others; because people who are constantly subject to ridicule and abuse are going to have their lives twisted or distorted in some ways, unless they are really superhuman.

So I'm looking forward to this. And all the cynics who say it can't be done, I would remind you that teen pregnancy is now down 5 years in a row because of a national grassroots movement, not because of any law we passed in Washington. Drunk driving is down because of Mothers and Students Against Drunk Driving. We now have 10,000 companies that have voluntarily joined an alliance that we organized a couple years ago to hire people from welfare to work, and they've hired over 400,000 people without a single law being passed. We can do this. And I believe we can do it, but only if our political, public life brings us together and not drives us apart.

And the last thing I'd like to say is about Kosovo. I know this is a difficult issue. I saw

the people with their signs on the way in, saying we ought to end the fighting. Nobody wants to do it more than me. I think those of you who've known me for 30 years know that the most difficult thing that I ever have to do is use a superior position to put pressure on somebody else, particularly if it involves the use of violence. I'm not that sort of person.

But let me tell you, since the end of communism, we have seen the inevitable rise of national aspirations and ethnic aspirations, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. In one place only, the former Yugoslavia, we have seen that turned into a credo that says it is all right to burn the homes, destroy the records, destroy the churches—the mosques, in this case—and the museums, and the libraries, and the very lives of families; it's all right to rape the daughters; it's all right to shoot the sons; it's all right to do this.

And for 3 years, we worked, through the United Nations and negotiations and everything else, to end the war in Bosnia. And finally, we ended the war in Bosnia when NATO bombed and when the opposition forces started winning some battles on the ground. And we've been able to maintain a peace there.

People don't have to like each other. People may have legitimate grievances. But ethnic cleansing and killing people wholesale because of their race or religion is wrong. And the United States is in a position to stand against it, and we ought to.

I know there are a lot of people who disagree with me. They say, "Well, we don't have any vital national interest." I would argue to you that we do. It's not only a moral, humanitarian issue. We'll be better off if our best allies in the world, in Europe, live in a continent that is whole and democratic and at peace and free of this sort of thing. First of all, they won't be wasting their money tearing each other up. Secondly, they'll be better trading partners. Thirdly, they'll be better partners in helping us solve problems in other parts of the world. And if we can put an end to ethnic cleansing in Europe, then we can put an end to it in Africa, and we can put an end to it wherever else it rears its ugly head.

If we can't solve this problem, it's very difficult to understand how our children are going to live in peace in a world where every radical terrorist group can get on the Internet and figure out how to build a bomb or get weapons

or do anything else they want to do. We have got, at least, to tell people that in the world of the 21st century, it is not okay to kill people just because they're of a different race or ethnicity or religion.

That's why I must say, I want to applaud the senators who are here, who are trying to pass that hate crimes act in the legislature in honor of James Byrd. I think it's very important. It makes a statement.

This is the last thing I'll say about this. I've already talked longer than I meant to, but if you don't remember anything else I say, remember this: It is one thing to say that we all ought to get along together and quite another to do what is necessary for us to do so in decency and honor.

The differences among us are a part of what makes life more interesting and makes this country so successful, as long as they are contained. When the differences among us are used, as they are in Kosovo today, as they were in Bosnia before, as an instrument of human destruction, they can quickly make life unbearable.

Now, we can't force anybody to like anybody else. Maybe not everybody in this place tonight likes everybody else. But we live according to certain rules, and we do it not only because it is morally right but because we do better when other people do well. When we do the right thing or, as Hillary says, when we act like we're in a village, we all are better off.

So I ask you to think about this. The Democratic Party has stood for community and for opportunity and for citizen responsibility. We have refused to accept all these phony choices we were presented with, between economic growth and the environment, between accountability and help in education, and all the other things. These ideas have led America to a better place. That's why I'm here. I'm glad I was President. I hope I was the instrument of a lot of the good things that have happened in this country. But the most important thing is that we continue in this direction, that we stay on this course, that we embrace these ideas. And that is why it is important to support this party.

I'm very grateful to you. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:38 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Roy

and Mary Spence, dinner hosts; Texas State Senators Carlos Truan and Gonzalo Barrientos; Garry Mauro, former Texas land commissioner; Judy Trabulsi, Nancy Williams, and Tom Henderson,

who worked with the President on the 1972 McGovern campaign in Texas; former Gov. Ann Richards of Texas; and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee.

The President's Radio Address

May 8, 1999

Good morning. I want to talk to you today about our efforts to help the people and communities devastated by the terrible tornadoes that hit Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, and Tennessee this week. These tornadoes killed over 50 people, injured hundreds more, and damaged or destroyed thousands of homes and businesses. I know I speak for all Americans when I say to the families who lost so much, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Today I'll be flying to Oklahoma City to get a firsthand view of the destruction. This is a duty I've performed many times in the aftermath of many natural disasters. One thing I've learned is that the images we see on television can never fully convey the level of sheer destruction or the depth of human grief caused by these disasters. Yet, I've also learned that the worst of nature can bring out the best in people.

At times like these, families rally together; neighbors help neighbors; strangers reach out to strangers; while police, doctors, firefighters put in 24-hour days in often hazardous conditions without complaint. Natural disasters create many victims but bring forth many heroes. There are some challenges that no individual, indeed, no community can handle alone. And on these occasions the National Government must act quickly, effectively, compassionately.

When I became President, I vowed that the Federal Government would do a better job of helping communities respond to the ravages of nature, and it has. As part of Vice President Gore's reinventing Government effort, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, under the direction of James Lee Witt, has gone from being much criticized to becoming a model of disaster relief, now recognized all around the world for its speed, skill, and dedication.

Officials from FEMA and other Federal agencies are already on the ground in communities

hit by this week's tornadoes, healing wounds, searching for missing persons, providing shelter, clearing debris, restoring power and water, issuing emergency expense checks. But more must be done.

Today I'm glad to announce the Department of Labor will spend over \$12 million to provide temporary jobs for some 3,500 Oklahomans. Men and women who lost their jobs and businesses destroyed by the tornadoes will be paid to serve at relief centers, to distribute food and water, to help on construction crews. They'll be able to feed their families by rebuilding their communities.

I'm also announcing today that I'll ask Congress for an additional \$372 million for FEMA's disaster relief fund. These resources are crucial for our disaster relief efforts, and I urge Congress to act quickly on my request.

Finally, in the balanced budget that I sent to Congress there is \$10 million to further improve the National Weather Service's next generation Doppler radar network. This system makes it possible to issue warnings in advance of coming tornadoes so that local residents can seek shelter. Over the last decade, average warning times have doubled from 6 minutes to 12 minutes. Residents of hard-hit Cleveland County, Oklahoma, received warnings a full 35 minutes before the tornado touched down there this week, and that warning saved lives. That's also why I support the creation of a national weather center for state-of-the-art tornado and severe storm forecasting at the University of Oklahoma.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to provide individuals with the tools they need to improve their own lives. That's what we're doing in Oklahoma this week. Natural disasters test our faith, but they also show us that the old-fashioned American values of neighborly care and concern are still very much alive. And

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they remind us of the enduring power of the American people to emerge from calamities even stronger.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:03 p.m. on May 7 in La Colombe d'Or restaurant in Houston, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 8. The transcript was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Following a Walking Tour of Tornado Damage in Del City, Oklahoma

May 8, 1999

Thank you very much. Governor Keating and Mrs. Keating; Congressmen Istook and Lucas; I don't know if Senator Nickles and—there he is, over there. Thank you very much.

We have, obviously, James Lee Witt, our FEMA Director, here with me, and Buddy Young, his Regional Director, and many others here: our SBA Administrator, Aida Alvarez; the Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Saul Ramirez; Mayor Lewis; Mayor Nelson; Mayor Reed; and a lot of other Oklahoma State officials who are here.

Let me say to all of you, I was talking last night to my wife, and we were remembering all the tornadoes that we dealt with when I was Governor of Arkansas. You may know that our two States have the highest incidence of tornadoes in the entire country. I have been going to these sites for 20 years, most of them with James Lee Witt, and this is the most devastating tornado I have ever seen. I have never seen so much complete destruction of homes over so wide an area. And of course, you know that at least for a couple of communities, the measurement of the tornado was virtually off the charts.

And I just want you to know—and I came into this neighborhood today, and I saw all these American flags sticking up, all the people rooting around in the rubble of their houses, looking for those family photos and the marriage licenses and the other records of family life, but with a strong spirit. It was profoundly moving to me.

And I want to say that our hearts go out to those who have lost so much and, obviously, especially to the families of those people who lost their lives. But we also thank you for setting an example of what is very best in this country, the way you have reacted to this.

I want to say a special word of thanks to the police and fire personnel, the National Guard, the Red Cross, all the people who volunteer, the young AmeriCorps volunteers over there, everybody who's been a part of this. I am very grateful. And I'd like to thank the citizens of Oklahoma. When the Governor said there had not been a single incident of looting, even though there had been no curfew, I think that says it all. And again, let me say to all of you, I am profoundly grateful.

There are a couple of things that I'd like to say that we're trying to do in addition to what you know already. FEMA has got a 1-800 number. We're trying to get in touch with all the businesses, as well as the homeowners and the people who have lost their cars and other things. But we also are today going to make available about \$12 million from the Department of Labor, which will provide 3,500 temporary jobs that will be directed to people who lost their jobs because their businesses were taken out by the tornado.

And these jobs—though obviously they pay better, a lot better than unemployment compensation—so we can put several thousand people to work in the reconstruction process, everything from delivering water and food supplies to doing cleanup to actually helping on some of the construction crews. We'll be able to do that. We talked with your congressional delegation today, and we're going to look and see if we can do more.

But there will be several people here who will be out of their own jobs for months while the rebuilding occurs. And we're going to go back to Washington, try to figure out exactly how many people are going to be out of work, for how long, and try to make sure we can provide funding for work that actually needs

to be done. We don't have to make up these jobs. You can look around. There's a lot of work that needs to be done here. So we'll try to do that.

The second thing that I wanted to mention, that the Governor has talked a lot about, is that I want to thank everybody who was involved in the weather warning because hundreds of lives were saved by that: the people at the weather service; the people here in Oklahoma who worked on this; the law enforcement people that went up and down the streets and blared their sirens and were on loudspeakers; the television stations that showed the pictures and the patterns and predictions. Over and over and over, people say how grateful they are for that.

We are working—and one of the things that is in the balanced budget this year that I very much hope will pass is several million dollars more to develop the next system of Doppler radar, which the Governor reminded me was developed here at the University of Oklahoma. And I think it's very important that we continue to improve that.

I also very strongly support establishing a national weather center with the help of Federal funds at the University of Oklahoma, to see what we can do not only to provide even better warning but perhaps to dilute the strength of some of these very powerful tornadoes before they hit, and we'll be working on that.

The last point I would like to make is something I'd like everyone who lost a home to think about. We believe—no, I take that back—we know that lives can be saved under almost all conditions if there is at least one room properly encased and protected with concrete in a house. Now, in the loans which will be given for rebuilding the homes, 20 percent of the loan money can be used for protective purposes, for preventive purposes. Isn't that right? Yes—to make safe rooms. The average cost of one of these safe closets, if you do it with a closet, is only about \$2,000. The Governor will have discretionary funds available from the Federal Government that will actually permit him to

contribute some of that money to families whose incomes are so modest they can't afford it on their own.

So if you don't remember anything else I say today, remember this: For goodness sake, build a safe room in your house when you rebuild. Go in and do the—any kind of alterations you have to do. It will be the cheapest \$2,000 you ever spent. If you don't have the money, get in touch with the right people at the State. We'll try to get them enough money to provide some help. But we will be able to save nearly everybody if we can do this. And in this rebuilding, once again, Oklahoma can show the way for America, if the word gets out that everybody here is determined to have one of these safe, reinforced closets in their homes.

We can't promise you that there will never be another tornado. We can promise you we'll do our best to continue to improve the warning. We'll see if the frontiers of science can widen to the point where we can dilute the strength of the storm. We'll put Oklahoma at the center of that.

But you can do something to help and to set an example for people throughout the United States in the areas that are vulnerable to tornadoes, by rebuilding with these safe and reinforced rooms.

Again, I'm sorry. Our hearts are with you. We'll be with you throughout the rebuilding. But thank you—thank you for once again showing the whole country what is best about America.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. in the Del Aire neighborhood at the corner of 42d Street and Angela Drive. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Frank Keating, and his wife, Cathy; Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VI Director Raymond Lloyd (Buddy) Young; Mayor Glenn Lewis of Moore, OK; Mayor Harry L. Nelson of Del City, OK; and Mayor Eddie O. Reed of Midwest City, OK.

Remarks on Departure From Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, and an Exchange With Reporters

May 8, 1999

Bombing of Chinese Embassy in Belgrade

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, as all of you know, last night the NATO airstrikes included a number of command and control targets in Belgrade, targets that involved Mr. Milosevic's ability to do what he has done in Kosovo to run the people out and repress them. Unfortunately, the Chinese Embassy was inadvertently damaged, and people lost their lives, and others have been injured.

It was a tragic mistake, and I want to offer my sincere regret and my condolences to both the leaders and the people of China.

Having said that, let me also remind you that it is clear that we're doing everything we can to avoid innocent civilian casualties. Because the television and other media are in Belgrade, you know every one that's occurred, but I would remind you that well over 10,000 sorties have now been flown, with massive ordinance having been dropped. And that is evidence that we're working very hard to avoid this.

It doesn't remove the sadness from the people in China and from the other innocent civilians that have been hurt, but we are doing our best. And I think it's important to remember why these airstrikes are necessary. Many thousands of Kosovars have been killed. There have been rapes; they have been burned out of their homes; their records have been destroyed; and hundreds of thousands have been turned into refugees.

This can all end tomorrow with an agreement that meets the minimum conditions to restore Kosovo to civilized life; that is, the Serb forces have to leave; a multinational security force with NATO involvement has to come in; the Kosovars have to be able to go home with security and autonomy.

And we're working hard to achieve that goal. We made some progress last week, diplomatically. And meanwhile, I think it's important that NATO stay the course.

Q. There are protests around the world. Russia is calling this barbaric. Could this derail the diplomatic efforts you're making toward a peace deal?

The President. Well, it wasn't barbaric. What is barbaric is what Mr. Milosevic has done. It's tragic. It's awful. But it's a tragedy, and it was an accident. What is barbaric is the intentional ethnic cleansing that he has provoked for a decade now, first in Bosnia where a quarter of a million people lost their lives and 2½ million people were made refugees, and now here. That is what is barbaric.

And I believe that Russia recognizes that, which is why they've shown so much leadership on the diplomatic front. And I would encourage them to stay on that course. If they want the bombing to end, then the Kosovars need to come home. We need to reverse the ethnic cleansing. We need to know they'll be secure.

And that's what I would urge everyone to think about here. You know, I'd like to see a few more demonstrations against the helplessness—I mean, the treatment against the helpless Kosovars.

I don't blame people for being upset about it; I'm upset about it. But it is clearly—if you remember that over 10,000 sorties have been flown here, it is obvious that the NATO—the generals and the pilots have worked very hard to avoid this.

I know when I was in Germany, I talked to pilots that literally had risked their own lives to avoid innocent civilian casualties when weapons being fired against them were being fired from heavily populated civilian areas—on roofs and things like that—and they didn't fire back. They risked their own lives to avoid this sort of thing.

So this will happen if you drop this much ordinance over this period of time. I think the campaign is necessary. And what we need to do to end it is to meet the conditions necessary for the Kosovars to go home with safety and autonomy.

Q. Is this a setback for peace?

The President. No. What I hope it will do—I'm convinced that NATO should continue its mission. And what I think it should do is to make everybody who's interested in peace redouble their efforts to get Mr. Milosevic to reverse ethnic cleansing here. We need some sense of proportion here. Look at the numbers of people involved: thousands of people killed—

of Kosovars; hundreds of thousands driven out of their homes, their homes burned, their records burned—coming on top of what happened in Bosnia. Let's not forget what the record is here.

And I hate this. And as I said, I send my regrets and my profound condolences to the leaders and the people of China, and to the innocent people in Serbia who have perished. I hate it. But someone sometime has got to stand up against this sort of ethnic cleansing and killing people wholesale and uprooting them and trashing them and destroying their lives by the hundreds of thousands solely because of

their religion and ethnicity. Otherwise, there will be far greater tragedies.

You know, these things are not easy. But someone had to do it sometime. And the answer is for everyone who wants an end to it to put some pressure on the Serbs and get this diplomatic thing even more energized. And let's keep working and put it behind us. No one would be happier than me when it's over. But what we're doing is the right thing to do.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks at the White House Strategy Meeting on Children, Violence, and Responsibility May 10, 1999

Bombing of Chinese Embassy in Belgrade

Before I make my opening remarks, I would like to begin by saying a word about the tragic bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. I have already expressed our apology and our condolences to President Jiang and to the Chinese people. And I have reaffirmed my commitment to strengthen our relationship with China.

But I think it's very important to remember that this was an isolated, tragic event, while the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo, which has led to the killing of thousands of people and the relocation of hundreds of thousands, is a deliberate and systematic crime. Until NATO's simple conditions are met, therefore, the military campaign will continue.

But again I want to say to the Chinese people and to the leaders of China, I apologize; I regret this. But I think it is very important to draw a clear distinction between a tragic mistake and a deliberate act of ethnic cleansing. And the United States will continue to make that distinction.

White House Strategy Meeting

Now, let me say as I look around this room today, I want to say on behalf of the Vice President and Mrs. Gore and Hillary and myself, first, we appreciate all of you coming. This is a very diverse and distinguished group of Ameri-

cans. We have leaders of Congress from both parties here; leaders of the faith community; we have activists among parents and students and educators, and people in music and people in the entertainment communities; people who represent the gun manufacturers of our country. This is a truly impressive and diverse array of Americans.

Obviously, we have asked you to come here to see what we can do together to give our children safer childhoods. The four of us, both individually and together, have worked on many of the matters that will be discussed here today for years. We have made particular efforts to give our children safe streets and safe schools.

But I think that we, and the members of the Cabinet and the administration who are here, like all Americans, were profoundly affected by the events in Littleton, Colorado, coming as they did after so many tragic incidents in our schools last year. And we were determined to see what we could do to bring the American people together, to get beyond the divisions that often attend many of the subjects here, which is not to say that we shouldn't have a serious discussion today, and to try to move forward on something really big that can make a difference.

Now, last Friday I announced, therefore, that we would launch a national campaign to prevent

youth violence, a grassroots effort that would involve all Americans, from every community and all walks of life. I expect the ideas and recommendations generated here today in our discussion to lay the groundwork, the common groundwork for that campaign. We are not here to place blame but to shoulder responsibility.

In the weeks to come, I will work with Congress to pass legislation that makes our schools and streets safer and keeps guns out of the wrong hands, because that's part of our responsibility. And again I want to say how very much I appreciate the representatives of the gun manufacturers for being here today and supporting some of the specific legislative proposals that have already been publicized.

Today I'm also directing the Surgeon General to prepare the first report in more than a decade on youth violence and its causes. This report will infuse our efforts with new understanding and new urgency.

Let me just briefly say that, with representatives of the manufacturers of guns today, I want to say to the press and to the public that we have found common grounds on some common sense measures: banning violent juveniles from buying guns, raising the age for handgun ownership from 18 to 21, closing the gun show loophole, holding reckless parents responsible for giving children access to guns, reducing illegal gun trafficking by helping law enforcement trace weapons used in crimes. Again, I commend the gun manufacturers here today for taking that kind of responsibility. Others have agreed to do their part.

A few years ago, through the Vice President's leadership, we were able to put in place a voluntary rating system for television. Les Moonves, the head of CBS, and Bob Iger, the head of ABC, have led the way by putting their networks behind this effort. They are here today, and they went to some considerable trouble to change their schedules to do so, and I appreciate their presence.

This year, half the new TV sets sold in America will contain the V-chip, which parents can

use to protect their children from violent programming. Today the FCC is announcing a V-Chip Task Force to make sure that next year every new set contains the V-chip. And the Kaiser Family Foundation is announcing a massive new public education campaign to make sure parents know about it and know how to use it. Also, following this meeting, Kaiser and the Ad Council, also represented here, will produce a campaign of antiviolent ads called "Talking With Kids About Tough Issues."

Last week the Vice President also announced a voluntary agreement by 95 percent of the Internet service providers to offer parents a new tool to assure that they are only one click away from the resources they need to protect their children. And I thank the representatives of the Internet for being here today.

Let me also say that we know that profoundly important efforts are being made in our schools and our communities in efforts to involve parents in increasing their capacity to prevent their children from drifting into violence, to engage the early warning signs, to get the necessary counseling and mental health services. I know that Mrs. Gore and Hillary have both been heavily involved in a lot of these issues for a long time.

And I want to say a special word of appreciation to the parents who are here, to the teachers who are here, and to the students who are here, because I believe that they may have more to say to us about what the rest of us should do than we can imagine.

So to all of you, thank you for coming. Let's leave here today resolved to be, all of us, a part of this national campaign, and I want us to have a good conversation about where we go from here.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jiang Zemin of China.

Remarks Following the White House Strategy Meeting on Children,
Violence, and Responsibility and an Exchange With Reporters
May 10, 1999

The President. Please be seated, everyone. We're getting our group up here, you see. It's a little slow—it's a large and, as you can see, diverse and distinguished group. We just had a wonderful meeting in the East Room of the White House. We had not only the Vice President and Tipper and Hillary and I, but many members of our administration and four Members of Congress: Senator Brownback and Senator Reid and Leader Gephardt and Representative Jennifer Dunn were there.

And we listened to several hours of discussions; over 40 people spoke, many of them already heavily involved in the efforts to give our children a safe childhood and protect them from violence.

This was exactly the kind of session I had hoped for, where everyone was talking about the problems and the opportunities; everyone was talking about what could be done to accept responsibility. No one was pointing the finger of blame.

In the weeks and months ahead, as we launch our national campaign to prevent youth violence, we will build on the strong foundation of this day and on many of the things which have been said and many of the people who have said them.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to the young people who are here today and who are working in their own communities to try to help their fellow students have a safe and wholesome life.

As the national campaign gets underway, we know we'll have to overcome the old ways of doing business. We've seen some of that today as well, in the remarkable support that gun manufacturers have given to many of our common-sense gun proposals. We see in the efforts of networks like ABC and CBS, and private family foundations like Kaiser, and agencies like the FCC, all of whom have supported the television rating systems, and giving parents the tool of the V-chip to protect children from excessively violent programming.

We know that there is more for each of us to do at home and at school, in Hollywood and in the heartland and here in Washington. Every

parent, every teacher, every leader has something more to do.

First and most fundamentally, we must do more to help parents fulfill their most important responsibilities, those to their children. Challenging parents to turn off the television when they don't like what they see, to use the new tools the Vice President announced recently to keep an eye on the computer screen, to refuse to buy products that glorify violence. If no one consumes these products, people will stop producing them. They will not build it if you don't come.

To the media and entertainment industries, I also say we need your wholehearted participation in this cause. There are many changes which have occurred over the last generation in our society. It is true that we've had a lot of breakdowns in families, schools, and communities. It is true that we have had a rise in the availability of weapons. It is also true that there has been a coarsening of the culture in many ways. And those who influence it must be sensitive to that.

I mentioned today that not very long ago there was a fascinating story on the birth of Hollywood, the virtual creation of Hollywood by immigrants, on one of our cable channels. And the story really graphically demonstrated how these immigrants, who came to the United States, faced initial discrimination, went to California to make a new life—created an image of America, and an image of the American dream and an image of American life in the movies that they made that had a very positive impact on the culture of America for decades.

We cannot pretend that there is no impact on our culture and our children that is adverse if there is too much violence coming out of what they see and experience. And so, we have to ask people who produce things to consider the consequences of them—whether it's a violent movie, a CD, a video game. If they are made, then at least they should not be marketed to children.

Finally, I urge Congress to join in this campaign by passing the legislation necessary to keep guns out of the hands of children. As a

group of gun manufacturers and sportsmen made clear today, these are commonsense measures that they support.

There are also other things that we can do, that I hope we will do to provide more support for counseling services, for mental health services, for other things which will help to improve our efforts.

Again, let me say, I want to thank the Vice President and Tipper Gore for the work they have done on these issues for years. I want them to come forward and speak. But first, I want to ask the First Lady to speak and acknowledge that she has to go to a school as soon as she finishes talking here.

She had the idea for us to call this national conference and to try to organize a national grassroots campaign. It was a good idea, and it looks like a lot better idea after today's meeting. So I want to thank Hillary for everything she's done and ask her to come forward and say a few words.

[At this point, Hillary Clinton, Tipper Gore, and Vice President Al Gore made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Situation in the Balkans

Q. [Inaudible]—forces? Is that good enough?

Q. Mr. President, are you encouraged by word of a Serb withdrawal?

The President. Well, I'm encouraged by any good word, but I think that the conditions that we set out are the minimal ones to make this work. I don't think that the—after all the Serbs—after all the buildup and the hundreds of thousands of Kosovars have been driven out, many, many killed, I don't think they'll come back with that. So I think we have to do better.

But any little daylight, any little progress is—it's better than it was the day before. We just have to bear down and keep working, and we'll work through it.

But I think that forces have got to be withdrawn. There has to be an international security force there. Otherwise, they won't come home. And that's the important thing.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:06 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Hillary Clinton, Tipper Gore, and Vice President Al Gore.

Message to the Congress on Certification of Satellite Fuels and Separation Systems Exports to China

May 10, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1512 of Public Law 105–261, the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999, I hereby certify that the export to the People's Republic of China of satellite fuels and separation systems for the U.S.-origin Iridium commercial communications satellite program:

- (1) is not detrimental to the United States space launch industry; and

- (2) the material and equipment, including any indirect technical benefit that could be derived from such export, will not measurably improve the missile or space launch capabilities of the People's Republic of China.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 10, 1999.

Remarks on the New Markets Initiative May 11, 1999

Thank you very much. I'd like to begin by thanking all the business leaders who have come here to be with us today, the members of the administration who are here, and especially the Vice President for the work that he has done to spearhead our community empowerment effort over the last 6 years and a few months.

I'd like to just say just a word or two by way of introduction to try to highlight why I asked these business leaders here today. You heard the Vice President talk about what we have tried to do since we came here, since we passed the first economic plan to give genuine economic opportunity to all of our citizens: the empowerment zones, the community development banks, the kinds of incentives we were trying to give to create jobs and opportunity for people who hadn't had them.

And we are very grateful for the record declines in unemployment among African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans and for the fact that the unemployment rate has dropped dramatically, not only overall but in many of our toughest, toughest neighborhoods throughout the country.

On the other hand, even though we have the lowest peacetime unemployment rate since 1957, there are still 37 cities—37—where unemployment is double the national average. There are lots of smaller communities where children still have to go past abandoned storefronts to get to a grocery store to buy a carton of milk. There are rural areas and very small towns which have had almost no new investment in the last 6 years. And of course, in many, many of our Native American areas and communities there is still a great deal of economic distress and uncertainty.

So what this whole effort has been about from the beginning for me, and especially what we are working on now, is the idea that we should go into the 21st century leaving no one behind. We should genuinely create opportunity for every responsible citizen. And we are being given a chance to do it.

I told the folks we met with today, it's very—I've spent a lot of time over the last 6 or 7 years studying how the American economy works as compared with other advanced econo-

mies in the world. And on balance, we've done a better job of creating jobs, while others have worked harder to maintain a sense of community and a greater degree of equality among working people. The price they have paid is that they have higher unemployment rates than we do.

We have been given an opportunity now, because we've got the strongest economy in at least a generation, to prove that we can bring the benefits of free enterprise to every neighborhood in America. We can prove that you can have low unemployment and increasing opportunity. The Vice President pointed out today that the wealth that minority families, for example, and families that live in poor rural areas have is still dramatically less than the wealth that average Americans have. They don't ever have a chance to accumulate anything.

This initiative that we are taking, we believe can change all that. We believe it builds on what we've done with the empowerment zones, with the enterprise communities, with the community development banks. We do want the Congress to give us another round of empowerment zones, and we want more.

In July I am going to visit communities for 2 or 3 days in our most stubborn pockets of poverty. I'm going places not just to remind America of the plight of the Americans who live there but to highlight their enormous economic potential and the visionary businesses who are helping to develop it.

Let me say again, the people who are here behind me, I was astonished when we listened in the meeting this morning about some of the things that they're already doing to bring opportunity to people in the areas they serve. But we have to do more.

You know, for years our Government has worked to give Americans incentives to invest in emerging markets around the world. But we now know, as we look forward to how we can continue to create jobs and have economic growth without inflation, that our greatest untapped markets are here at home—at least \$85 billion in untapped markets.

So how are we going to do this? First, the business leaders of our country have to help

us. We have to mobilize the private sector to bring new jobs and opportunities. We know that, since the Government, the Federal Government is the smallest it has been since 1962, what we can do is to do what we have been doing. We can find a new way to create the conditions and give the private sector the tools to bring investment to these areas to put people to work.

Now, how can we do that? More empowerment zones, more community development banks, but also our new markets initiative. Many of the people here with me today said, "What we need, if we want more investments in the inner cities, more investments in the medium-sized cities and small towns, more investments in rural areas, you've got to have more equity investment." So in the State of the Union, I proposed this new markets initiative to leverage billions of dollars in that kind of investment by providing tax credits of up to 25 percent of the equity placed in untapped markets.

I also proposed to create American private investment companies and new market venture capital firms to bring more equity capital to investors who develop or expand in these areas with loan guarantees that would cover up to two-thirds of the investment. If you have 25 percent tax credit for what's at risk and a loan guarantee of two-thirds of the rest and a plain

market there and we can actually get this out in simple terms that people can understand, I think we have a chance to spark an enormous amount of economic development in America before this administration's work is done.

We should not be thinking of our success without an equal determination to give every one of our fellow citizens a chance to be a part of it as we go into a new century. We don't have to leave anyone behind. And if we can't do this now, when in the wide world will we ever get around to it?

So, July we'll make the tour. In a few days we'll go down to south Texas, to the Vice President's annual empowerment conference. And we will continue to work with the business leaders that are here to do things that make sense. But the bottom line is we need the Congress to work with us in a bipartisan way. Of all the things in the world, this should not be a partisan political issue. We want to provide the economic incentives necessary to create jobs, keep growth going in America, keep inflation low, and go into that new century with everyone—everyone—walking hand-in-hand together.

Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on New Markets in Atlanta, Georgia May 11, 1999

The President. Thank you. Well, first, Mayor Campbell, Mayor Jackson, Mayor Young, my friends, it's wonderful to be back in Atlanta. I will be very brief because I want to spend most of my time listening to our panelists, but I'd like to try to put what the mayor has said into the perspective of what we're trying to do with our administration. And I have with me our Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo; our Small Business Administrator Aida Alvarez; my Deputy Chief of Staff Maria Echaveste. We had other members of the Cabinet with us earlier today, along with my National Economic Adviser, Gene Sperling, who helped to put this whole event today together.

But let me try to tell you why I'm here. When I became President in 1993 I had traveled around America and I had seen with my own eyes for many years, as a Governor and then as a candidate for President, people able to start businesses in places that had high unemployment or low income or other economic problems, if they just had access to capital and they had the right technical support, marketing support, loan guarantees, or whatever.

So when we started our administration we put into our first economic plan this whole idea of empowerment zones which would give tax credits, loan guarantees, technical assistance, and direct investment, and community development financial institutions which would make direct

loans to people who otherwise might not have access to them.

We've also been greatly aided in this national endeavor by some of our own financial institutions, and I think the leading one plainly has been NationsBank in terms of what you have done to try to loan money to people who couldn't get it otherwise.

Now, after 6 years, watching these empowerment zones work, we can see examples like this. But what I want to say to you now is, I think it's important that we try to take this example to the whole Nation. Our economy now is in the best shape it's been in at least a generation; some people think it's the best economy America has ever had. We have the lowest recorded rates of unemployment since we've been keeping separate statistics for African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans. We have record numbers of new small businesses starting in each of the last 6 years. We've got the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957.

Now, that's all good, but we also know that we have neighborhoods in big cities, we have small- and medium-sized cities, we have rural areas and Native American reservations where there has been almost no new investment, almost no new businesses, almost no new jobs. So I am trying to highlight, first of all, for the American people, you and people like you all over the country, so people will know this can be done.

Secondly, I'm trying to build support for an initiative I have before the Congress now, which is called the new markets initiative, designed to give tax credits to people who put equity money, investment money, into low per capita income areas, high unemployment areas in our country, and to provide loan guarantees, up to two-thirds of the total investment for people who will do that, and to increase our community development loaning all over the country, not just in the empowerment zones, because I believe we ought not to leave anybody behind when we go into the 21st century. I think that every American who is willing to work ought to have a chance to do it.

And so, that's why I'm here. I want people to see you and believe it can be done in their neighborhoods, in their communities, rural or urban. I want to listen to you, and I want to try to build support.

The last point I want to make is, in July I am going to take 2 or 3 days and go to

places in America that need this help and try to highlight for the American people, in the midst of all our prosperity, both the obligation and the opportunity we have to do better. And I'm going to ask the American business leaders to help me. And a lot of these folks came with me today from all over the country. I just want to mention who is here. They're all the leaders of their various organizations.

Duane Ackerman from Bell South and Dan Amos from AFLAC, both of Georgia; Don Carty of American Airlines; Emma Chappell of the United Bank of Philadelphia; Jon Corzine of Goldman Sachs; Ted Gifford of Bank of Boston; Martin Grass of Rite Aid; Dan Hesse, AT&T Wireless; Richard Huber, Aetna; Debra Lee of BET; Leo Mullin of Delta Airlines, another home base here; Frank Newman of Bankers Trust; Maceo Sloan of Sloan Financial Group; Sy Sternberg of New York Life; and Sandy Weill, head of Citigroup. I'd like to ask all them to stand. They are giving a day of their lives to try to help replicate this elsewhere, and we thank them. *[Applause]*

Now, that's enough of our talk. We want to hear from you. Who would like to go first? I also want to say, I've got some of this good coffee from the Cameroon, and I gave myself a refill on the way out here; I hope you'll forgive me. And I had a little of that sweet potato cheesecake, and I have lifted things from almost every entrepreneur here. This is a beautiful market, and I want to thank all of those who had anything to do with it. This is something the entire city can be proud of, and especially because of its roots to the rich history of 20th century Atlanta. So I'm very pleased.

But I would like to hear from all of you now. Who would like to go first and talk about what your experience was, how you got your business started, or what progress has been made here? Would you like to start?

[Jason Slaughter, president and chief executive officer, S&W International Food Specialties, thanked the President and stated that if people were given opportunities, they would do well. He explained how his business had been helped by the empowerment zones, the welfare to work program, and the Small Business Administration, saying it had grown from a \$150,000 company with 12 employees to a \$13 million company with over 60 employees in 3½ years.]

The President. Give him another hand. That was great. [Applause] You were great. Jason, you might be interested to know that earlier today when we were meeting in the White House, a lot of these business leaders—and many of them have thousands and thousands of employees—but they repeatedly said to us, “Look, what we’ve got to do is to get capital out there to folks. They need that more than anything else. If they can get that first investment money—because you can’t borrow it all unless you’re able to put something up—that will make a big difference.”

And you’re living proof of it. The way I figure it, if you can keep growing at this rate, by the time I’m ready to draw Social Security you will be a billionaire, and you can hire me to sort of work in my off hours. [Laughter] I accept right now in advance. I’ll be here. You get ready. That’s great.

Would you like to talk a little bit about the role of your bank here and what you’re trying to do?

[NationsBank representative Sally Adams Daniels stated that the bank had opened its community development operation in 1993 and had redeveloped over 4,200 units of affordable housing in Atlanta through partnerships with local community development corporations.]

The President. Let me say, many years ago, before I ever became President, my wife and I had a long talk one night with Hugh McColl about investment in low income areas in America. And we told him—we talked about the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, which basically was the pioneering bank in the Third World, starting very poor people out in businesses and actually making good money doing that.

And both Hillary and I at various times in the last, probably 10 years, have had other conversations with him about it and then with others involved with NationsBank. But I was particularly pleased that not long after you announced your merger plans, that the bank’s 10-year plan for reinvestment in communities, including direct loans to provide initial capital to people who otherwise wouldn’t have it, was announced.

And I want to tell you I very much appreciate that. I think it will make a huge difference. These people prove that they need a hand up, and they do right well if they get it.

Vivian, would you like to talk about your experience?

[Vivian Reid, owner of the Kaffee Shop, described how she and family members had started the business, which thrived, in part, because new market initiatives had provided others in the area with the means to support each other.]

The President. Thank you. Let me say, I think you hit on an important point, because I can just say, I was really looking forward to coming down here because I’ve always loved Atlanta and I love the history of the place. But when I got here, I saw a lot of things I didn’t know were here, so I think you do need a marketing plan that tells people what it’s like now and where you’re going with it.

You know, you had so many different kinds of just food establishments, just different kinds. And the other thing that impressed me—you talked about the family businesses—the other thing that impressed me was the diversity of people working here. You have a lot of Asian-American families here. You have—there is a lady back there who is in a food store who told me she is from Ghana, and she said “Akwaaba”—when I saw the Ghana word for welcome, which I first heard about a half a million people in Accra—and I think this is something that ought to be highlighted, that there are people here from all over the world, so that you get the best of Atlanta’s past and a picture of Atlanta’s future here. And I think there is a way for you to market it that would even increase the rate of growth that the merchants are enjoying.

That’s what I’m going to do when I get out of the White House, go around and give people advice like this.

Go ahead. Ken.

[Kenneth Bleakley, executive director, North Yards Business Park, stated that his organization wanted to try to create more jobs in the inner city as one of the legacies of the Olympic Games. He described how they had been successful with the help of the empowerment zone program and environmental funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.]

The President. Give him a hand. That was great. [Applause] I would like to emphasize just one of the points that Ken made. And that is the funds the Federal Government put into environmental cleanup. Most people don’t ever

think about this as an economic development issue. But one of the things that has retarded the comeback of many areas in our cities are so-called brownfields, areas that have been subject to some measure of environmental pollution and areas, therefore, that can't get new investment and new support and can't even very often get permits to do what people want to do unless the cleanup is done.

But if the people who want to put the plan in or the business in have to bear the cleanup costs, then the financing doesn't work out. There's no reasonable way they can make the economics of their business work in the early years. So this is something the Vice President pointed out to me fairly early on in our work together, because he was heading this empowerment task force that we had. And we've spent a lot of time and effort trying to give communities funds to clean up the brownfields, because—and it's just breathtaking what we've found happens, the way it sort of cascades on itself—the money. And I appreciate what you're doing.

Mr. Bleakley. Thank you.

The President. And congratulations to you, too. That's great.

Now, this is my cheesecake lady who destroyed my diet today, and I loved every bite of it. Do you want to tell us a little about your experience here and how you got started and what you're doing?

[Sonya Jones, owner of the Sweet Auburn Bread Co., stated that the empowerment zone agencies were very aggressive in helping clients get projects off the ground. She described her problems getting qualified employees, citing the need to offer benefits to attract them.]

The President. Let me ask you this: Are the principal needs you have, to attract and keep good employees, child care and health care?

Ms. Jones. Definitely.

The President. Those are the principal ones?

Ms. Jones. Yes.

The President. One more than the other?

Ms. Jones. They're right together, actually, I would say.

The President. I do believe this year, at the end of the year when Congress has to pass the budget, I still think we have quite a good chance to pass our health care initiative—I mean our child care initiative, which would provide more tax credits and more direct subsidies for people

with modest incomes to afford quality child care. And one of the things—there must be a child care center very close to this market with all these people down here. If there's not, that's something that ought to be looked at. But when you get a certain number of employees in the market and then people near here, you may be able to quite economically establish something for the neighborhood if there's not.

But if we pass this program, people like the people who would get a job working for you will have access to a lot more financial help to pay for that child care.

On the health care side, I really believe the only places that I know that have been really, really successful at this are people that have offered pool coverage to small businesses so, in effect, both the employers and the employees can buy health care at the same cost, more or less, per person that some of these large employers can. I don't think there is presently available another alternative to that, and so I think it's—except for when some States allow people who make relatively low incomes to buy into the Medicare/Medicaid program for—you know, they pay something but not the full range.

Those are the only two options that I'm aware of. But if there's not such a pooled arrangement here in this area, that's the next thing you ought to try to get the empowerment zone to organize. They can't do it until they have a certain number of employees, because it doesn't work economically. But once you cross a certain threshold with a certain profile for the employees, and a lot of them are young restaurant workers and healthy—you know, for example, you can do this and make the economics work. So that's something I think the empowerment zone can do.

Mr. Aderhold, do you want to say something there?

[Mr. John E. Aderhold, chairman, Aderhold Properties, Inc., pointed out that the community did have a day care center, but that it operated on a small scale and needed to be expanded.]

The President. You know, it's very interesting. One of the things that—I saw a study of Georgia about—oh, this was 6–8 months ago, we were looking at the impact of the welfare reform law. And at the time, one of the big problems was that Georgia was growing jobs like crazy, but most of them were growing in the suburbs. And

most of the people who were losing their welfare benefits lived in the cities, and there wasn't an adequate transportation link.

Here's something that's been done here that has the potential to grow where are all of you are working folks in the urban areas. And there may be some way that the State's welfare reform program—and I think the person who ran it at least for Governor Miller is here—I don't know if the commissioner is here or not, but he was out at the airport. But there may be some way that they can use some of the money that they still have from welfare reform to subsidize child care centers in the city of Atlanta around here.

Because when we—when I signed the welfare reform bill, one of the things we did was we gave every State the amount of money they were receiving in February of 1994, when welfare caseloads were at an all-time high. Now, they have dropped more than at any period in history. They're almost 50 percent lower than they were in February of '94. The State still has that dollar amount. So they've got the same amount of money they had then, minus inflation, which hasn't been very much. So it may be that you could go there and try to get them to help the empowerment zone locate child care here for you.

Mr. Aderhold?

[Mr. Aderhold described how the Fulton Cotton Mill project had progressed, renovating 12 acres of dilapidated territory and converting it into an area which was helping to draw people back into the city.]

The President. Well, thank you for taking a chance on it. And I think that, if someone like you is willing to take a chance of that magnitude, at least the modest amounts of money that the Government put up is the least we can do to share the early risk.

[Mr. Aderhold then added that the way the city cooperated in dispensing the funds was key to the project's success, and he thanked Mayor Bill Campbell of Atlanta for his assistance.]

The President. Thank you. [Applause] Yes, give them a hand. That's great.

I didn't mention this earlier, but we are having, 2 weeks from today—maybe, and maybe it starts 2 weeks from yesterday; but either 2 weeks from yesterday or today, we're having our annual empowerment zone and enterprise com-

munity national convention that the Vice President hosts, and we're doing it in south Texas this year, in a small town, rural empowerment zone area we had down there. I think it's in McAllen. And it's a great place to go if you've never been there.

And we're going to all gather down there, and, Mayor, if either you're going, or whoever is going from Atlanta representing you—I'm sure you'll be represented there—I think the point that John just made is one that ought to be made there. Because we have now had enough experience with these empowerment zones that we can see differences in the rate of effectiveness. And I think this is a point that ought to be hammered home.

So if either you go, or if you will instruct whoever is going on behalf of Atlanta to make that point, I'd appreciate it.

Tricia?

Tricia Donegan. Hi, welcome. Thanks for coming to Atlanta. You're the first guy to get me off a day of work so—[laughter]—since we've opened.

The President. Glad to do it.

[Tricia Donegan, owner of the Eureka Restaurant, described how she had started her restaurant business in 1995, with assistance from Federal funds to help get it off the ground, and how it was expanding into other empowerment zones in the city.]

The President. Thank you, that was great. I said this morning when I was meeting with all the CEO's, I don't think any of us ever conceived this as a charitable operation. We thought that if we could build a community where everybody had a chance to make a living, that it would help all the rest of us, that we would all be stronger if people who were willing to work and had skills and had gifts to give to the community had a chance to do it and be paid an appropriate amount for it.

I think that this is a—it is really—America is very good at creating jobs. And compared to almost every other country in the world with an advanced economy, we've got a very low unemployment rate. But we still have a problem when places have been down for a long time, going back and getting that economic opportunity there and bringing people into the circle of success.

And if we can't do it now when the economy is good, we'll never get around to doing it. So

that's why I wanted people to see and hear all of your stories and your philosophy and see how this can work, because this is what we would like to do in every community in America where it is not now being done.

Mr. Mayor?

[Mayor Campbell thanked the President for bringing the business leaders to see how the inner city was flourishing. He stated that the President's urban policy, whether the COPS program or the empowerment zones, had effectively contributed to the city's growth and well-being.]

The President. Let's give all our participants a hand here. They're great. Thank you. Great job.

NOTE: The discussion began at 2:55 p.m. at the Sweet Auburn Market. In his remarks, the President referred to Maynard Jackson and Andrew Young, former mayors of Atlanta; F. Duane Ackerman, chairman and chief executive officer, Bell South; Daniel P. Amos, president and chief executive officer, AFLAC, Inc.; Donald J. Carty, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, American Airlines; Emma Chappell, chairman, presi-

dent, and chief executive officer, United Bank of Philadelphia; Jon Stevens Corzine, chairman, Goldman Sachs; Charles K. Gifford, chairman and chief executive officer, Bank of Boston; Martin Grass, chairman and chief executive officer, Rite Aid Corp.; Dan Hesse, president and chief executive officer, AT&T Wireless; Richard L. Huber, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, Aetna, Inc.; Debra Lee, president and chief operating officer, BET Holdings; Leo Mullin, president, chairman, and chief executive officer, Delta Airlines; Frank Newman, chairman and chief executive officer, Bankers Trust; Maceo Sloan, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, Sloan Financial Group; Sy Sternberg, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, New York Life; Sanford I. Weill, chairman and co-chief executive officer, Citigroup, Inc.; Hugh L. McColl, Jr., chairman and chief executive officer, Bank of America Corp.; and Georgia Commissioner of Labor Michael L. Thurmond, who had been director, Division of Family and Children Services, Georgia Department of Human Resources, under former Gov. Zell Miller. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the roundtable participants.

Remarks at the Hubert H. Humphrey Civil Rights Award Dinner May 11, 1999

Thank you so very much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the warm welcome. Thank you, Dorothy, for your wonderful words. She has been involved in this work for many years, but every time I hear her speak I always marvel at how young and vigorous and alive and energetic she always sounds.

I'm honored to be here with Wade Hender-son; Julian Bond; Rabbi Saperstein; Monsignor East; my good friend Justin Dart; Frances Humphrey Howard, it's nice to see you tonight, ma'am. I also want to—I have been told that Judy Shepard is here, the mother of Matthew Shepard, and she testified for the hate crimes legislation today. I don't know where she is, but I'd like to ask her to stand up—and I thank you. Where is she? Thank you very much, and God bless you. Thank you. *[Applause]*

I would like to thank the members of the administration who are here: Secretary Herman;

our EEOC Chair, Ida Castro; our Civil Rights Assistant Attorney General, Bill Lann Lee; Ben Johnson, who is continuing the work of our initiative on race at the White House; and Mary Beth Cahill and others on the White House staff. I thank them.

I would also like to say a special word of appreciation to the many Members of the Congress who are here, well over a dozen House Members, and Senator Wellstone, Senator Sarbanes, and Senator Robb. I thank all of them for being here and for what they do. If it weren't for them, many of the things we have tried to do in the area of civil rights and human rights would not have been sustained in these last few years.

When I saw Senator Robb's name here, it reminded me before I give out this Hubert Humphrey Award—or acknowledge the award winners, you're going to give it out—I admired

Hubert Humphrey very much, and I grew up just being almost crazy about him because I grew up in the South during the civil rights revolution. And I got to meet him when I was a young man and when he was making his last campaign and during his latter service in the Senate, after he had been Vice President.

But I would like to say something I have rarely had the chance to say as President, but I don't think I would be here doing this, or we would be where we are as a country if it had not been for the President Hubert Humphrey served, Lyndon Johnson, and I think that we should never forget that. I just got back from Texas a few days ago, and I was thinking about it quite a lot down there.

I want to congratulate the Hubert Humphrey Award winners tonight: Gary Locke; Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee; Jeannie Van Velkinburgh, who I know is back in the hospital tonight and couldn't be with us.

We honor these people because of something Dr. King once said, "No social advance rolls in on the wheels of inevitability." You all know they are pushed forward by courageous men and women who give themselves and inspire others to follow—people like my good friend Governor Gary Locke, who has used the power of his office to expand and defend opportunity for all the people of his State; Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, who together for 50 years have advanced the cause of civil rights through their art and through their efforts to open the theater and movies to people of all backgrounds; and Jeannie Van Velkinburgh, who stood with the white martyrs of the civil rights movement in the South when she was paralyzed in 1997, trying to help a black man under attack by skinheads. All true American heroes. I know we are honored to be in their presence tonight. I congratulate them on their awards, and I congratulate you for your choices.

For nearly half a century, the Leadership Conference has helped hundreds of diverse groups keep their eyes on the prize and speak with one booming voice. Today, your voice is louder, larger, and more diverse than ever. And that is good, because it is still sorely needed. While our economy has never been stronger and minority unemployment is the lowest it has been since separate measurements have been kept, there are still striking disparities in income, wealth, jobs, education, and criminal justice that breakdown along what DuBois called "the color

line," and other disparities that affect people who are disabled or people who are gay. In other words, we still have quite a little hill to climb before we can claim to be the one America of our Founders' dreams.

I was thinking today how I could best honor the spirit of Hubert Humphrey. I could give a long speech. *[Laughter]* I should tell you, if he were here at this podium tonight and I was out there, I would want him to give a long speech. I loved his long speeches. But I think what I will do instead is to try to make briefer comments in the spirit of his service about just three things we still need to do before we cross that bridge into a new century.

First, we must continue to work together for a fair and accurate census. I agree with Wade when he says the 2000 census is a civil rights issue. It is a fundamental building block of democracy. We have to make sure the Census Bureau can do its job with the most up-to-date and scientific methods. We all say we live for the day when every American counts as much as every other American. Surely, that day must begin with counting every American.

The second thing we have to do is to close the economic opportunity gaps that still exist among our people, in our inner-cities, our smaller and medium-sized towns, our rural areas, and on our Native American reservations. There will never be a better time for us to shine the light of economic opportunity on communities and neighborhoods that have been too long in the shadows. We do have the strongest economy in a generation, perhaps in this century. But we know—we know—that there are still large numbers of communities that have been left out and left behind.

Just an hour ago I returned from Atlanta—I think Congressman Lewis is here—but I toured the Sweet Auburn Market in Martin Luther King's home neighborhood in Atlanta's empowerment zone, with the mayor of Atlanta, Bill Campbell, and two of his predecessors who are friends of many of yours, Maynard Jackson and Andy Young.

I was there to highlight the fact that our greatest untapped markets today for America are not overseas; they are right here at home. There's an \$85 billion consumer market out there that is grossly underdeveloped. Ever since we took office, Vice President Gore and I have worked hard to try to get more people to invest in that part of America, with the empowerment

zone program, the community development financial institution effort, special initiatives from HUD, from SBA, from the Department of Labor. And we have had some good success.

But as I look back on it, even now, with unemployment at 4.3 percent, with over 18 million new jobs, there are still inner-city neighborhoods, there are still medium-sized and smaller communities, there are still rural towns, there are still Native American reservations where there has been almost no new investment in job creation.

And what I am attempting to do this year is to convince the Congress to pass legislation and the American business community to mobilize to invest in those communities to create jobs there. I took some of the biggest business leaders in America today to that market in Atlanta. And I let them sit there with me, and we listened to people talk about how they started their coffee shop and their bakery and their restaurant and how one man had bought an empty old mill and was converting it to 500 apartments and how a young man who was a supplier to other businesses had taken his business from \$150,000 a year to \$12 million a year in 3 years, starting with a modest loan.

And in July, in early July, I'm going to take 3 days and do what I did today in Atlanta. I'm going to go across the country, to the poorest communities and to some places where a lot of good things are happening, to demonstrate why we need to have a national framework to give every community a chance to get the money it needs to start the businesses, to expand the businesses, to create the jobs, to stabilize the future.

Our proposal is very straightforward: We want to double the number of empowerment zones where people get tax credits, loan guarantees, direct investment, and technical assistance. We want to dramatically increase the number of community development banks, but we want to pass a national new markets initiative that simply says we want to give business people and investors the same incentives to invest in poor American neighborhoods we give them to invest in our neighbors.

We don't want to take those other incentives away. We want to grow the Caribbean economies. We want to grow the Central American economies. We want to encourage Americans to be involved in Africa, and we want a new partnership there. But we also believe that Ap-

palachia, the Mississippi Delta, south Texas, and the Indian reservations of the high plains should get new American money now. So I would ask you to help me pass this legislation.

The third thing I ask you to do is to help us pass the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act" this year. In 1997, the year Jeannie Van Velkinburgh and Oumar Dia were brutally attacked by skinheads, more than 8,000 hate crimes were reported in the United States. That's nearly one an hour. The hearings today that Mrs. Shepard testified at were held in the United States Senate by the Judiciary Committee, under the leadership of Senator Hatch. First, I commend Senator Hatch for holding those hearings. They are a welcome sign. Surely to goodness we can make fighting hate crimes a bipartisan, even a non-partisan mission of the United States of America.

I think we need to be clear about what our legislation is designed to do. It is not an effort to federalize crimes traditionally handled by the States. It is an effort to partner with local authorities. And it is not only about cracking down on hate crimes committed because of sexual orientation, gender, or disability. It's also about expanding civil rights protection for all Americans. Let's never forget what happened to James Byrd, Jr., in Texas. I met with his daughter in Austin, just a few days ago. She's down there trying to get the Texas legislature to pass State hate crimes legislation. We ought to be pulling for her and for the Texas legislators who are trying to get the job done, and we ought to remember that we also need it here in Washington.

So I say to you, we need to do this for all Americans. We need to make the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act" and the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" the law of the land, because it will help us to move toward one America, and it will help us to make a statement about what we are not, as well as what we are.

I was honored to appear at a testimonial banquet for Rabbi Saperstein the other night. We've been friends for many years. I love and admire him very much. And I especially appreciate how hard he's worked for peace in the Middle East and how hard he's worked to protect the heritage and the historical rights of the Israeli people and still be fair and humane toward the Arabs, with whom they share that land.

And I make this point for the following reason. It seems to me that the central irony of

our time is that most of us have a vision of America in the 21st century and the world in the 21st century in which we'll all be mixed up in wonderful ways. We'll have all this fabulous technology, and we'll be E-mailing people on the South Pole or wherever. [Laughter] Our kids will have pen pals in Africa and Mongolia. We'll jet around on airplanes and do business with people at the tip of Tierra del Fuego. Our kids will speak Japanese and Russian; one of them will solve the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh. We think this is what it's going to be like. It's going to be great.

We just had this NATO Summit here. We had the leaders of 42 countries here, all the way to central Asia, speaking all these different languages, because we see that the world is drawing us closer together—technology and commerce and culture all bringing us together. And most of us think it will really be neat if America can thrive in that kind of world because we're rapidly becoming the most diverse democracy ever known. And won't it be grand? That's the image we all have. That's the dream we have.

And yet, our whole world is bedeviled by the oldest problem of human society, which is fear and hatred of the other. We have known it in America primarily as the curse of race—although we see discrimination and cruelty against people who are gay, discrimination against people who are disabled; we see it in other manifestations; we occasionally see religious discrimination in America. But primarily we have known it as race.

And yet, we see it everywhere. Hillary wanted to come here tonight to pay her respects to the honorees, but she got on a plane today to continue years of work she has done in Ireland, to try to use women and children to bring together people across the lines of Catholic and Protestant Irish. And then she's going on to the refugee camps of Albania and Macedonia, to clarify our compassion and concern for the predominantly Muslim Kosovar Albanians who have been driven from their homes and female loved ones murdered.

The bane of the Balkans is primarily a religious ethnic bane, first the Bosnian Muslims but now the Kosovar Muslims driven from their homes, systematically killed, raped, pillaged, their cultural and religious institutions and records destroyed. Why? Because they have been turned into something subhuman and so

they somehow taint the land they share with the Serbs or the Croats or others.

We saw with breathtaking speed what happened in Rwanda a few years ago, the world totally caught flat-footed with no mechanism to deal with the slaughter of Rwanda, where somewhere between 700,000 and 900,000 people were killed in 100 days with no modern weapons, mostly hacked to death, because two African tribes who, in this case, who had shared the same land for 500 years, all of a sudden decided that they couldn't bear it anymore.

I hope you support what we are doing in Kosovo and what we did in Bosnia. I want you to know that we also have worked to redeem the failure of the world to stop the slaughter in Rwanda by developing an Africa Crisis Response Team, working with the militaries of the countries in the region that are committed to democracy and human rights, so that, God forbid, if anything like this ever happens again, we in the United States and other freedom-loving people around the world will have Africans with whom we can work to move more quickly to stop genocide, to stop ethnic cleansing, to not let it happen again.

But what I want to say to you is this: There will be fights around the world based on ethnic differences that we won't be able to stop. Sometimes people just fall out with one another. But if we want to at least be able to stand firm against ethnic cleansing, against genocide, and for the principle that it is possible to honor our differences, to enjoy our differences, to recognize our differences and still keep them contained within the framework of our common humanity so that life is more interesting but not unbearable—if that's what we want, and we expect people to take the United States seriously at a time when we are easy to resent because of our economic and military power, then people have to see us not only trying to do good around the world but trying to be good at home.

You know, many of these people are struggling. Macedonia and Albania, the two poorest countries in Europe—think how easy it is for all of them to resent us, to say, "Well, we're just waiting for our turn in history's clock to bring us to the top and take them down," to resent our power, to resent our wealth, to resent what they may think of as our preaching. I am telling you, it's imperative that we do this at this moment in history. But if we want to be a force for good, we have got to be good.

So when we stand up for the hate crimes legislation, when we stand up for the employment nondiscrimination legislation, when we stand up as a people and say that it's okay for us to have differences—and we're not even asking everybody to like everybody else in America. But we have got to find a way to get along by recognizing the fundamental human dignity of every person. We have got to find a way to do that so that we take advantages that are rife with all of our diversity by joining together in affirming our common humanity.

Keep in mind, unless we can do that here at home, in the end, we will not be able to do that around the world. And our whole vision of the 21st century—our whole vision—what we want our children to see in the world of their dreams depends upon our being able to do both, to stand for what is good abroad and to keep struggling to be good at home. That's what our honorees have led us in doing. It is certainly

what you have led us in doing. Don't get tired. We've still got a ways to go.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:15 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Dorothy, Height, chair, Wade Henderson, executive director, and Rabbi David Saperstein, executive committee member, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; Julian Bond, chairman of the board, NAACP; Monsignor Raymond G. East, pastor, Nativity Catholic Church, Washington, DC; award presenter Justin Dart, Jr.; Frances Humphrey Howard, sister of Hubert Humphrey; Judy Shepard, mother of murder victim Matthew Shepard; award recipients Gov. Gary Locke of Washington, actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, Jeannie Van Velkinburgh, who was shot while aiding murder victim Oumar Dia in Denver, CO, in 1997; and Renee Mullins, daughter of murder victim James Byrd, Jr.

Remarks Announcing Proposed Anticrime Legislation

May 12, 1999

Thank you very much. Please be seated; and good afternoon. Madam Attorney General, Mr. Holder, Officer Hall, Senator Leahy, Congressman Stupak, Senator Biden, Senator Specter. There are now over 50 Members of Congress here, I think; at least that many had accepted to come. And we see our mayor there, Mayor Williams; Mayor Schmoke; Mayor Rendell, and other officials: Associate Attorney General Fisher; Treasury Under Secretary Enforcement Jim Johnson; and the Director of our COPS Office, Joe Brann. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here today, and welcome.

Five years ago this summer, after a remarkable effort in Congress which required, among other things, the breaking of an intense filibuster, with the support of many of the people here today, I was able to sign into law a crime bill that was the first of its kind: a comprehensive bill that funded local solutions to local problems and enhanced the promising practice of community policing; a bill that also banned assault weapons and demanded tougher punishment for the toughest criminals and provided

innovative prevention strategies to keep our young people out of trouble in the first place.

It was a crime bill that brought our laws into line with our oldest values, requiring all of us to take responsibility at every level of government and every community in America to prevent crime and protect our families. I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Senator Biden who is here today for his extraordinary efforts in what seems like, at once, a long time ago and only yesterday.

Today we know that the strategy embodied in the crime bill, which was really written by local police officers and law enforcement officials, is working. The murder rate is down to its lowest level in 30 years; violent crime has dropped 20 percent in the last 6 years alone; and in many smaller ways, reducing crimes like vandalism and littering that undermine the quality of life. We are beginning to repair the social fabric and restore civility to everyday life.

There are many reasons for this success. The Brady bill has stopped over 250,000 illegal handgun sales to felons, fugitives, and stalkers. The

assault weapons ban has helped; so have tougher penalties and the waning of the devastating crack epidemic.

But police chiefs, politicians, and people on the street all agree that the most important factor has been community policing. After all, until the crime bill passed, the violent crime had tripled over the preceding 30 years, but the size of our police forces had increased by only 10 percent. Where police officers, therefore, used to cruise anonymously through the streets, now community police officers walk the beat and know the people in the neighborhoods, becoming involved in the lives of the people they protect and involving them in the fight against crime.

Community policing has worked miracles in many of our cities, where violent crime once was out of control and law-abiding citizens mistrusted police often as much as they feared gangs. Now, in cities and communities all across America, residents work with police officers forming neighborhood watches, banding together against drug dealers, building connections that are the core of community life and the heart of civil society.

When I signed the crime bill I pledged to help communities all over our Nation fund 100,000 community police officers by the year 2000. Today we are keeping the pledge.

Since 1994, the COPS program has funded 99,000 new police officers, over half already on the beat. Today I am pleased to announce the latest COPS grants, over \$96 million for nearly 1,500 police officers in more than 500 communities. This will bring us to over 100,000 community police officers funded, ahead of schedule and under budget. And I thank you for all of your efforts in that regard.

In making America's thin blue line thicker and stronger, our Nation will be safer. But you and I know our job is far from finished. Last week I sent new legislation to Congress to close the loopholes in our gun laws, raise the age of handgun ownership to 21, hold adults liable for keeping, recklessly keeping guns and ammunition within the reach of children, and asking for background checks for the purchase of explosives.

Today I will send to Congress a new crime bill for the 21st century, to advance our crime-fighting strategy in several respects and build on the successes of the 1994 crime act. We

know what works, and we should make certain that those efforts continue and are expanded.

We know, too, that crime is still too high in too many communities. And the next stage of our crime-fighting strategy must focus with renewed intensity on the high crime areas, to break the cycle of violence on our meanest streets. Finally, we know we face new threats as a result of the new technologies of the information age.

So here's what the bill does. First, and most important, it expands the COPS program, helping communities to hire up to 50,000 more police officers, especially those hardest hit by crime. It will help them hire local prosecutors who work much as community police officers do in the neighborhoods where they can make the biggest difference. The bill will also give 21st century tools to our police officers to fight the criminals who, themselves, increasingly use technology to commit crimes and to avoid capture. The bill will provide grants to help communities encourage schools, faith-based groups, and citizens, themselves, in restoring peace to our neighborhood. School districts can use the grants for preventive efforts that will reduce the likelihood of tragic violence.

The second thing the bill will do is to help steer young people away from crime and gangs by strengthening antitruancy and mentoring programs, by cracking down on gang members who intimidate witnesses.

Third, the bill will help to break the cycle of crime and drugs. Three out of four people in the criminal justice system have drug problems. If we treat those drug problems, we can cut the crime rate dramatically. The bill says to prisoners, "If you stay on drugs, you stay behind bars; to those on parole, if you want to keep your freedom, you must stay free of drugs."

Fourth, the crime bill will do more to protect our most vulnerable citizens. It will punish retirement rip-off artists, nursing home operators who abuse and neglect their residents, telemarketers who prey on older Americans. It will toughen penalties for people who commit violent crimes in the presence of children and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

Finally, the crime bill will strengthen our efforts to combat international crime and terrorism. The threat of weapons of mass destruction is real and increasing in an age of technological change and open borders. The bill will

make it a Federal crime to possess the biological agents used in such weapons without a legitimate, peaceful purpose.

This is the kind of comprehensive approach that has brought crime down 6 years in a row now. It is the kind of tough but smart approach we need in the new century. I am pleased that so many Members of the Congress are committed to move this agenda forward this year. I thank the Democrats who have come out in support of the legislation, and I hope that, as in 1994, we will enjoy strong support from Republican Members who share our objectives. And I thank those who are here today. I look forward to working with members of both parties to protect our families and to make our communities safe.

Now, as you all know, this is Police Week, and you see a number of police officers behind me and out in the audience. It's a week where we pay tribute to our Nation's law enforcement officers. Without their courage, commitment, and ability to meet the challenges of our time and to help keep our streets safe, life would be much more difficult in America.

It is fitting, therefore, that the next speaker is a young community police officer from the Wilmington, Delaware, Police Department, funded through our COPS program, who used to be, I might add, a fifth-grade teacher and who truly represents the changing face and the bright future of policing in America. Officer Jonathan Hall was a teacher when he decided to become a police officer, but he still finds time to be a mentor to at-risk young people. And he takes every chance he can to talk to children about how they can protect themselves from crime.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming a man who symbolizes what we have been working to bring to America for the last 6 years, Officer Jonathan Hall.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore, MD; and Mayor Edward G. Rendell of Philadelphia, PA. The Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week proclamation of May 10 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Secretary of the Treasury Transition *May 12, 1999*

The President. Please be seated. I'd like to welcome all of you here today, especially the families of the people who are at the center of this announcement, and members of the Cabinet, Members of the Congress, Mr. Greenspan, ladies and gentlemen.

For 6½ years now, I have worked hard to build an economy that gives all of our people a chance to prosper and to live out their dreams. When I took office in 1993, it was a time of record deficits, high unemployment, decades of stagnant wages. It was clear then that we needed to make difficult and too long deferred choices.

So we put in place a new economic strategy rooted in the realities of the emerging information age. By now, the elements of that strategy are tiresomely familiar to those of you who have been a part of this: fiscal discipline, investment in our people, expanded trade. But the results

are plain: over 18 million new jobs; the lowest unemployment and inflation in three decades; the strongest economy in a generation, perhaps ever, ushered in by new technologies; the productive energies of the American people; and sensible policies.

In 1992 I told the American people I would focus on the economy like a laser beam. The first step was to establish within the White House a National Economic Council, modeled on the National Security Council, and then to pick Bob Rubin to lead it.

As the first Chair of the National Economic Council, Bob forged a true team and built an enduring and vital institution, now ably led by his successor, Gene Sperling.

Four years ago, when Secretary Bentsen resigned, I appointed Bob to be Secretary of the Treasury. Alexander Hamilton, our first Treasury Secretary, insisted that the United States pay

its debts and practice fiscal prudence. That then-controversial proposal gave the new Nation a chance to grow into the powerhouse it is today. Bob has been acclaimed as the most effective Treasury Secretary since Alexander Hamilton, and I believe that acclaim is well deserved. I thank again the Members of Congress who have come here, both Republicans and Democrats, in testament to that.

He has upheld the highest traditions of the office. He has merged old-fashioned fiscal conservatism with new ideas to help all Americans benefit from the new economy and to maintain and enhance America's leadership in the world economy. He understood the importance of fiscal discipline and the accountability and the impact that it would bring, not only low interest rates but also intangible economic confidence, both of which have brought us more jobs, more businesses, higher wages, lower mortgage rates, and a rising standard of living for all Americans.

He cares very deeply about the impact of abstract economics on ordinary people. I can tell you that for all these years, he has always been one of the administration's most powerful advocate for the poor and for our cities, for the investments that we put into the empowerment zones, for the earned-income tax credit, for the community development banks and the Community Reinvestment Act, and for the new markets initiative that I was out promoting in Atlanta yesterday. He has also tried to help our friends abroad when they needed it, knowing that our friends and trading partners need to do well if America is to do well.

We were reminiscing in the Oval Office just a moment ago about the night just before he was appointed Secretary of the Treasury when we decided we had to give assistance to Mexico. At the time, I think 11 percent of the American people thought we were doing the right thing. But since then, I think almost always, the American people have concluded that Bob Rubin's recommendations have been the right thing for our country.

It's no secret to all of you who know him that Bob has been pining for private life for a long time now, and I have been pleading for all that long time for him not to pine too much. But 2 weeks ago, he told me that he was ready to go. I will miss his cool head and steady hand, his sharp mind and his warm heart. I also want to put him on notice that I expect

him to show up here regularly for the next 2 years until we're done, for lots of free advice.

I used to joke that Bob Rubin came to Washington to help me save the middle class, and he'd stayed so long that by the time he left he'd be one of them. *[Laughter]* He just wants a little time to prove me wrong. *[Laughter]* But I thank him from the bottom of my heart for being a true patriot and a true friend.

To carry forward our economic strategy, I will nominate Larry Summers to be the next Secretary of the Treasury. He is brilliant, able, a critical part of our economic team during the entire life of this administration, therefore, deeply knowledgeable and more than ready to help steer our Nation through the strong and sometimes turbulent currents of the new economy.

Rarely has any individual been so well prepared to become Secretary of the Treasury. For the past 6 years he has been a senior official at Treasury, first Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs, and then for 4 years as Deputy Secretary. He has always been Bob Rubin's partner in many, many ways, working with him to balance the budget, to strengthen Social Security, to reform the IRS, to build a stronger economy at home and abroad. He has a close working relationship not only with Chairman Greenspan but with key finance ministers and central bankers around the world. He has the rare ability to see the world that is taking shape and the skill to help to bring it into being.

I will also nominate Stu Eizenstat to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. I have known him now for well over 20 years, since he was President Carter's Domestic Policy Adviser. He has served our administration very well in several positions: Ambassador to the European Union, Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, and most recently Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs.

Of all the people on this platform today, the person making the greatest sacrifice for the national interest is Secretary Madeleine Albright. And I appreciate her presence here and the absence of tears in losing a man as able as Stu Eizenstat. *[Laughter]*

Stu has handled many of our Nation's most difficult missions over the last 6 years, from our successful efforts to lift food and medicine sanctions on trading partners—or non-trading

partners—to the struggle for justice and compensation on behalf of the victims of the Holocaust, an endeavor he will continue.

I would like to say a special word of thanks to him for all the many missions he has undertaken, but especially for the work he's done in the Holocaust area. He has done it better, more energetically, more completely, and with greater sensitivity for all the elements involved than I think any other American could have. And not just Jewish Americans and other survivors and family members of survivors of the Holocaust around the world, but all Americans should be grateful for this unique contribution he has made to making the American dream real.

With his legendary grasp of policy and the art of practical government, his long experience, his stamina, and his steady judgment, he will be a vital, full member of our economic team.

Our economy continues on its remarkable path, but we must press forward with the strategy that has brought us thus far. We have a lot to do to strengthen Social Security and Medicare in the months ahead; to maintain our fiscal discipline and begin to pay down this debt; to renew our public schools so that they can play the role that they must play in preparing all of our people to succeed in the economy we are working to build; and to bring economic opportunity where it is still not in sufficient supply in underinvested urban and rural areas in America.

With a steady strategy and now, a strong economic team, I am confident we can enter the 21st century stronger than ever. But I would like to say that more than any other single citizen, Bob Rubin deserves the credit for building all the teams we've had with all the members,

because he started with his National Economic Council. No one had ever made it work before. No one had ever made it really a priority to bring together all the strands and all the economic actors, to bring together the State Department and the Treasury Department and the Commerce Department and the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and a lot of other things most Americans had never heard of.

He brought it all together. He got us to work as a team. He worked for a consensus. He was always honest with me in presenting disagreements. And he built a spirit and a belief that we could actually make this economy what it ought to be for our people. That will be his enduring achievement, along with the fact that everybody believed as long as he was Secretary of the Treasury, nothing bad could happen.

Ladies and gentlemen, Bob Rubin.

Secretary Rubin. Thank you.

The President. You're not used to this.

[At this point, Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin, Treasury Secretary-Designate Lawrence H. Summers, and Deputy Treasury Secretary-Designate Stuart E. Eizenstat made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:48 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Treasury Secretary Rubin, Treasury Secretary-Designate Summers, and Deputy Treasury Secretary-Designate Eizenstat.

May 12 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Memorandum on the Report to Congress Regarding Conditions in Burma and U.S. Policy Toward Burma

May 12, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Report to the Congress Regarding Conditions in Burma and U.S. Policy Toward Burma

Pursuant to the requirements set forth under the heading "Policy Toward Burma" in section 570(d) of the FY 1997 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, as contained in the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law 104-208), a report is required every 6 months following enactment concerning:

1) progress toward democratization in Burma;
2) progress on improving the quality of life of the Burmese people, including progress on market reforms, living standards, labor standards, use of forced labor in the tourist industry, and environmental quality; and

3) progress made in developing a comprehensive, multilateral strategy to bring democracy to and improve human rights practices and the quality of life in Burma, including the development of a dialogue between the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and democratic opposition groups in Burma.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit the report fulfilling these requirements to the appropriate committees of the Congress and to arrange for publication of this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Continued Operations of United States Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina

May 12, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 1203 of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act For Fiscal Year 1999, Public Law 105-261 (the Act), requires submission of a report to the Congress whenever the President submits a request for funds for continued operations of U.S. forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In connection with my Administration's request for funds for FY 2000, the attached report fulfills the requirements of section 1203 of the Act.

I want to emphasize again my continued commitment to close consultation with the Congress on political and military matters concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina. I look forward to continuing to work with the Congress in the months ahead as we work to establish a lasting peace in the Balkans.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 12, 1999.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner

May 12, 1999

Thank you so much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I want to join those who have spoken before and thank everyone, from our enter-

tainers to the caterers to the servers, everyone who made this wonderful evening possible.

I want to thank Senator Torricelli for taking on the leadership of the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee. It is often a thankless task; but we have to recruit good candidates, and then they have to be able to get their message out. If it weren't for you, the second part couldn't occur. I want to thank Senator Murray, who won a heroic battle for reelection in the last election season, when many people thought it would not happen, and she won and won big, and she deserved to.

And I want to thank our leader, Tom Daschle. It is in no small measure because of the way he held our Democrats together and the way he spoke for and to ordinary Americans from his position in the Senate that we did so well in the last election, and we'll do even better in 2000. I am honored every day I get to work with him in our leadership effort.

Now, you've all had a good time tonight, and the last thing you need is another long speech. But I would like to try to emphasize something Senator Torricelli said and make a real point that I hope you can leave with.

Tomorrow morning, when you're doing whatever else you're doing, if someone asks you why you were here tonight, you could say, "Well, I wanted to hear the band," or "I wanted to taste the food," or "I work for somebody that made me go"—[laughter]—or whatever else. I would hope you could give a better answer. And I would hope you could tell people why you believe it's important that our party continue to do well and that we win more seats in the Senate until we win the majority back.

You know, I'm gratified by what Senator Torricelli said about our record. I'm gratified that we've got the longest peacetime expansion in history and over 18 million new jobs and that millions of children are getting health insurance and 90 percent of our kids are immunized against serious diseases for the first time, and we've set aside more land in permanent protection than any administration, except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt. I'm gratified by all that.

But what you must understand is that even when we have been in the minority in the Congress, most of what has been achieved in this administration would not have been possible without the support of the Democrats in the Senate and the House of Representatives. They deserve a full measure of credit for every good thing that has happened in the last 6½ years.

The second thing I want to say is, it's very flattering, now that I can't run for reelection anymore, for Senator Torricelli or someone else to say that I did a pretty good job leading our country. But what we did in 1993, as a result of the vote in 1992, was to bring back old values and to bring new ideas to the American people. And it was the combination of reaffirming our devotion to opportunity for all, for responsibility from all citizens, for the idea of an American community in which every good person could be a part, and the new ideas to prove we could reduce the deficit and balance the budget and still double spending on education and the environment; to prove that we could improve the economy and improve the environment at the same time; to prove that we could value the individual and still say, "What brings us together across all the lines that divide us is more important; our community is what makes us great;" to give entrepreneurs a chance to make a lot of money and the stock market a chance to grow and still say that we can't rest until we've given every American community a chance to be a part of the American dream. It was those ideas that brought America back. And that's why in the year 2000, when I will not be on the ballot, it will be as important as it has ever been for the Democrats to do better and better and better so that those ideas can be made real in the lives of every American citizen.

We've got a lot on our plate this year and next year: saving Social Security and Medicare; paying our debt down so we can keep interest rates down; continuing to strive for educational excellence and education opportunity; many other things. But because of the traumas that we have been through in America in the last few weeks and because of the conflict in Kosovo, I would like to ask you to think about one thing as I close.

And that is this: It is supremely ironic, particularly for all these young people here, that when we dream about the 21st century, we dream about a time when people of all ethnic and racial and religious configurations will be working together in our country and around the world. We dream about capitalizing on this fabulous explosion of technology. You can have pen pals in Mongolia, in Cameroon, and wherever else. We think the world will be stronger and smaller and at our fingertips, and how wonderful it will be.

And yet, the only real cloud looming over the world today is the oldest demon of human society, the weakness of people when together to fear and hate and harm those who are different from us by race or ethnicity or religion or in some other way.

Now, what we have to do is to say to ourselves, we will be purged of that. That's why it's important that we pass this hate crimes legislation. That's why it's important that we pass the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act." That's why it's important that we move in Washington to take sensible steps to protect all our children from the dangers of guns. I'm very disappointed that the Senate today did not vote to have background checks at these gun shows, like the people of Florida voted to do it. That's part of our community.

In a world in which America is so blessed with so much wealth and so much power, it is very easy for others to resent us and to mistake our motives, as we have seen in recent days. If we want to be in a position to stand up against ethnic cleansing, against genocide, against bigotry abroad, we must be good at home. We must reaffirm the fundamental value of community to the Democratic Party and the American people. And we must acknowledge that our own history has given us plenty of humility because of our history of slavery and because we, too, are guilty of cleansing, when the American people pushed the Native American tribes off their lands without adequate compensation and without any concern for how they would govern themselves and make their way in life so long ago. And we are still living with the consequences of that.

But I will close with this story to make this point. If this doesn't make you proud to be an American, nothing will. Today, at the request of Senator Daschle and his colleagues, Senator Johnson and Senator Conrad and Senator Dorgan from North Dakota and Senator Baucus from Montana and Representative Pomeroy from North Dakota, I met with 19 tribal leaders from Native American tribes from the high

plains of America. Even more than most other Native American tribes, they have struggled economically. They have not yet felt the wonderful rush of all this economic opportunity and this very low unemployment rate. Their educational system still needs improvement. Their health care needs advances. And I met with them and listened to them.

But at the end of the presentations, the person who was their spokesperson stood up, and he said, "Mr. President, we have seen America's long journey, and we have been a part of it, from the unfortunate beginnings of our relationship to where we are today, meeting with the President. And today we signed a proclamation, all of us tribal leaders, supporting the United States stand against ethnic cleansing and the murder of innocents in Kosovo, and I want you to know that." And then—[*applause*—oh, it gets better.

And then another man stood up and he said, "Mr. President"—another tribal leader—he said, "I have two uncles. One was on the beach at Normandy in World War II; the other was the first Native American fighter pilot in American military history. My great-great-grandfather was slaughtered by the 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee. And I only have one son. But I have seen America's journey, and I would gladly have my son go fight to protect the Kosovar Albanian Muslims from the fate that we should never see any people endure again."

Remember, look around the room tonight. It's the America we want and the world we will work for. And I think you should have no doubt about which party is more likely to give you that future.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 p.m. in the Great Hall at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Memorandum on the Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area

May 12, 1999

*Memorandum for Heads of Executive
Departments and Agencies*

Subject: 1999 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area

I am delighted that Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna E. Shalala has agreed to serve as the Chair of the 1999 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area. I ask you to enthusiastically support the CFC by personally chairing the campaign in your agency and appointing a top official as your vice chair.

The Combined Federal Campaign is an important way for Federal employees to support thousands of worthy charities. Public servants not only contribute to the campaign but also assume leadership roles to ensure its success.

Your personal support and enthusiasm will help positively influence thousands of employees and will guarantee another successful campaign.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 13. An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Remarks on Senate Action on Gun Control Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

May 13, 1999

The President. Good morning. On Monday we brought parents and students, religious leaders and educators, and representatives of the entertainment and gun industries to the White House to lay the groundwork for a national campaign to reduce youth violence.

We agreed that this was no time to point fingers or to pass the buck, but instead a time for everyone to take responsibility. Parents must take greater responsibility for their children's actions and get more involved in their children's lives. The entertainment industry must do its part.

Even now, in the aftermath of Littleton, there are some in the entertainment industry who say there is nothing they can or should do. But that is wrong. Hundreds of studies show that the aggregate impact of sustained exposure to violence over the media to children, principally on television but also in the movies and now in video games, generally desensitize children to violence and its consequences, and therefore, make the more vulnerable children more violence-prone.

The entertainment community is helping parents to limit children's exposure to violence. It should also not market indiscriminate violence to children. If this is a job for all of society, the entertainment industry is very much a part of our society and must do its part.

Perhaps the most courageous statement at the summit, however, came from representatives of the gun manufacturers. They vowed to be part of the solution, to work with us to pass sensible measures to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children.

One of the most important measures we agreed on was legislation to require background checks at gun shows. In the past 5 years, the Brady law has stopped more than a quarter million felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns. But there's a loophole in the law: tens of thousands of guns are sold every year at gun shows without any background check at all.

Last night a narrow majority of the Senate voted to preserve the dangerous gun show loophole. For the life of me, I can't figure out how they did it or why they passed up this chance

to save lives. Just last November, over 70 percent of the voters in Florida, not generally thought of as a liberal State, voted to close the gun show loophole.

I ask the Senate to reconsider its decision. There is simply no excuse for letting criminals get arms at gun shows they can't get at gun stores.

Today the Senate will have another chance to debate commonsense measures that most gunmakers and sportsmen and ordinary citizens would welcome. The American people are watching this debate. They care very much about the result.

As we all saw Monday, the gun manufacturing industry is ready to make progress. The country is ready to make progress. The Congress should be ready to make progress. We can't expect parents, young people, and the media to take responsibility if we in Government aren't willing to do our part.

Thank you very much.

Kosovo Funding Legislation

Q. Mr. President, the Kosovo money bill—is it getting so loaded down that you may have to veto it?

The President. Well, I believe that we're actually making progress. I got a report from Mr. Podesta this morning, and I think there is some effort to trim down the bill some and to get it in position where I can sign it, and I hope it will be done quickly. We need the funds now, and we need the demonstration of support for the Kosovar refugees and for Macedonia and Albania now. It needs to be done as quickly as possible. And I'm, frankly, pretty encouraged this morning.

Q. Do you think the American people understand the war, Mr. President? Support for the war seems to be declining, according to national polls.

The President. I think they do understand it. I think they understand that it is overwhelmingly a humanitarian problem. I think they understand that there's a great difference between ethnic cleansing and mass slaughter and ethnic conflicts, which are so prevalent in other parts of the world. I think they understand that this is not something the United States is doing alone but with the strong involvement and leadership of our European allies. And I believe they understand that we have an interest in seeing peace and freedom in Europe.

I think they are probably frustrated that it's not already over, but I said in the beginning we have to be prepared to pay the price of time. And the most important thing is that our children will understand it years from now if we stand against ethnic cleansing and we can turn the world against it, and they will not forgive us years from now if we do not.

Thank you.

Q. Central American aid, Mr. President?

Q. Are there offsets that you would accept?

Q. Will Yeltsin be impeached? What happens if Yeltsin goes?

Q. Central American aid—

The President. That is there, and I hope we get it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Fort McNair, MD. A portion of the exchange could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States at Fort McNair, Maryland

May 13, 1999

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, Commander Pouliot. I am grateful to you and to Veterans of Foreign Wars for your support of America's efforts in Kosovo.

General Chilcoat, Secretary Albright, Secretary Cohen, Secretary West, National Security Adviser Berger, Deputy Secretary Goyer, Gen-

eral Shelton and the Joint Chiefs, and to the members of the military and members of the VFW who are here. I'd also like to thank Congressman Engel and Congressman Quinn for coming to be with us today.

I am especially honored to be here with our veterans who have struggled for freedom in

World War II and in the half century since. Your service inspires us today, as we work with our Allies to reverse the systematic campaign of terror and to bring peace and freedom to Kosovo. To honor your sacrifices and fulfill the vision of a peaceful Europe for which so many of the VFW members risked your lives, NATO's mission, as the Commander said, must succeed.

My meetings last week in Europe with Kosovar refugees, with Allied leaders, with Americans in uniform, strengthened my conviction that we will succeed. With just 7 months left in the 20th century, Kosovo is a crucial test: Can we strengthen a global community grounded in cooperation and tolerance, rooted in common humanity? Or will repression and brutality, rooted in ethnic, racial, and religious hatreds, dominate the agenda for the new century and the new millennium?

The World War II veterans here fought in Europe and in the Pacific to prevent the world from being dominated by tyrants who used racial and religious hatred to strengthen their grip and to justify mass killing.

President Roosevelt said in his final Inaugural Address: "We have learned that we cannot live alone. We cannot live alone at peace. We have learned that our own well-being is dependent on the well-being of other nations far away. We have learned to be citizens of the world, members of the human community."

The sacrifices of American and Allied troops helped to end a nightmare, rescue freedom, and lay the groundwork for the modern world that has benefited all of us. In the long cold war years, our troops stood for freedom and against communism until the Berlin Wall fell and the Iron Curtain collapsed.

Now, the nations of central Europe are free democracies. We've welcomed new members to NATO and formed security partnerships with many other countries all across Europe's east, including Russia and Ukraine. Both the European Union and NATO have pledged to continue to embrace new members.

Some have questioned the need for continuing our security partnership with Europe at the end of the cold war. But in this age of growing international interdependence, America needs a strong and peaceful Europe more than ever as our partner for freedom and for economic progress and our partner against terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and instability.

The promise of a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace, is at long last within reach. But we all know it is threatened by the ethnic and religious turmoil in southeastern Europe, where most leaders are freely elected and committed to cooperation, both within and among their neighbors.

Unfortunately, for more than 10 years now, President Milosevic has pursued a different course for Serbia, and for much of the rest of the former Yugoslavia. Since the late 1980's, he has acquired, retained, and sought to expand his power by inciting religious and ethnic hatred in the cause of Greater Serbia, by demonizing and dehumanizing people, especially the Bosnian and Kosovar Muslims, whose history, culture, and very presence in the former Republic of Yugoslavia impedes that vision of a Greater Serbia. He unleashed wars in Bosnia and Croatia, creating 2 million refugees and leaving a quarter of a million people dead. A decade ago, he stripped Kosovo of its constitutional self-government and began harassing and oppressing its people. He has also rejected brave calls among his own Serb people for greater liberty. Today, he uses repression and censorship at home to stifle dissent and to conceal what he is doing in Kosovo.

Though his ethnic cleansing is not the same as the ethnic extermination of the Holocaust, the two are related, both vicious, premeditated, systematic oppression fueled by religious and ethnic hatred. This campaign to drive the Kosovars from their land and to, indeed, erase their very identity is an affront to humanity and an attack not only on a people but on the dignity of all people. Even now, Mr. Milosevic is being investigated by the International War Crimes Tribunal for alleged war crimes, including mass killing and ethnic cleansing.

Until recently, 1.7 million ethnic Albanians, about the population of our State of Nebraska, lived in Kosovo among a total population of 2 million, the other being Serbs.

The Kosovar Albanians are farmers and factory workers, lawyers and doctors, mothers, fathers, school children. They have worked to build better lives under increasingly difficult circumstances. Today, most of them are in camps in Albania, Macedonia, and elsewhere, nearly 900,000 refugees, some searching desperately for lost family members. Or they are trapped within Kosovo itself, perhaps 600,000 more of them, lacking shelter, short of food, afraid to go home.

Or they are buried in mass graves dug by their executioners.

I know we see these pictures of the refugees on television every night, and most people would like another story. But we must not get refugee fatigue. We must not forget the real victims of this tragedy. We must give them aid and hope. And we in the United States must make sure—must make sure—their stories are told.

A Kosovar farmer told how Serb tanks drove into his village. Police lined up all the men, about 100 of them, by a stream and opened fire. The farmer was hit by a bullet in the shoulder. The weight of falling bodies all round him pulled him into the stream. The only way he could stay alive was to pretend to be dead. From a camp in Albania, he said, "My daughter tells me, 'Father, sleep. Why don't you sleep?' But I can't. All those dead bodies on top of mine."

Another refugee told of trying to return to his village in Kosovo's capital, Pristina. "On my way," he said, "I met one of my relatives. He told me not to go back because there were snipers on the balconies. Minutes after I left, the man was killed. I found him. Back in Pristina no one could go out because of the Serb policemen in the streets. It was terrible to see our children; they were so hungry. Finally, I tried to go shopping. Four armed men jumped out and said, 'We're going to kill you if you don't get out of here.' My daughters were crying day and night. We were hearing stories about rape. They begged me, 'Please get us out of there.' So we joined thousands of people going through the streets at night toward the train station. In the train wagons, police were tearing up passports, taking money, taking jewelry."

Another refugee reported, "The Serbs surrounded us. They killed four children because their families did not have money to give to the police. They killed them with knives, not guns."

Another recalled, "The police came early in the morning. They executed almost 100 people. They killed them all, women and children. They set a fire and threw the bodies in."

A pregnant woman watched Serb forces shoot her brother in the stomach. She said, "My father asked for someone to help this boy, but the answer he got was a beating. The Serbs told my brother to put his hands up, and then they

shot him 10 times. I saw this. I saw my brother die."

Serb forces, their faces often concealed by masks, as they were before in Bosnia, have rounded up Kosovar women and repeatedly raped them. They have said to children, "Go into the woods and die of hunger."

Last week in Germany I met with a couple of dozen of these refugees, and I asked them all, in turn, to speak about their experience. A young man—I'd say 15 or 16 years old—stood up and struggled to talk. Finally, he just sat down and said, "Kosovo, I cannot talk about Kosovo."

Nine of every ten Kosovar Albanians now has been driven from their homes, thousands murdered, at least 100,000 missing, many young men led away in front of their families; over 500 cities, towns, and villages torched. All this has been carried out, you must understand, according to a plan carefully designed months earlier in Belgrade. Serb officials pre-positioned forces, tanks, and fuel and mapped out the sequence of attack: What were the soldiers going to do; what were the paramilitary people going to do; what were the police going to do.

Town after town has seen the same brutal procedures: Serb forces taking valuables and identity papers, seizing or executing civilians, destroying property records, bulldozing and burning homes, mocking the fleeing.

We and our Allies, with Russia, have worked hard for a just peace. Just last fall, Mr. Milosevic agreed under pressure to halt the previous assault on Kosovo, and hundreds of thousands of Kosovars were able to return home. But soon, he broke his commitment and renewed violence.

In February and March, again we pressed for peace, and the Kosovar Albanian leaders accepted a comprehensive plan, including the disarming of their insurgent forces, though it did not give them all they wanted. But instead of joining the peace, Mr. Milosevic, having already massed some 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo, unleashed his forces to intensify their atrocities and complete his brutal scheme.

Now, from the outset of this conflict, we and our Allies have been very clear about what Belgrade must do to end it. The central imperative is this: The Kosovars must be able to return home and live in safety. For this to happen, the Serb forces must leave; partial withdrawals can only mean continued civil war with the

Kosovar insurgents. There must also be an international security force with NATO at its core. Without that force, after all they've been through, the Kosovars simply won't go home. Their requirements are neither arbitrary nor overreaching. These things we have said are simply what is necessary to make peace work.

There are those who say Europe and its North American allies have no business intervening in the ethnic conflicts of the Balkans. They are the inevitable result, these conflicts, according to some, of centuries-old animosities which were unleashed by the end of the cold war restraints in Yugoslavia and elsewhere. I, myself, have been guilty of saying that on an occasion or two, and I regret it now more than I can say. For I have spent a great deal of time in these last 6 years reading the real history of the Balkans. And the truth is that a lot of what passes for common wisdom in this area is a gross oversimplification and misreading of history.

The truth is that for centuries these people have lived together in the Balkans and southeastern Europe with greater or lesser degree of tension but often without anything approaching the intolerable conditions and conflicts that exist today. And we do no favors to ourselves or to the rest of the world when we justify looking away from this kind of slaughter by oversimplifying and conveniently, in our own way, demonizing the whole Balkans by saying that these people are simply incapable of civilized behavior with one another.

Second, there is—people say, “Okay, maybe it's not inevitable, but look, there are a lot of ethnic problems in the world. Russia has dealt with Chechnya, and you've got Abkhazia and Ossetia on the borders of Russia. And you've got all these ethnic problems everywhere, and religious problems. That's what the Middle East is about. You've got Northern Ireland. You've got the horrible, horrible genocide in Rwanda. You've got the war now between Eritrea and Ethiopia.” They say, “Oh, we've got all these problems, and, therefore, why do you care about this?”

I say to them, there is a huge difference between people who can't resolve their problems peacefully and fight about it and people who resort to systematic ethnic cleansing and slaughter of people because of their religious or ethnic background. There is a difference. There is a difference.

And that is the difference that NATO—that our Allies have tried to recognize and act on. I believe that is what we saw in Bosnia and Kosovo. I think the only thing we have seen that really rivals that, rooted in ethnic or religious destruction, in this decade is what happened in Rwanda. And I regret very much that the world community was not organized and able to act quickly there as well.

Bringing the Kosovars home is a moral issue, but it is a very practical, strategic issue. In a world where the future will be threatened by the growth of terrorist groups, the easy spread of weapons of mass destruction, the use of technology including the Internet, for people to learn how to make bombs and wreck countries, this is also a significant security issue. Particularly because of Kosovo's location, it is just as much a security issue for us as ending the war in Bosnia was.

Though we are working hard with the international community to sustain them, a million or more permanent Kosovar refugees could destabilize Albania, Macedonia, the wider region, become a fertile ground for radicalism and vengeance that would consume southeastern Europe. And if Europe were overwhelmed with that, you know we would have to then come in and help them. Far better for us all to work together, to be firm, to be resolute, to be determined to resolve this now.

If the European community and its American and Canadian allies were to turn away from and, therefore, reward ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, all we would do is to create for ourselves an environment where this sort of practice was sanctioned by other people who found it convenient to build their own political power, and therefore, we would be creating a world of trouble for Europe and for the United States in the years ahead.

I'd just like to make one more point about this, in terms of the history of the Balkans. As long as people have existed, there have been problems among people who were different from one another, and there probably always will be. But you do not have systematic slaughter and an effort to eradicate the religion, the culture, the heritage, the very record of presence of the people in any area unless some politician thinks it is in his interest to foment that sort of hatred. That's how these things happen. People with organized political and military power decide it is in their interest, that they

get something out of convincing the people they control or they influence to go kill other people and uproot them and dehumanize them.

I don't believe that the Serb people in their souls are any better—I mean, any worse than we are. Do you? Do you believe when a little baby is born into a certain ethnic or racial group, that somehow they have some poison in there that has to, at some point when they grow up, turn into some vast flame of destruction? Congressman Engel has got more Albanians than any Congressman in the country in his district. Congressman Quinn's been involved in the peace process in Ireland. You think there's something about the Catholic and Protestant Irish kids that sort of genetically predisposes them to—you know better than that, because we're about to make peace there, I hope—getting closer.

Political leaders do this kind of thing. Think the Germans would have perpetrated the Holocaust on their own without Hitler? Was there something in the history of the German race that made them do this? No.

We've got to get straight about this. This is something political leaders do. And if people make decisions to do these kinds of things, other people can make decisions to stop them. And if the resources are properly arrayed, it can be done. And that is exactly what we intend to do.

Now, last week, despite our differences over the NATO action in Kosovo, Russia joined us, through the G-8 foreign ministers, in affirming our basic condition for ending the conflict, in affirming that the mass expulsion of the Kosovars cannot stand. We and Russia agreed that the international force ideally should be endorsed by the United Nations, as it was in Bosnia. And we do want Russian forces, along with those of other nations, to participate, because a Russian presence will help to reassure the Serbs who live in Kosovo, and they will need some protection, too, after all that has occurred.

NATO and Russian forces have served well side-by-side in Bosnia, with forces from many other countries. And with all the difficulties, the tensions, the dark memories that still exist in Bosnia, the Serbs, the Muslims, and the Croats are still at peace and still working together. Nobody claims that we can make everyone love each other overnight. That is not required. But

what is required are basic norms of civilized conduct.

Until Serbia accepts these conditions, we will continue to grind down its war machine. Today our Allied air campaign is striking at strategic targets in Serbia and directly at Serb forces in Kosovo, making it harder for them to obtain supplies, protect themselves, and attack the ethnic Albanians who are still there. NATO actions will not stop until the conditions I have described for peace are met.

Last week I had a chance to meet with our troops in Europe, those who are flying the missions, and those who are organizing and leading our humanitarian assistance effort. I can tell you that you and all Americans can be very, very proud of them. They are standing up for what is right. They are performing with great skill and courage and sense of purpose. And in their attempts to avoid civilian casualties, they are sometimes risking their own lives. The wing commander at Spangdahlem Air Force Base in Germany told me, and I quote, "Sir, our team wants to stay with this mission until it's finished."

I am very grateful to these men and women. They are worthy successors to those of you in this audience who are veterans today.

Of course, we regret any casualties that are accidental, including those at the Chinese Embassy. But let me be clear again: These are accidents. They are inadvertent tragedies of conflict. We have worked very hard to avoid them. I'm telling you, I talked to pilots who told me that they had been fired at with mobile weapons from people in the middle of highly populated villages, and they turned away rather than answer fire because they did not want to risk killing innocent civilians. That is not our policy.

But those of you who wear the uniform of our country and the many other countries represented here in this room today and those of you who are veterans know that it is simply not possible to avoid casualties of noncombatants in this sort of encounter. We are working hard. And I think it is truly remarkable—I would ask the world to note that we have now flown over 19,000 sorties, thousands and thousands of bombs have been dropped, and there have been very few incidents of this kind. I know that you know how many there have been because Mr. Milosevic makes sure that the media has access to them.

I grieve for the loss of the innocent Chinese and for their families. I grieve for the loss of the innocent Serbian civilians and their families. I grieve for the loss of the innocent Kosovars who were put into a military vehicle—that our people thought was a military vehicle, and they’ve often been used as shields.

But I ask you to remember the stories I told you earlier. There are thousands of people that have been killed systematically by the Serb forces. There are 100,000 people who are still missing. We must remember who the real victims are here and why this started.

It is no accident that Mr. Milosevic has not allowed the international media to see the slaughter and destruction in Kosovo. There is no picture reflecting the story that one refugee told of 15 men being tied together and set on fire while they were alive. No, there are no pictures of that. But we have enough of those stories to know that there is a systematic effort that has animated our actions, and we must not forget it.

Now, Serbia faces a choice. Mr. Milosevic and his allies have dragged their people down a path of racial and religious hatred. This has resulted, again and again, in bloodshed, in loss of life, in loss of territory, and denial of the Serbs’ own freedom and, now, in an unwinnable conflict against the united international community. But there is another path available, one where people of different backgrounds and religions work together, within and across national borders, where people stop redrawing borders and start drawing blueprints for a prosperous, multiethnic future.

This is the path the other nations of southeastern Europe have adopted. Day after day, they work to improve lives, to build a future in which the forces that pull people together are stronger than those that tear them apart. Albania and Bulgaria, as well as our NATO Ally Greece, have overcome historical differences to recognize the independence of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and others have deepened freedoms, promoted tolerance, pursued difficult economic reforms. Slovenia has advanced democracy at home and prosperity, stood for regional integration, increased security cooperation with a center to defuse landmines left from the conflict in Bosnia.

These nations are reaffirming that discord is not inevitable, that there is not some Balkan

disease that has been there for centuries, always waiting to break out. They are drawing on a rich past where peoples of the region did, in fact, live together in peace.

Now, we and our Allies have been helping to build that future, but we have to accelerate our efforts. We will work with the European Union, the World Bank, the IMF, and others to ease the immediate economic strains, to relieve debt burden, to speed reconstruction, to advance economic reforms and regional trade. We will promote political freedom and tolerance of minorities.

At our NATO Summit last month we agreed to deepen our security engagement in the region, to adopt an ambitious program to help aspiring nations improve their candidacies to join the NATO Alliance. They have risked and sacrificed to support the military and humanitarian efforts. They deserve our support.

Last Saturday was the anniversary of one of the greatest days in American history and in the history of freedom, V-E Day. Though America celebrated that day in 1945, we did not pack up and go home. We stayed to provide economic aid, to help to bolster democracy, to keep the peace and because our strength and resolve was important as Europe rebuilt, learned to live together, faced new challenges together.

The resources we devoted to the Marshall plan, to NATO, to other efforts, I think we would all agree have been an enormous bargain for our long-term prosperity and security here in the United States, just as the resources we are devoting here at this institution to reaching out to people from other nations, to their officers, to their military, in a spirit of cooperation are an enormous bargain for the future security of the people of the United States.

Now, that’s what I want to say in my last point here. War is expensive; peace is cheaper. Prosperity is downright profitable. We have to invest in the rebuilding of this region. Southeastern Europe, after the cold war, was free but poor. As long as they are poor, they will offer a less compelling counterweight to the kind of ethnic exclusivity and oppression that Mr. Milosevic preaches.

If you believe the Marshall plan worked and you believe war is to be avoided whenever possible and you understand how expensive it is and how profitable prosperity is, how much we have gotten out of what we have done, then we have to work with our European Allies to

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rebuild southeastern Europe and to give them an economic future that will pull them together.

The European Union is prepared to take the lead role in southeastern Europe's development. Russia, Ukraine, other nations of Europe's east are building democracy; they want to be a part of this.

We are trying to do this in other places in the world. What a great ally Japan has been for peace and prosperity and will be again as they work to overcome their economic difficulty. Despite our present problems, I still believe we must remain committed to building a long-term strategic partnership with China.

We must work together with people where we can, as we prepare, always, to protect and defend our security if we must. But a better world and a better Europe are clearly in America's interests.

Serbia and the rest of the Balkans should be part of it. So I want to say this one more time: Our quarrel is not with the Serbian people. The United States has been deeply enriched by Serbian-Americans. Millions of Americans are now cheering for some Serbian-Americans as we watch the basketball playoffs every night on television. People of Serbian heritage are an important part of our society. We can never forget that the Serbs fought bravely with the Allies against Fascist aggression in World War II, that they suffered much; that Serbs, too, have been uprooted from their homes and have suffered greatly in the conflicts of the past decade that Mr. Milosevic provoked.

But the cycle of violence has to end. The children of the Balkans, all of them, deserve the chance to grow up without fear. Serbs simply must free themselves of the notion that their

neighbors must be their enemies. The real enemy is a poisonous hatred unleashed by a cynical leader, based on a distorted view of what constitutes real national greatness.

The United States has become greater as we have shed racism, as we have shed a sense of superiority, as we have become more committed to working together across the lines that divide us, as we have found other ways to define meaning and purpose in life. And so has every other country that has embarked on that course.

We stand ready, therefore, to embrace Serbia as a part of a new Europe if the people of Serbia are willing to invest and embrace that kind of future; if they are ready to build a Serbia, and a Yugoslavia, that is democratic and respects the rights and dignity of all people; if they are ready to join a world where people reach across the divide to find their common humanity and their prosperity.

This is the right vision and the right course. It is not only the morally right thing for America; it is the right thing for our security interests over the long run. It is the vision for which the veterans in this room struggled so valiantly, for which so many others have given their lives.

With your example to guide us, and with our Allies beside us, it is a vision that will prevail. And it is very, very much worth standing for.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in Eisenhower Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas A. Pouliot, commander in chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Brig. Gen. Scott Van Cleef, USAF, commander, 52d Air Expeditionary Wing; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Statement on the Death of Meg Greenfield

May 13, 1999

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Meg Greenfield. In her work for the Washington Post and Newsweek, Meg perfected the art of the newspaper column. Her essays were invariably tightly reasoned, forcefully stated, and deeply felt. She called on those of us who work in Government to pursue far-

sighted public policy and bipartisan solutions. Her voice of eloquence and reason will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family in their time of mourning.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Assist Young People Leaving the Foster Care System

May 13, 1999

Hillary and I are pleased that Representatives Nancy Johnson and Ben Cardin today introduced important legislation to assist the approximately 20,000 young people who leave our Nation's foster care system each year at age 18 without an adoptive family or other permanent family relationship. Today, Federal financial support for these young people ends just as they are making the critical transition to independence. Without the emotional, social, and financial support that families provide, many of these youth are not adequately prepared for life on their own.

I believe that we have a responsibility to ensure that these young people have the tools they

need to make the most of their lives. That is why my budget request includes significant new investments to provide them with access to health care and help them to earn a high school diploma, further their education or vocational training, and learn daily living skills such as budgeting, career planning, and securing housing and employment. Today, Representatives Johnson and Cardin have moved this issue forward. I am committed to working with them and other Members of Congress in the months ahead to enact meaningful and fiscally responsible legislation to enable these young people to live up to their God-given potential.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the National Institute of Building Sciences

May 13, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the requirements of section 809 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701j-2(j)), I transmit herewith the annual report of the National Institute of Building Sciences for fiscal year 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

May 13, 1999.

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

Remarks at a Dinner for Representative John Conyers, Jr.

May 13, 1999

Thank you very much. Let me, first of all, thank Bob Johnson and the whole BET family for making us feel at home at this wonderful place tonight. And I want to thank Kenny Burrell and Donald Byrd and James Moody, and also I'd like to thank the musicians who were playing for us earlier. They were very, very good, and I enjoyed hearing them.

I want to say how much I appreciate the fact that so many of John Conyers' colleagues are here from the Michigan delegation, from the Congressional Black Caucus, and the whole Congress would have showed up if they could have. And notwithstanding his claims of false advertising, he really is 70 years old. *[Laughter]*

Now, I say that in astonished admiration. He has a child who is 10 years younger than my

daughter—[laughter]—maybe more—and one of the most impressive young men I've ever met in my life. And thanks to Debbie Dingell, he went through the Detroit Auto Show with me, and he knew more about the cars than I did. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, there are many things that I appreciate about John Conyers. I appreciate the fact that he has supported my economic and social initiatives since I've been President. And thanks to his leadership, we have tried to do things that make sense—for our economy, to give everybody a chance to participate. We've tried to do things to help young people stay out of trouble, instead of just punishing people after they commit crimes. We've tried to do things that make sense to bring people together and to create more opportunity. And he's had a big impact on that.

I appreciate the fact that in standing up for me last year, he stood up for the Constitution of the United States. And I'm grateful to him.

I am grateful for the fact that long before it was fashionable, he believed the United States ought to be on the side of human rights in South Africa, in Haiti, and throughout the world. So I am very grateful to be a friend of John Conyers.

I am also hoping that if I hang around him long enough, I get to meet some more great musicians—[laughter]—I get another chance or two to play. I can't tonight. I've got to work. And maybe I'll learn the secret of how to look young when I'm 70. People always ask me how old I am, and I say, "I'm the oldest 52-year-old man in America"—or 53, or however old I am—I can't keep up with it.

Let me say one other thing that's very important as I look around this crowd tonight—you know, our hearts have been heavy in the United States over the loss of the children in Colorado. And our hearts have been burdened over the efforts that we are making in Kosovo. And I think about the world we would like to build for our children. I think about how jazz music brought people together across racial lines, long before there was much of any other way to do it in America, long before it was cool or noticed—I'm talking about in the twenties and thirties. Mr. Gregory, I'm glad to see you here—thank you.

And I look around this crowd tonight and I think about—those of you who are here who are young, you imagine what you want your

life to be like. And a lot of you, you know all about computers and the Internet and how to relate to people all around the world and go into these strange chat rooms and talk to people in Mongolia or someplace. And we all want to believe it's going to be great and wonderful and fascinating. And isn't it interesting, after all our long journey, so that we could come here tonight, together—a journey which John Conyers, having been in the Congress since 1964, had a lot to do with helping us make.

But isn't it interesting that we had in our own country a horrible murder-suicide which the young people involved said was perpetrated because they felt that they were part of a gang that was not respected by others, and they hated other people, partly for racial, partly for other reasons. And this is 1999. And these kids were so far gone that that's what they said. And our hearts were broken by it. And all those brilliant young people—one African-American, the others not—had their whole future taken away because these kids wanted to destroy and then to destroy themselves.

And isn't it interesting that that's sort of against everything both that the whole history of jazz but also the potential of America and the world represents. And then you look around the world today, and what's the trouble? What's the trouble in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East and Africa, in the Balkans—from Bosnia to Kosovo—what's the trouble? People can't get along because of their racial, their ethnic, or their religious differences.

And so if we ought to think of one thing we can honor John Conyers for, thinking about what he stood for in South Africa, think about the record he stood for on civil rights at home, what he's fought for on the Judiciary Committee—it ought to be the idea that America ought to be a good place and a safe place and a full place for all its children.

Yesterday—I will tell you this story in closing. I want to tell you a story. Yesterday, at the request of the Senators from North Dakota and Senator Daschle and Senator Baucus, I had a fascinating meeting with 19 tribal chiefs from the 19 Indian tribes of the high plains, the northern high plains in America. And all of you who don't know about that part of the country need to know that notwithstanding all the things you read about how rich the Native Americans are because of their gambling enterprises today,

the tribes that don't have those gambling enterprises and the tribes that are in the poor, rural areas, a long way from economic activity, are still the poorest people in America.

And so these very dignified, mostly pretty young tribal leaders, men and women, came in; we sat in a circle, according to their request, in the Roosevelt Room in the White House; and they spoke in their turn about the needs of their people. And then after they had done that, the person whom they had designated to be their spokesperson stood up in a very dignified way and said, "Mr. President, we have something to say about our involvement in Kosovo. We know something about ethnic cleansing. We were removed from our lands, and some of the people who did it said that it was God's will, which we hear in the Balkans. And we have seen America come a very long way. And we have signed this proclamation to tell you that we, the leaders of the first Americans, support America's policy to stand up against ethnic cleansing and the murder of people because of their religious and ethnic background."

And then another man said, "I would like to be heard." And this young man stood up with great dignity, and he had a beautiful silver Indian necklace on. And he said this—he said, "Mr. President, I had two uncles. One landed on the beaches at Normandy on D-Day; the other was the very first Native American fighter pilot in the history of the American military. My great-great-grandfather was slaughtered by the 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee." He said, "I now have only one son. America has come a very long way from Wounded Knee, to the beaches at Normandy, to the opportunity I have

to be in the White House today. And I love my son more than anything, but if he needed to go and fight against ethnic cleansing and the brutality and the murdering of people because of their race or their ethnicity or their religion, I would be proud for him to stand for the United States and for the humanity of man."

No one in the room could breathe, we were so moved by this man in his simple dignity, representing Americans who still don't have a total, fair shot at educational and economic opportunities, who live in places that still don't have adequate health care. But he told a story that needs to be told.

So I say to you—you honor John Conyers tonight—the best way we can honor John Conyers is to say, we've got a pretty picture of the 21st century, and we've got an ugly picture of the 21st century that is every last nightmare that has dogged human society since people came up out of the caves and first got together, and that is fear and hatred of people who are different from us. And we're better than that. And he's helped us to be better than that. And we're going to do better still.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. at the BET on Jazz Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Robert L. Johnson, chairman and chief executive officer, BET Holdings, Inc.; musicians Kenny Burrell, Donald Byrd, and James Moody; Representative Conyers' son John; Debbie Dingell, wife of Representative John Dingell; civil rights activist Dick Gregory; Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Remarks on Senate Action on Gun Control Legislation

May 14, 1999

Good morning. It is now clear that the tragedy at Littleton has helped to create a broad national consensus that we must act together to protect our children from violence, including taking efforts to keep guns away from children and away from criminals. The question is whether Congress will write that national consensus

into law or block it. Thus far, the Senate has not fully lived up to its responsibility.

I am very pleased that on Wednesday a bipartisan majority in the Senate passed two important measures I proposed 2 weeks ago. First, they agreed to ban the import of high-capacity ammunition clips that are used to evade the 1994 ban on assault weapons. Second, they

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agreed to ban juvenile possession of semi-automatic assault weapons and large-capacity magazines, weapons used—designed only for mayhem. There's no good reason for a child to own an AK-47 or a 15-round ammo clip.

I applaud the Senate for taking these two steps. However, on Wednesday a narrow majority squandered an important opportunity to close the gun show loophole through which tens of thousands of guns are sold each year without background checks. Yesterday I called on the Senate to reconsider that vote. It makes no sense to let criminals continue to use legitimate gun shows as a convenience store for their weapons.

Today the Senate will vote again on a measure purporting to address this issue. However, the new Senate Republican bill is still riddled with high-caliber loopholes. It won't stop criminals from buying guns at gun shows. At the same time, it will open up a new pawnshop loophole that lets convicted felons get guns at a local pawnshop. That's actually worse than current law.

I simply can't believe the Senate will make the same mistake twice. So once again, I ask

them to reject this phony proposal and to pass real legislation that requires the background checks necessary to prevent criminals from buying guns at gun shows which they cannot buy at gun stores. This should be a moment for national unity.

I was so pleased today to receive a letter from the major gun manufacturers reiterating their support for our efforts to pass real, enforceable, mandatory background checks at gun shows. They recognize that law-abiding citizens don't need a gun show loophole, only criminals do.

For 6 years, we have made strong, steady progress against crime by elevating results over ideology. Today we have a chance to put aside partisanship, political divisions, and draw special interest power that has dominated our politics on this issue for too long. For the sake of our children, I hope the Senate changes its mind and does the right thing.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 a.m. in the South Portico at the White House, prior to his departure for Seattle, WA.

Remarks in a Telephone Conversation With Americans at Camp Hope, Albania

May 14, 1999

Maj. Gen. William Hinton. Hello, Mr. President. This is General Bill Hinton from Camp Hope in Albania.

The President. Hi, General Hinton. And are you there with Mr. Sykes?

Major General Hinton. Yes, Mr. Chris Sykes is here with me from CARE.

The President. Well, first of all, I just wanted to call to applaud your efforts in building and managing Camp Hope. I think it's a very important example of our commitment to give shelter and assistance to the refugees until they can go home. And I'm very proud you were able to do it in such a short time. I know you had a lot of constraints finding the right site and getting the infrastructure up. I think this will help us to get our NATO Allies to do more on other camps as well.

How are you doing with the rest of the work there?

Major General Hinton. Sir, the work is coming along very well. We're progressing with the rest of the camp, and we hope to complete the camp for up to 20,000—

[At this point, the telephone connection was interrupted.]

Major General Hinton. —hello, Mr. President. Are you there?

The President. Yes.

Major General Hinton. In any case, we hope to complete the rest of the camp by the first of June.

The President. That's great. Well, it's good to talk to you again. I hope you will tell all the people in Joint Task Force Shining Hope that I'm very grateful for a job well done.

Major General Hinton. Mr. Sykes is here, sir, and of course, he already has 400 refugees on board.

Chris Sykes. How are you, Mr. President?

The President. I'm fine.

Mr. Sykes. Okay. It's been a great exercise—

The President. Well, I really appreciate the way you've worked with our military to organize and design the camp. And I want to thank CARE and all the NGO's that are working there.

Exactly how many are there now?

Mr. Sykes. We've got exactly 409 now, and we'll be receiving another 500, which we're in the process of receiving as you speak.

The President. Well, that's good news. I think it's good for them—go ahead.

Mr. Sykes. Yes—we're moving right ahead on schedule, and we should be able to speed up our rate of reception. The initial influx has come in from Kukes, and we're prepared for any influx from Macedonia, as well.

The President. Well, that's great. I think we may have a little influx from Macedonia. The situation there is not the best, and we've got a lot of pressure. So I hope we can really do a good job of getting as many people as possible there.

Mr. Sykes. Well, sir, we'll keep this camp going on schedule, and we're looking for sites for two more camps right now.

The President. That's great. I know they need all the help they can get. They've taken a lot of folks, and I know a lot of them are in homes, but I think from here on out we're going to have to have more camps and good ones.

Mr. Sykes. Yes, sir. We've got a good contractor here helping to build these camps, and we'll keep trying to find the right sites.

The President. Well, I appreciate it. I know it's tough work, but you're doing something really important. And it will be temporary, but it may be a while. And so we've got to do the best we can. And I'm very grateful to both of you.

Mr. Sykes. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you, Chris, and thank you, General. It's good to hear your voice. Take care.

Major General Hinton. Thank you, thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The teleconference began at 9:40 a.m. The President spoke from the Oval Office at the White House to Maj. Gen. William S. Hinton, Jr., USAF, Commander, Joint Task Force Shining Hope, and Chris Sykes, camp manager, CARE, at the Camp Hope refugee site, located 60 miles from the city of Fier, Albania.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Seattle, Washington May 14, 1999

Thank you. I couldn't help but thinking when Jack was up here talking and saying all those wonderful things, that Joe Andrew had just said that we would win every election in 2000, from dogcatcher to President. And my immediate reaction was, that's not such a great distance. [Laughter] That's because I spend too much time in Washington. [Laughter] Now, when I'm in Seattle, it feels great.

Let me first of all say how grateful I am that the Governor and the mayor are here. Thank you both for coming; our State party chair; your former mayor and my good friend,

Norm Rice, and his fine wife. I thank our officers for coming out here to Washington. And Jack, to you and Ron, my long-time friend, and Ted and Ben and the others who are here who have helped so much, Mr. Marshall and others, I thank you all.

I was thinking when I got on the airplane today—you know, when a politician tells you a true story, your immediate reaction is, it couldn't be true—[laughter]—but this is a true story. The first time I ever came to Washington, when I was running for President in 1992, I came rather late. I'd been out there running

for quite some time, and I was nervous as a cat. And I knew that Senator Tsongas had been here a lot and had built a lot of support. And I really wanted to make a good impression, and there was this event planned, and we had a very nice crowd.

And I came into the airport in my modest little plane, and, coincidentally, the Seattle police force, under Mayor Rice, who has been trying to pay me back ever since—[*laughter*—they were practicing how to provide security and rapid transportation to dignitaries. So here I arrived, you know, as President Bush used to say, a Governor of a small southern State—[*laughter*—in an airplane not quite as grand as the Boeing I fly in today. [*Laughter*] And I look up—I swear, there were more than 50 motorcycle police officers there. [*Laughter*]

And we go, and you know, I know how MacArthur felt with his ticker-tape parade in New York City now at the end of the war. And we're going in, you know, and I've got this little 2-car motorcade—[*laughter*—and 50 motorcycles. I mean, I couldn't breathe. I thought, my God, there won't be a person in this town that votes for me. [*Laughter*] And sure enough, I lost the primary in Washington State. [*Laughter*] And I've often thought it was because of those—it was quite a grand thing, you know. I don't have 50 motorcycles today when I go anywhere. [*Laughter*]

But the Seattle police were well-trained, and they've always been very polite to me, and I never will forget it, though. Every time I land on the tarmac, I get a little nervous. [*Laughter*]

Let me seriously say the people of Washington State have been very good to Hillary and me and the Vice President, to our administration, in two elections, in 1992 and 1996. We suffered a terrible setback here in the congressional elections in 1994, and then made up a great deal of ground in 1996 and 1998. And I think we will more than make up the rest of the ground in the year 2000, thanks to people like you.

I would like to just—you know, I just made myself a few notes here on the way in. Sometimes I don't even do that. But I've got some things—I don't get to come here as much as I'd like, and I would like to say a few things.

When I made the long trip out here the first time in 1992, I did so with some mixed feelings, because I had a job I loved in a place I loved and my family was doing well and things were

going great for us. But I was very concerned that our country was drifting and divided, that we had all kinds of problems, and that no one seemed to be offering a clear vision about what kind of country we were going to be in the 21st century and how we proposed to get there.

And I had in my own mind a very simple idea of the world I wanted our daughter to grow up to live in. I wanted 21st century America to be a place where there was opportunity for every responsible citizen, where we were joined together, across all the lines that divide us, into an American community united by our common humanity and where my country was still the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity.

In short, I wanted to find a way to take advantage of the two great things that are happening in the world today, the explosion of technology and the increasing interdependence of people across national lines—both of which are perfectly embodied in this room, in this city, and in this State—in a way that would give everybody a chance to participate in it and give us a chance to let go of the problems that besiege us.

And it seemed to me in order to do that we had to move beyond the old political debate in Washington. And so I went around the country saying, "I believe if we're committed to opportunity and responsibility and community and to being a 21st century democracy, then we have to find a way to reward entrepreneurship and build the middle class and help the poor work themselves into it. I believe we have to find a way to grow the economy and protect the environment.

"I believe we have to find a way to help people succeed at work and at home, because everybody's most important work is still raising good children. I believe that we have to find a way to reform welfare that requires able-bodied people who can work, to work; but doesn't require them to sacrifice their responsibilities as parents because they can't afford child care or health care.

"I believe we have to find a way to reduce the crime rate, not simply by better enforcement but also by better prevention. I believe that we have to find a way not only to increase the quantity but the quality of education. I believe we can expand trade and lift the environmental and labor standards of the world instead of driving them lower. I believe that we can

be a force for peace in the world and still be willing to use force if it is the only way to achieve legitimate, indeed, compelling objectives.”

I believed all that. I also believed that we could do it with a Government that was markedly smaller, but more active, if we focused on what a 21st century mission would be. And for me, it is overwhelmingly the mission of establishing the conditions and then giving people the tools to solve their own problems, but not alone—working together.

Now, all the work that those of us in our administration have done in the last 6 years has been a labor of love to try to take those basic ideas and make them real, working facts of life in America. And I am profoundly grateful for the results. I literally get up and try to live with the spirit of gratitude every day for the good things that many of you have played a large role in bringing to our country: the longest peacetime expansion in our history, over 18 million new jobs, the lowest minority unemployment rate we have ever recorded, welfare rolls about half of what they were before, a 25-year low in the crime rate, the highest homeownership in history, over 90 percent of our children immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time ever, dramatic progress in the quality of our air and water, more land set aside in perpetuity under this administration than under any administration in the history of the country except those of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt.

We’re almost there with our goal of hooking up all our classrooms to the Internet by the year 2000. We have now over 1,000 and will soon have 3,000 charter schools, which I think are the most exciting new innovation in public education. There was one when I became President. We have 100,000 young people who have now served in AmeriCorps, serving their communities as service volunteers. It took us 4 years to get to 100,000; it took the Peace Corps 20 years to get to 100,000 volunteers.

I am grateful for the work we’ve been able to do in the world to help our friends when they’re in trouble, to try to reform the global financial system, to be a force for peace from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Bosnia and now in Kosovo. And I am grateful that I had the chance to serve in this job at this time to bring these changes and for the role our Government had, as well as for the role

all of you and others like you all across America had.

But I am here today to tell you that the important thing is the ideas—the ideas. If we had the right ideas rooted in the right vision and we had the right attitude about our work, then we can continue that.

You know, I won’t be on the ballot in 2000. It’s the first time in a long time I haven’t been on a ballot. But it is terribly important to me that everyone in America understand that this, on the one hand, didn’t happen by accident, but on the other hand, is not dependent upon any person alone, including the President. What matters is that we have the right ideas based on the right vision and that we have the right attitude about our work.

There was a wonderful article in the *Christian Science Monitor* in the last couple of days, which pointed out that even though I have had what some people might characterize as a fairly tumultuous 6½ years—[laughter]—I had enjoyed more stability in my Cabinet and senior staff than most other Presidents have. There is a reason for that. The people that work on our team know why they’re there. They’re not there to occupy offices or sit at certain places behind certain name cards at tables or wonder who is leaking on whom in the paper the next morning. They’re there because they passionately believe in what we are doing, and they understand that this is a job. It is not about political positioning; it’s about putting the people of this country first and having a vision of where you want to go, having guiding ideas, and making them real. That’s why I’m here. That’s what I want you to understand.

When somebody asks you why you were here today, tell them it’s because you like what happened in the last 6 years; we’ve got a lot more to do, and the vision and the operating ideas of the Democratic Party should continue to guide the United States of America. That is what I believe.

We’ve got a lot of things to do. We’ve got to deal with the aging of America. We’ve got to deal with Social Security and Medicare and long-term care, and people have to be able to save more for their own retirement. We have to continue to tend to the world economy, and I badly want to prevail in my argument that we must use this surplus in a way that both deals with the aging of America and pays down the debt of the country.

My plan, in 17 years, would give us a debt that's the smallest percentage of our economy we've had since before World War I broke out. And that means lower interest rates, less dependence on foreign capital, higher investment, higher growth, more opportunities for people in high-tech havens like this and in small rural towns like those I represented for so many years. It's very important.

We still haven't come to grips with all the challenges of education. We cannot pretend that we can be the country we want to be until we can offer a world-class education, not just in our universities but in our kindergarten through 12th grades, to all Americans. We still haven't done everything we have to do to help people balance work and family by a long shot. We need to do more with child care; we need to do more with family leave; we need to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. We have a lot of things we have to do.

We have big environmental challenges. Several of you discussed environmental issues with me today. I'm very proud of the livability initiative we have, to try to bring environmental issues into the practical lives of people in urban communities; and the lands legacy issue we have, to try to add more lands to the permanent legacy of the United States. And I will continue to try to persuade my friends in the other party in Washington, DC, that the crisis of climate change is a real issue that demands a real response from the United States, and that we cannot expect others to do their part unless we're ready to do ours.

But the most important issues we have, I would argue—and if we get this right, the rest of it will work out all right; people in this room will solve half the problems that are out there—the most important thing we have to decide is what kind of country we are going to be. In the last several days, couple of weeks, the headlines have been dominated by two pieces of sobering news—notwithstanding the Dow going to 11,000 and having 18¼ million jobs and all of that. One, of course, was the tragic killings in Littleton; the other is the ongoing conflict in Kosovo.

I would like to just say a couple of words about that, kind of picking up on what Ron said. I talked with Hillary for a long, long time about what happened in Littleton. And we had a family conversation about it, too. And we talked with Al and Tipper Gore about it, be-

cause they've worked on a lot of these cultural and family issues for years.

And then I talked with people all around America. I have to tell you, I do not believe that there is a single thing for us to do; I think there are a lot of big things for us all to do. When we had our meeting Monday to say that we're going to have a national campaign against violence against children, Pam Eakes was there, and I want to thank her for the wonderful work she's done with Mothers Against Violence.

I think that you have to understand that we live in a world where there are a lot of people who are alone even when they're in a crowd, where there are a lot of children who never knew they were the most important person to anyone. And when you have large numbers of vulnerable people, then things that other people can't imagine would be problems can be big problems. So if it's easier for a kid in America to get an assault weapon, whereas it's impossible in most other countries, and you have a higher percentage of vulnerable, disconnected kids, more bad things will happen. If it is easier for a child in America to play an interactive video game where you score by how many innocent people you kill, and you have more vulnerable kids, then it's more likely to have a bad impact.

If we have 300 studies now which show that hours and hours and hours a week after years and years and years and years of watching sustained, indiscriminate violence makes young people less sensitive to violence and to its consequences, if there are a larger number of disconnected kids, then it will have a more destructive impact than in other countries.

So all of us—not pointing the finger at anybody—we've got something to do to rebuild this web of support to build that village that Hillary always talks about it takes to raise a child. There are things for families to do, things for schools to do, things for communities to do, things for the gun industry to do, things for the entertainment industry to do, things for Congress to do.

I hope Congress finally, next week, will get around to passing that bill that closes the loophole on background checks for gun sales at gun shows. They did pass yesterday, in the Senate bills, to raise the age of handgun ownership to 21 and to close the loophole in the assault weapons ban, which has allowed the sale of large ammunition clips if they're imported since 1994. They voted for that, and I applauded them.

But we need to pass all these common-sense measures. We've moved a long way since we had Democrats from Washington State losing elections in 1994 because they voted for the crime bill, with the assault weapons ban, and the Brady bill. We've come a long way. The voters in Florida—not exactly a raving liberal State—voted 72 percent to close the gun show loophole on the ballot. So we're moving in the right direction.

But I don't want to see our attempts to save our children turn into chapter 57 of America's ongoing culture war for someone's political advantage. What I want to see is to see every single segment of our society stand up and say not, "It's someone else's fault," but, "What can I do?" And let's work through it.

How we deal with this issue—you know, we had all those school killings last year. We did a lot of things. We sent out these wonderful handbooks to every school in the country, and they're very, very good. And people were horrified by it, but somehow, when Littleton happened, I think it finally, like, broke a dam in the psyche of America. I think finally people said, "My goodness, this really can happen anywhere."

And we cannot—we owe it to those families and those children who perished not to let this opportunity pass from us and not to let it disintegrate into finger pointing. Everybody needs to just stand up and say, "Okay, what can I do?"

But we have to be honest about how every one of these things—look, I can make a case that no single thing—whatever you say the problem is—I've heard all these arguments. I can stand up and debate you and say, "No, that's not the problem; something else is the problem." And I've heard it all. And you know, I could take either side in the guns-versus-culture argument.

But the truth is, start with the facts. There are disconnected children in America, some of them in crowds every day. There are a higher percentage of them in our country—for whatever reason—getting killed every year than in other countries, in spite of all of our prosperity and all of our intelligence and all of our technology and all of our everything else. It's a fact. It's a human fact.

And all the things that happen to a person in life, and all the opportunities that are present or absent, they all have an impact. And we need

to unpack it and quit saying it's not our problem, and just have everybody show up and say, "Well, what can I do?"

If there was a fire down the street today and we heard the fire bell ring, every one of us would walk outside; we'd walk up to the firemen and say, "What can I do?" That's the way we ought to look at this. It ought to be an occasion for bringing this country together.

We were talking at lunch, here. I was down in Texas a few days ago with the daughter of James Byrd, the man who was dragged and dismembered to death in Texas, trying to help pass the hate crimes legislation there. And I hope we can pass it in Washington, and the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act." Why? Because it will make a big statement about what kind of people we are and what our level of mutual respect for people who are different from us is.

And you ask me, "Well, what has that got to do with Kosovo?" Let's just move into that.

It is the supreme irony of this new millennium—I mean, here we are. We've got all these folks here from Microsoft and Boeing, first one place and the other, and everybody's got all these great—you know, all of you are more technologically literate than me, doubtless. But isn't it ironic that you can simulate virtually every problem in the world with a software package. You can do things and communicate with people in ways that already are unimaginable. And within 5 years, there'll be things that we're not even thinking about now. And these will be accompanied by breathtaking advances in the biological sciences, as the mysteries of the human genome are unlocked. And then the interaction of computer technology and the genome project will be completely explosive in ways that I can't even imagine.

Isn't it ironic that in this world we're going to live in, where we'd like to think, "Gosh, you know, we'll finally run the average life expectancy up to 120 years, and we'll all be flying around on safe, fast planes, and we'll be able to get into cars that won't have traffic jams because we'll be able to program them all, and they will all run right. And what a fabulous world it will be. And we're now building an economy that actually requires less energy, not more—if we do it right—so we're not going to have to burn the planet up after all."

We have all these grand dreams for our children's future, and it is threatened by the oldest

problem of human society, which is that we have a hard time getting along with people who are different from us—because we're afraid of them. And once we get our crowd together, it's easy for somebody to stir us up and turn our fear into hatred. And once we start hating somebody, then it's easy for somebody else to come along and turn our hatred into violence.

And there's a little of that in the reported accounts of Littleton. There was certainly that in the death of James Byrd or in the death of Matthew Shepard. And it is the thing that most bedevils the world in global politics today.

What is consuming the world today? Fights over technology? Not on your life. What happened in Rwanda? Why is the Northern Ireland conflict unresolved? What are they fighting about in the politics of the Middle East today? What are the Balkans about? Who gets the right to sell Apple computers? Whether somebody represents Microsoft in Belgrade? That's not what they're fighting about, is it?

They're fighting about religion and ethnicity and imagined history and old slights—real and imagined. That's what the whole thing's about.

And I ask you to think about that. Look at Seattle. Next time—just walk down the street, here. That's what you want America to look like, isn't it? Look around this room here. That's what you want America to look like, and that's what you'd like the world of your children to be like.

Now, I don't ask all these ethnic groups, many of whom are still very poor and early on experiencing their democracies—anywhere—to like each other. Don't even ask them not to fight. But I do not think it is too much to ask, as we have first in Bosnia and now in Kosovo, that there be no ethnic cleansing and slaughter, or to recognize that if that becomes an acceptable basis of behavior in the world, especially in Europe right at the doorstep of our closet allies and trading partners, that it bodes very ill for the future. We made a terrible mistake with the bombing of the Chinese Embassy, and I regret it more than I can say. I talked to the President of China today and told him that. But you can see that on CNN.

What you do not see on television is the tales told by the refugees of the little village where 15 men had a rope wrapped around them and were burned alive because they happened to be Albanian Muslims, of all the young girls that were systematically raped because they hap-

pened to be Kosovar Albanian Muslims and because the people who were oppressing them knew that even though that is horrible in any culture, it is especially awful in theirs.

So I say to you: The reason I talk about all this stuff all the time and the reason we have joined with our NATO Allies and we're doing what we're doing in Kosovo is, I don't want to let the promise of the 21st century be overcome by the oldest poison in human society's history. And America is about to get it right.

The framers of the Constitution knew when they said all of us were created equal, endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—they were smart people. They were not dummies. They knew we were nowhere near living that.

You go to the Jefferson Memorial and you see one of Thomas Jefferson's great quotes: "When I think of slavery, I tremble to consider that God is just." They knew that. Well, we're about to get it right. And that's why we have to fight to give all our children a safe future. That's why we have to fight against the last vestiges of discrimination, and that's why we are right to stand with our NATO Allies against ethnic cleansing and manslaughter in Kosovo. It is the world we want our children to live in.

I want to close with this story. A couple of days ago, I had 19 Indian tribal leaders in the White House representing the Dakotas and Montana, the northern high plains tribes. They are the poorest tribes in America. And you can imagine that their geographical position doesn't make them very well positioned to get a lot of new and modern investment. You want to put a data center there, they'd be glad to have it.

So anyway—and I got a lot of my Cabinet there, and they asked if we could sit in a circle in the Roosevelt Room, as was their custom. And so we did. And the tribal leaders, each in their turn, got up and talked, and they talked about housing and education and economics and all of that. And then at the end of the meeting, their spokesperson, a very tall man whose name was Tex, believe it or not, the chief of his particular tribe, he pulls out this scroll, and it is a proclamation where the tribal leaders are signing an endorsement of the United States position in Kosovo. And he said to me, "We know

something about ethnic cleansing. And America has come a very long way. And we think we should stand with you.”

And then another young tribal leader asked if he could speak. And he stood up; he had a beautiful Indian silver necklace on. And with great dignity he said, “Mr. President, I had two uncles. One of them was on the beach at Normandy; the other was the first Native American fighter pilot in the United States military. My great-great grandfather was slaughtered by the 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee. I now am the father of a young son. We have come a long way from my great-great grandfather to my uncles to my son. I love my son more than anything. But because of the distance we have come, I would gladly have him serve to save the people of Kosovo from having their culture and their lives destroyed.”

And there was not—you couldn’t breathe in this room because we knew that this dignified man representing people with all kinds of problems was the living embodiment of everything that this country ought to be. And his people were here first. All the rest of us are latecomers.

So I say to you: The best politics for our party is to do what is right for our children and our country for the new century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. in the Kirtland Cutter Room at the Rainier Club. In his remarks, he referred to event chair Jack J. Spitzer; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Wayne C. Marshall, regional finance director, Democratic National Committee; Gov. Gary Locke of Washington; Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle; Paul Berendt, chair, Washington State Democratic Party; former Mayor Norman B. Rice of Seattle and his wife, Constance; King County Executive Ron Sims; event cochairs Ted Johnson and Ben Waldman; Pamela Eakes, founder and president, Mothers Against Violence in America; Renee Mullins, daughter of murder victim James Byrd, Jr.; President Jiang Zemin of China; Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Statement on Senate Action on Gun Control Legislation

May 14, 1999

I am deeply disappointed that, by the narrowest of margins, the Senate has refused to close the gun show loophole while creating other dangerous loopholes to our gun laws. If the Senate’s decision is left to stand, it will be easier for criminals to get guns and harder for law enforcement to do its job. Criminals will be able to get guns at gun shows and pawn shops,

no questions asked, and Federal law enforcement won’t be able to ensure gun sellers’ compliance with laws or to trace firearms later used in crimes. If the Senate wants to do right by the American people, it will once again bring up the Lautenberg amendment, when all Members are present, and close the gun show loophole once and for all.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Portola Valley, California

May 14, 1999

Walter, I’d like to say something that I think a lot of us who’ve known you for many years could have been thinking. We laughed about how you’ve always been for losers and now you’ve had a few winners. But one of the rea-

sons that we love you and admire you is that you stuck by the people with whom you agreed, whether they won or lost. A lot of people don’t do that anymore; we appreciate that.

Let me say I'm delighted to be here with Governor Davis and with Sharon, Attorney General Lockyer, Mayor Brown—he's funny, isn't he? *[Laughter]* I would have come all the way out here tonight just to hear Willie do that little shtick he did, you know? *[Laughter]* When I start to get bored with politics and kind of tired I—and you know, it's 12:30 on my body clock, so I needed a little jolt. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Walter and Martin and Tom, Victoria, all the rest of you who put this dinner together tonight. I want to thank our Democratic Party officers for coming with me, Joe Andrew, Andy Tobias, and Beth Dozoretz.

You know, today we were in Seattle before we came here. And we had all these exciting young people at this fundraiser we did, and a lot of them were kind of high-tech folks. And Joe Andrew got up and said, "In 2000 we're going to win every election, from President to dogcatcher"—as if that were a great distance. *[Laughter]* I was sort of hoping we would have a wider range than that myself. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Willie Mays for being here again. I want to thank Walter—one of the greatest things Walter ever did for me was arrange for me to meet Willie Mays. And a lot of you know I am a big sports fan, and I collect memorabilia. I've got 100-year-old golf clubs and all kinds of things, but the things that I treasure the most are the baseballs that Willie has autographed for me and my wife and my daughter.

And I hope he won't be embarrassed by this, but I went to Atlanta the other day—oh, a couple months ago—to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the night Hank Aaron broke Babe Ruth's record. And Hank and Billye are friends of Hillary's and mine, and we like them very much. So I went down there, and Hank Aaron had 12 Hall of Fame baseball players there—Reggie Jackson and Frank Robinson, just a slew of great players.

And we were sitting there, and I meet all of Hank's family and his in-laws and all these—there were thousands of people there. And I just, sort of off the top of my head, I said, "Hank, who's the greatest baseball player you ever played with?" He said, "Oh, that's an easy answer; it's not even close: Willie Mays." He said, "Not even close!"

And I personally would like to thank Willie and his wonderful wife for the work they have done since leaving baseball and for their concern for our children. And I'm delighted to see them.

I just talked to Hillary not long before I came here. She's on an airplane coming back—you may have seen on the news today, she was in Macedonia visiting the refugees there. And I wanted to mention her, in particular, since we're all making jokes at Gray's expense—including himself making jokes at his expense. The very first person who ever told me he would be elected Governor when he had been written off by all of the experts was my wife, who came to California. And she said, "Man, I've been out there and," she said, "I think he's going to win. He knows why he wants the job; he's done a good job, and he inspires confidence." She said, "He inspires confidence in me, and I believe he would inspire confidence in other people." And sure enough, you have, and we're grateful to you, and we thank you.

I would also like to thank Laura Tyson, who was the Chairman of my Council of Economic Advisers and head of my Economic Council, for being here. And she's now an academic, which means that sooner or later, she will have to criticize something I'm doing on the economy. *[Laughter]* So I'll give her advance dispensation.

Ladies and gentlemen, the hour's late and most of you have heard me give this speech before. *[Laughter]* I'll tell you a story, one more story. One night in the mid-1980's—I can't remember exactly when it was—Tina Turner came to Little Rock, Arkansas, to do a concert. And you all remember, you know, she sort of faded from the scene, and then she made this huge recovery with an album called "Private Dancer." I remember because she had a saxophone player in her band who was a weight lifter. Remember that guy, the guy with the great big arms? He had arms as big as my neck, and he wore chains and stuff—it was a weird deal. *[Laughter]* But the guy could play.

So she comes to make this concert and she was playing at the Arkansas Fairgrounds and, I forget, Hillary had to go some place that night. So I had six tickets, and I took all these friends of ours and we went. And usually the guy who ran the concert put me sort of 15 rows back in the middle, so I had a real good seat but I wasn't conspicuous—because I was the Governor, after all. But he knew I loved Tina Turner. So this night he completely embarrassed me by putting all six of us on the front row in the middle. And behind us there was a lady I later found out was a hairdresser in a small

town about 50 miles away, dressed in a tiger outfit—[laughter]—complete with ears and tail and everything. It was an interesting night, all right. [Laughter]

But anyway, here's the point I made about the speech—you all laughed when I said you'd all heard the speech. Tina Turner sang all of her new songs, and everybody loved them. Then at the end of the concert the band started playing the introduction to her first hit, "Proud Mary." And as she walked up to the microphone, with all that energy packed into her, the crowd just went crazy before she ever said anything. So she backed off, and then she walked up again. The crowd went crazy again.

And she looked at the crowd, and she said, "You know, I have been singing this song for 25 years, and it gets better every time I do it." So I thought, that's something I'll try to remember as I rock along through life. [Laughter]

I want to make a case tonight that I hope you can remember. We were talking at our table, and I was looking at all of you, and I remembered little conversations we shared when you came by and we took the pictures. I always am interested as to what motivates people to get involved in politics, to make their contributions, to come to events like this. And when you go home tonight, I want you to think about why you came and what you're going to do tomorrow and in the days ahead.

I am gratified by what has already been said, what the Governor said, what Walter said. I've loved being President. I love working with people like Mayor Brown, because we think we're supposed to actually enjoy what we're doing. And Gray is actually beginning to enjoy what he's doing. [Laughter] I hope it doesn't destroy his whole sort of persona, you know. [Laughter] But it is a great privilege to be in public service. You know, everybody talks about what a great burden it is. Well, nobody made us do this. It is a great privilege. It's an honor.

And I am so gratified that the economy is in the shape it's in. I saw the pain in the faces of the people in California when I was running for President in 1992. And I wanted people here to believe that California was the cutting edge of tomorrow again. I wanted them to be full of optimism and hope and taking all these initiatives to meet the challenges of our country.

And I'm grateful for the progress we've made in crime and welfare and education and so many

other things. I'm glad that 90 percent of our kids are immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time ever. I'm glad that we've got 100,000 young people in AmeriCorps. Many of them have served in northern California. It took the Peace Corps 20 years to get 100,000 volunteers. We got that many in the domestic national service program in 4½ years. I'm proud of that. And I'm grateful for the chance to serve.

But I want to make this point: Whatever role I had in this was not as important as the fact that in 1992, our party united behind a vision and a set of ideas that we have then all worked like crazy for 6 years to make real in the life of America.

And the reason you should be here tonight—because I'm not running for anything—the reason you should be here is not because you're glad I was President and you feel good about what's happened in California but because you understand that—that there is no indispensable person, but there are indispensable ideas and indispensable attitudes.

I ran for President, and I was happy as a clam at home with Hillary and Chelsea and the life we had. But I was very concerned that our country had no driving vision of what we were going to be like in the 21st century and no strategy to get us there. And I didn't like what I saw in Washington. Everybody was having the same old political debate over and over, sounded like a broken record every day. And if I was bored with it, I can only imagine how people who aren't addicted to politics, like I am, felt.

And we tried to change all that. I really do want our children to live in a world in the next century where everybody has a chance to live out their dreams, where everybody is expected to be a responsible citizen, where we join together across all the lines that divide us—celebrating the differences but appreciating even more our common humanity, and where America is trusted enough and strong enough to continue to lead the world to greater peace and freedom and prosperity. That's what I want. It's pretty simple.

And I believed in 1992, and I believe more strongly today, that to have that kind of world, we had to have a different approach to politics. First, we had to believe we could grow the economy and preserve the environment at the same time. Second, we had to believe we could

grow the economy in a way that had more entrepreneurs like you have in this part of our world, and at the same time make life better for ordinary middle class people and give more poor people a chance to work their way into the middle class.

I believed there was a way you could lower the crime rate not just by prosecuting crime but by preventing it. I believed that we ought to put more money in education, but we had to raise standards, and I was tired of seeing poor people patronized, because I believe all of our children can learn. And lots of other things like that.

I think a lot of times, the debates we have in Washington, they don't resonate very well with the real-world experience people have in California or Arkansas or anywhere else in the country. And the story of this administration has been the story of a relentless effort for over 6 years now to take these basic ideas and that vision and turn them into real, concrete actions and results for the American people.

Now, we still have a lot to do. I'm doing my best to get the Congress to address the challenges of the aging of America, to reform Social Security and Medicare and help people with long-term care, and help people save for their own retirement. I'm asking the Congress to do it in a way that pays down the Government's debt. Did you ever think a politician could even talk about that? Because I believe that we can get the Government debt down in 15 years to its lowest point since before World War I. And if we do, interest rates will be lower; investment will be higher; there will be more businesses, more jobs, and higher incomes. And we will be relatively less dependent on the vagaries of the world financial markets.

I believe that we have to do more to help people balance their work life and their family life. So when I talk about child care or family leave or the Patients' Bill of Rights, what I'm really saying is, most parents are working, and I think it's important for people to succeed at home and at work because the most important work in America is raising good children. And if it doesn't work out, as we often see, there is a grievous price to be paid.

I am concerned in the aftermath of what happened at Littleton, but I am also hopeful because we had all these school shootings last year and people wanted to do things, and a lot of things were done. But I think for the first time,

the whole country now believes that what happened with those children could happen in any community. And I believe the whole country wants to do better and also recognizes that many of our children fall victim every year, not in stunning, tragic, big ways but in quiet alleys or in drive-by shootings or in other ways where they can almost die anonymously. And I want us to have a national campaign to make our children's lives less violent.

And I'd like to close with just a reflection on that and what we're doing in Kosovo and point out what I think is—in addition to economic opportunity for all and educational opportunity for all and the sense of general community—I think the most important thing about the Democratic Party on the eve of the 21st century is our vision of what community means at home and our relationship to the rest of the world. And if you take these two difficult events and break them down, maybe I can make some sense of that.

What I honestly believe about the Littleton situation—and I've spent a lot of time thinking about it. I have been overwhelmingly impressed by almost all of the people I've seen from that community talking on television and going to the townhall meetings, some of the brave parents actually already—who lost their children—already able to try to make some contribution to a safer future for the rest of us. One father who lost his child was with Hillary last week, the day before Mother's Day, to be part of this whole antiviolence movement.

But what I think is that we now understand—I hope we do, as a people—that if we're going to make America a safer place for our children, we have to stop pointing the fingers at one another and start assuming responsibility. We have to—instead of saying, "I wish someone else would do something," we have to say, "Okay, I've shown up for duty. What am I supposed to do?"

Because this is an exceedingly complex thing—Willie and I could have an argument. I could take—you know, we have the—is it the entertainment culture or is it the gun culture? And he could take one side and I could take the other, and then 5 minutes later we could switch roles. We all know how to point fingers—we're good at that—and shift the blame.

Let's start with the facts of life today. For whatever reason, there are more children in the

United States, of all races and in all socioeconomic groups, that are at risk of being victims of violence. You would all accept that, I presume; that is a fact, for whatever reason. And there are also children, therefore, at risk of being victims of violence from other young people. Therefore, there are a higher percentage of children in the United States than in most other advanced countries who are themselves vulnerable to violent conduct.

Now, if we start with that, and we say, "Shouldn't we all be doing something," I think we can move to "yes" very quickly. One of the things that you see in all these tragic stories—it's heartbreaking—is how easy it is for children as they come of age and naturally seek their own independence to be strangers in their own homes and not to have people in their schools or their communities that are so connected to them that they can't drift off into the darkness.

So the fundamental thing is, we have to still do a better job trying to help parents understand what it means for children to move into adolescence and to drift away, and to be given both independence and still be held accountable and be involved with their parents and their lives. And we have to help the schools do a better job of connecting and telling kids how they can find nonviolent ways to deal with their conflicts and how they can count no matter what group they're in and how they can be treated with respect no matter what group they're in.

I don't see how anybody can dispute the fact that it's crazy to have a country where, you know, criminals can buy guns at gun shows they can't buy at gun stores. I mean, I think that's a pretty hard case to defend.

I think it's a hard case to defend to say we've abolished assault weapons—thanks in no small measure, by the way, to a citizen from San Francisco named Steve Sposato, who lost his wife in a shooting, a man who happened to be a Republican. I met him and his daughter. So we abolished assault weapons, but we let people keep bringing in these big ammunition clips and selling them legally as long as they were imported, as opposed to homegrown. How come these things are in the law? These things don't happen by accident, folks. I did the best I could back in 1994. I pushed that thing as hard as I could push. So now we have a sense all over the country we should close the loopholes.

Florida, not normally known as a raving liberal State, voted 72 percent in a public ref-

erendum to close the gun show loophole, and we're having trouble getting it done in Washington. That's not good. It's not going to kill the NRA to change its position. The gun manufacturers did, and I applaud them. They deserve a lot of credit. There have been—one of the most outstanding groups in this whole debate are the gun manufacturers, coming and saying, "Okay, let's clean up this business. Let's have responsible, commonsense controls. We want people to be able to hunt; we want to support the rights of sportsmen; but we don't need that. We need to deal with this."

So they have their responsibility. But so, too, does the entertainment industry. You can say if you start from their perspective, just like you can say if you start from the gun perspective, "Guns don't kill people, people do." Right? If you start from the entertainment perspective, you can say, "Well, we show these movies and we sell these video games in Europe and you don't have this level of violence." You can say that—in other words, from anybody else's perspective, you can always say this.

But here is the thing. Start with the kids. We have more kids getting hurt and more kids hurting other kids. Start with the facts. And we now have over 300 studies that show that the volume of sustained exposure to violence through the media—and now increasingly through interactive video games—is so great that it desensitizes children dramatically to the impact of violence and the real consequences of it, and therefore makes the most vulnerable children more likely to go over the edge.

Now, having said that, we have to find some commonsense things we can do. For example, you could change the whole advertising strategy of a lot of these games and other media outlets and not have a lot of the problems you have. But lots of other things can be done. I'm trying to make a larger point here. How we respond to this and whether we take on something really big and important like this and do what the Mothers and Students Against Drunk Driving did to drive down drunk driving; or do what the 10,000 business people did to hire 400,000 people off welfare so people wouldn't be just thrown in the streets—how we respond to this and whether we respond to this as one community coming together instead of pointing the finger at each other will define in large measure what kind of country we're going to be in the 21st century.

And the same is true of Kosovo. What in the world have these two things got in common? Well, in both cases, there at least is some evidence that part of the problem was one group of people looking down on another group of people and getting to where they hated them and then getting to where they thought it was legitimate to take them out. And if you look all over the world today, from the Middle East to the Balkans, to Rwanda and Africa, to the still unresolved conflict in Northern Ireland, what is at the root of most of the world's problems on the edge of the 21st century? Is it that the Kosovar Albanians don't have as good computers as the Serbs? Are we fighting over some software secret in central Africa? Not on your life. The economics are bringing people together. That's one of the reasons we're going to get this thing done in Ireland this year.

What is dividing people on the edge of this brave new brilliant high-tech interdependent world are the oldest demons of human society, our hatred and fear of people who are different from us. First, you're scared of them; then you hate them; then you dehumanize them; then it's okay to kill them. And isn't it ironic that we're sitting here a stone's throw from Silicon Valley, dreaming about the marvels of modern technology and at risk of being held hostage to the oldest, most primitive human designs?

So you want to know why we're in Kosovo? Because it's in Europe, where we were pulled into two wars in the 20th century and the cold war; and because we had the capacity to stand against that kind of ethnic cleansing and slaughter; and because when we couldn't get it done for 4 long years in Bosnia, there was a trail of 2½ million refugees and a quarter of a million people dead, and we still had to get in and put Humpty Dumpty back together again and tell people they had to stop killing each other because of their different religious and ethnic background.

But I'm telling you, there are common threads to what is there—the hatred of those boys built up in Littleton, hatred looking up at the athletes, hatred in their minds looking down at the minorities; the hatred in what happened when that poor man, James Byrd, was murdered in Texas and his body was torn apart; hatred in what happened to Matthew Shepard in Wyoming. It's all the same thing.

We're all scared. Not anybody in the world is not scared from time to time. How many

days do you wake up in a good mood? And how many days do you wake up in not such a good mood? Every human being has got a little scale inside. It's like the scales of justice and hope and fear. And some days the scales are just perfectly in balance, some days they're just—you're crazy with hope, and some days you're gripped with fear.

And the more fearful you are, the more people who are different from you seem to present a threat. And here we are. Look at California. Look at San Francisco. Look at Seattle, where I was today. Look at the diversity of our population, racial and otherwise—religious, all the differences you can imagine—sexual orientation, the whole 9 yards. Look at all the differences in our population.

In our dreams, all people get a chance to become what God meant for them to be and we pull together. In other words, we finally got a chance to be the country our Founders said we ought to be when they knew darn well we weren't. I mean, when only white men with property could vote, they said all are created equal, and they knew what they were doing. These guys were not dummies.

Every now and then, I go over to the Jefferson Memorial and read what Thomas Jefferson said, "When I think of slavery, I tremble to think that God is just." He knew exactly what he was doing. They knew that this whole struggle would be sort of an endless effort to try to make real these ideals. And here we are about to do it. And are we going to let the whole thing go haywire because of the most primitive impulses in human society, both inside our country and beyond our borders?

That man that blew up the Federal building in Oklahoma City, he was poisoned with hatred and a sort of blind irrational notion that if you worked for the Federal Government there was something inherently bad about you. And I believe the distinguishing characteristics of our country in the 21st century has to be that we constantly, consistently reaffirm that for all the differences among us—we don't have to like each other, but we have to respect each other, we have to tolerate each other, and we have to actively affirm each other's common humanity. And if you want all this modern technology to be put at the service of your children's dreams instead of terrorists and madmen, then you have got to say this is one thing America

will stand for, overall, above all, beyond everything else.

And that is what all these incidents have in common. We must not let the great promise of the modern world be undermined by the most ancient of hatreds. We cannot fundamentally alter human nature, but we can alter the rules by which all of us let our nature play out. And we can call forth our better selves. That is what we have worked for 6½ years to do. And you know as well as I do, if the economy works better it's easier to do.

But when you go home tonight and you get up tomorrow and somebody says, "Why in the world did you write a check and go to that thing?" Tell them, "Because I believe in the vision and the ideas that the country has followed in the last 6 years. We have a lot more to do, and most important of all, I really want America to be a community and a model to the world, because I want my children to have a future more like my dreams than the worst nightmares we see in the paper."

We can do it, but not unless we work at it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner host Walter Shorenstein; Bill Lockyer, State attorney general; Gov. Gray Davis of California and his wife, Sharon; Mayor Willie Brown of San Francisco; dinner cochair Martin Maddaloni and Tom and Victoria O'Gara; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Andy Tobias, treasurer, and Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; baseball legends Willie Mays and Hank Aaron and their wives, Mae and Billye, respectively; Tom Mauser, whose son, Daniel, was killed in the Columbine High School shooting by gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold; gun control activist Steven Sposato and his daughter, Meghan; and Timothy McVeigh, who was convicted of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City, OK.

The President's Radio Address *May 15, 1999*

Good morning. In the past few weeks, ever since that terrible day in Littleton, people all across America have searched their souls and searched for solutions to prevent this kind of tragedy from happening again and to reduce the level of violence to which our children are exposed.

Last Monday at our White House strategy session on children and violence, representatives of every sector of society agreed on one fundamental fact: Making progress requires taking responsibility by all of us. That begins at home. Parents have a duty to guide children as they grow and to stay involved in their lives as they grow older and more independent.

Educators have a responsibility to provide safe learning environments, to teach children how to handle conflicts without violence, and how to treat all young people, no matter how different, with respect. They also need to teach them how to get counseling or mental health services if they're needed.

Communities have a responsibility to make sure that there is a village, as the First Lady said, that supports all its children, especially those who don't get their needs met at home. And the community needs to do more to get our kids involved in working with each other and serving the community, not being isolated from it.

And here in Washington, we have a responsibility. We've got a responsibility to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. There's a broad national consensus on that point. At the White House conference, the gun manufacturers agreed that we need common-sense approaches. Everybody agrees except the U.S. Senate. For example, everyone knows we need a real law to close the deadly gun show loophole, through which thousands, indeed, tens of thousands of guns are sold each year without background checks—even though they'd have to have a background check to be sold in a gun store.

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Now, the Senate declined to pass that bill. Even worse, the Senate's substitute bill is riddled with new loopholes permitting convicted felons to get guns at pawn shops, no questions asked, and making it harder, not easier, for law enforcement to trace guns used in crimes. If the Senate wants to fix the problem, it should fix the problem, not make it worse. The American people deserve better. They know law-abiding citizens don't need loopholes in our gun laws, only criminals do. I sure hope that in the coming weeks the Senate will step up to its responsibility and do the right thing by our children.

I've always said the entertainment industry must do its part, too. In 1993, shortly after I became President, I traveled to Hollywood and spoke there to members of the community about their responsibility. I said then, "You have the capacity to do good, to help change the way we behave, the way we think of ourselves. Examine what together you might do to help us rebuild the frayed bonds of community, to give children nonviolent ways to resolve their frustrations."

After 6 years of work, the entertainment industry is helping parents to limit children's exposure to violence, working with the administration on a voluntary rating system for television and the V-chip to enforce it, and on parental screening for the Internet and ratings for all Internet games sales. But there is still too much violence on our Nation's screens, large and small. Too many creators and purveyors of violence say there is nothing they can do about it. And there are still too many vulnerable children who are steeped in this culture of violence, becoming increasingly desensitized to it and to its consequences and, therefore, as studies show, hundreds of them more liable to commit violence themselves.

By the age of 18, the typical American will see 40,000 dramatized murders. There are those

who say they can or should do nothing about this. But I believe they're wrong. Every one of us has a role to play in giving our kids a safe future. And those with greater influence have greater responsibility. We should see movies and music, TV programs, video games, and advertising for them made by people who made them as if their own children were watching. Members of the entertainment community can make a big difference.

Today I want to issue three specific challenges to them. First, the whole industry should stop showing guns in any ads or previews children might see. Second, I challenge theater and video store owners all across our country to enforce more strictly the rating systems on the movies they show, rent, and sell. You should check ID's, not turn the other way as a child walks unchaperoned into an R-rated movie. Third, I challenge the movie industry to reevaluate its entire ratings systems, especially the PG rating, to determine whether it is allowing too much gratuitous violence in movies approved for viewing by children.

Our administration is fighting to do all we can to protect children. The entertainment industry should do everything it can, too. Across America people are coming together, saying, "Yes, together we can change this culture of violence; together we can give our children a safer future and a culture of values we'll be proud to pass on to future generations." We can do it together.

Thank you.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:26 p.m. on May 14 in the library at the Rainier Club in Seattle, WA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 14 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Radio Remarks on the Observance of Armed Forces Day

May 15, 1999

Armed Forces Day was created in 1950 as a way for Americans to thank our men and women in uniform for their service and sacrifice.

Our Nation has changed a good deal since then. But our debt to the Armed Forces is as great as ever.

From the Persian Gulf to the Americas, from Korea to Kosovo, you are protecting the freedom so many Americans gave their lives for in this century and helping to build a safer world for the next century.

We ask a lot from our Armed Forces, and we owe you a lot in return, especially at a moment of such great challenge to our service men and women around the world. I am determined to work with Congress to give you the equipment and training you need and the pay and quality of life you deserve. The security you have given us supports our strong economy—

we must ensure that you and your families share its benefits. So on this Armed Forces Day, all Americans join me in gratitude for your service to our Nation.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at 3:31 p.m. on May 14 in the library at the Rainier Club in Seattle, WA, for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 15. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on the Observance of Armed Forces Day, 1999 *May 15, 1999*

The first Armed Forces Day was celebrated in 1950, to acknowledge the debt all Americans owed to the courageous men and women who had fought a great war for freedom. Our nation has changed a great deal over the last half century, but our debt to the Armed Forces remains as great as ever. Each year, Armed Forces Day gives us an important chance to pause and remember the service and sacrifice that keeps our nation in the vanguard of freedom. On behalf of all Americans, I thank the men and women of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard for all they do to keep our nation strong and secure.

Today, the world's prayers are with the people suffering the horrors of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and with the brave Americans and allies coming to their aid. But Kosovo is only one of many places our armed forces are making a difference. From the Persian Gulf to the

Americas, from Korea to the Mediterranean, our men and women in uniform are superbly performing their mission: deterring war, protecting the freedom so many Americans gave their lives for in this century, and creating confidence that the next century will be more peaceful than the last.

Every time I meet with our servicemen and women, I am inspired by their patriotism, skill, and selfless dedication to the ideals that make this nation great. America is proud of the greatest force for freedom the world has ever known.

On this Armed Forces Day, all Americans join me in gratitude for their service to our nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial and Congressional Campaign Committees Dinner in Beverly Hills, California *May 15, 1999*

I have never before had the honor of being the warmup act for Andrea Bocelli, but I will. I will do my best. *[Laughter]* I want to—and if I sing a little, you will just have to—*[laughter]*. I want to say first of all how grateful I am

to all of you for being here, especially to the chairs and the cochairs of the dinner and, of course, to David and Steven and Jeffrey. I want to thank my leaders, Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt. I was looking at them up

here. We knew each other, of course, before I was elected, but not so well as we do today. And I can tell you that it is a joy and an honor every day to work with them. They are people that we can really be proud of.

And I have seen them in far less comfortable circumstances than we find ourselves tonight, and they are what they seem to be, and they're always there for the American people.

I'd like to thank Governor Davis and Sharon for coming. I'm thrilled by his success and was honored to be asked to campaign here a time or two last year.

And I want to echo what has already been said about Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer. They are on the forefront of this still ongoing and yet unfolding struggle to protect our children on the gun issues, and I want you to give them a big boost tonight and a lot of support, because it's been pretty tough there, although the American people did a great job in turning some of those votes around last week.

I'd like to thank Senator Torricelli for being here. It's his unhappy, or sometimes happy, duty to go around and try to make sure that we've got someone to actually run for all these Senate seats and take on some very tough fights. I thank Congressman Kennedy and your Congressmen, Henry Waxman and Brad Sherman, for being here. And Mayor Levin gave me a gift from the city tonight, so I'm delighted to be here. *[Laughter]*

And I'm glad to be here in, as far as I know, the only beneficial product to the Teapot Dome scandal here—this beautiful place.

Most of what needs to be said has already been said, but I would like to try to put a few things in perspective, talk a little bit about some of the events of the present that are of great concern to people.

When I came to California in 1991 and early '92, this was a very different place in a different country. People were divided and confused and drifting and frustrated. And I believed very strongly it was because we had no overriding vision for our future, no strategy to achieve it, no way, therefore, of pulling the American people together and getting us pointed in the right direction. And that's really why I got in the race for the President.

It was not the easiest of races. I was laughing with Goldie Hawn tonight because I remember her being in the Biltmore in Los Angeles on June 2, 1992, when I was nominated for Presi-

dent, really officially. I won in California and New Jersey and Ohio that night, so it was clear that I had enough votes to be nominated. And all the stories were the exit polls showing that Ross Perot was really in first place, and I was in third place. I say that to caution you about reading too much into any polls. *[Laughter]*

But I knew something, I thought, about the American people, about where we were at this moment in our history and where I thought we ought to go. Just 6 weeks later there had been a complete reversal in the polls, and thank the good Lord, they stayed that way through November, and the people of California were very good to me and to Al Gore and to our families and our administration, twice. And I am very, very thankful.

What I want you to do—you know what all the individual issues are, but what I want you to think about tonight, just for a minute, before we hear a magnificent performer and before you go home and you go back to your lives tomorrow and the days ahead, is what you would say to people if they asked you why you came tonight. You could say, "Well, Geffen made me." *[Laughter]* Or there's a lot of things you could say. But I hope you will have some really good answers.

I guess the first thing I'd like to say to you is, obviously, this is a fundraiser for the Congress. It's not for me. I can't run anymore. And I'm here because I believe very strongly that the people you just saw should lead the majorities in the House and Senate; because while I am very grateful for the opportunity I have been given to serve the American people as President and for whatever role I was able to play in this remarkable economic turnaround and the big drop in crime and welfare and the improvements in almost all the indicators of social health—the lowest minority unemployment in history, the highest homeownership—all the things that are moving in the right direction, I'm grateful that we've had a chance to be a force for peace and freedom around the world. What I want you to understand is, first, most of what we have done could not have been done, had it not been for the support I received from the Democrats in the Congress. Second, most of what we stopped could not have been stopped, had it not been for their support. And third and most important, what we did grew out of a vision of 21st century America as a

place where there is opportunity for every responsible citizen, where we celebrate our differences but we come together in one community, and a place that can still lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, and out of a willingness to think in different ways about the future, to break out of the old vices that were paralyzing Washington.

We believe, for example, that we can reward successful entrepreneurs, like many of you in this audience, and still expand the middle class and give poor people a chance to make it. We believe we can grow the economy and improve the environment. We believe we have an obligation to help people succeed not just at work but also at home, because raising children is the most important job of any society.

We believe these things. We believe that we can have a quality and excellence and high standards and accountability in education. We believe we can be a force for peace in the world and still stand up if we have to, against ethnic cleansing and weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

And the work of the last 6 years has largely been our combined efforts to take these ideas and that vision and hammer them into specific proposals. It's what animates our efforts today to deal with the aging of America, with the reforms of Social Security and Medicare, doing something about long-term care, helping people to do more to save for their own retirement.

It's what's driving me now that we have a big surplus instead of a huge deficit to say that we ought to deal with Social Security in a way that pays down the debt for the first time in anybody's memory, so that 17 years from now, we could actually have the smallest debt this country's had since before World War I, which will mean for our children lower interest rates, a stronger economy, less dependent on the vagaries of the world economy.

We believe that we have to continue to improve the environment in ways that are tangible. I'm proud of the fact that the air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, and we set aside more land than any administration except those of the two Roosevelts, in our term, but we have a lot more to do. And this environmental issue will continue to dominate public concern for at least another 30 to 40 years. So we still have more to do.

But what I want to say to you is, those of you who are here because you've helped me

through thick and thin for all these long years, this did not happen by accident, nor did it happen just because I was President. It happened because we had the right vision and the right ideas, and we worked to make them real. And it couldn't be done without the help of the people who have spoken before me and what they represent, and they deserve the chance to be in the majority so that we can see these ideas fully implemented in the beginning of the 21st century. That is what I want you to think about when you leave here tonight.

Let me say, in spite of all the good news, most Americans have been sobered in the last several days because of the terrible tragedy at Littleton and the ongoing conflict in Kosovo. And I would like to say to you that I think how we respond to both of these will say a lot about what kind of country we have for years to come.

And I believe that the ideas that I've tried to infuse into all of our work ought to be looked at against the backdrop of these two issues. I do think—you heard Dick Gephardt talking about what the person who lost a child at Littleton said, "Don't let my child die in vain." I do believe that, even more than all the terrible tragedies that happened last year, because of the sheer scope and power of this event, it touched a deep nerve in America that has profoundly opened up our country to a serious examination of what it would take to give our children a safer childhood.

And last Monday I had a lot of people from every sector of our society into the White House, with Hillary and Al and Tipper, to talk about how we could have a national campaign against children's violence in the same way that we have seen other national campaigns prevail in the past. And what I'd like to say is—what I've pleaded with people to do is not to make this chapter 57 in the ongoing American culture war saga.

You know, if the house next door here were burning down, we'd probably all be willing to go over there and help put the fire out. And think how absurd it would be if Norm looked at David and said, "I'm not going to help put the fire out because it's your fault you left your car running outside the house, and its sparks from the fumes caused the fire." And David said, "Norm, if you'd quit smoking years ago, you wouldn't have put a cigarette over in the yard, and that's what caused the fire." And so

everybody gets in a fight about who's at fault here, and we let the house burn down—that is a dumb thing to do.

This is far more important. We can't let those children have perished in vain. And I don't know—you know, probably a lot of you are like me. I have watched the parents of these children being interviewed. I have seen the school people. I have seen some of the wounded children. I have been, on the whole, profoundly moved and impressed by these people, by the depth of their faith and their conviction and their genuine striving to understand and go beyond this.

So for me, I think we ought to—since I think what happens to our kids is more important than whether the house next door burns down, I think we ought to have the same attitude. We ought to say, “Okay, I'm showing up for work. Tell me what I can do.” And I believe that we have to do more to help parents do their job, whether it's better child care or family leave programs or, literally, people helping people understand that your kids can become strangers in your own home.

And I agree with what has already been said. It is a fact that most parents in America spend far less time with their children today than they used to spend. That is not free. That's why I say, we will never be the society we want in the new century until we better balance work and family.

I think we have to help the schools do more. I was in a fabulous school in Alexandria, Virginia, the other day—that's the most culturally diverse school district in America now, just across the river from the White House—where they have peer mediation programs and counseling services and mental health services and a 1-800 anonymous hotline that if one kid calls and says, “I'm worried” about another one, they know it will be followed up on, and they know they will be kept anonymous. We have to do those kinds of things. We have to give every school the ability to protect our children better.

I think the people in the gun business ought to come to the table and help us. And I want to say one thing that wasn't mentioned, that I'm very proud of, is that the gun manufacturers, who for years sided always with the NRA and always opposed all these measures, have changed. And every one of you who believes that it's a good thing that we raise the handgun ownership age to 21 and that we close the loop-

hole—and Senator Feinstein's assault weapons bill, so now we can stop these big ammunition clips from coming in—it's never had any purpose, anyway.

We can also thank the gun manufacturers who supported the legislation this time in Congress and had the kind of civic responsibility that we need more from every American. I appreciate that.

Now, we've still got a lot of work to do. We've got to do background checks on explosives. We've got to get this gun show loophole closed in the right way. And I'm going to watch it pretty close, because unlike most Americans, I've actually been to a lot of these gun shows. It was part of my job description at one time when I was Governor of Arkansas. And I enjoyed them greatly, but they ought to have background checks, and they ought not to have loopholes.

So that's a big part of it. I also believe—let's talk about the entertainment issue. You know, I think the—here's the way I look at this. It's like the NRA can say, “Guns don't kill people, people do.” That's true, but people with guns kill more people than people without them. And we're the only country in the world that has no reasonable restrictions. There are now over 300 studies that show that sustained lifetime, week-in and week-out, night-in and night-out, exposure to indiscriminate violence through various media outlets over a period of time makes people less sensitive both to violence and to the consequences of violence.

Now, for most kids, it won't make any difference. But if you have a society where we have already positive—there are more kids who are spending less time with their folks and less time being connected to somebody that they know they're the most important person in the world to, and if that same society has those same kids having easier access to weapons, then desensitizing them will be more likely to push those that are vulnerable into destructive behavior.

Now, that doesn't make anybody who makes any movie or any video game or any television program a bad person or personally responsible with one show for a disastrous outcome. There's no call for finger-pointing here, but we just look around and we know that all these things go together, starting with the raw material that you've got more kids who are more isolated, some of them in their own homes, strangers.

So I would like to say, first, like I said about the gun manufacturers, it ought to be put in the record that the entertainment industry for 6 years has worked with Al Gore and me and with our administration on the V-chip, the television rating system, the video game rating system, the screening technologies that the video people—the Internet people have worked with us to try to help parents screen inappropriate material away from their kids on the Internet.

Today in my radio address, I said there were two or three other things—I had been studying this and listening—that I think ought to be done. I think that if young people can't see certain kinds of movies, then they shouldn't see the advertisement for the movies if the advertisement has the same stuff that caused the movie to be rated as inappropriate. And that's something I think the entertainment industry can look at and ought to look at very seriously, that the advertising ought to be consistent with the rating in terms of the audience that receives it.

I also think there's a lot of evidence that these ratings are regularly ignored, not by you but by the people who actually sell or rent the video tapes or the video games or run the movie theaters. And the rating system ought to be used by checking ID's. And finally, I believe in light of the most recent research, it would be a very good thing if the industry would reexamine the nature of the rating system, especially the PG-13 as it relates to violence, not because anybody is willfully doing something that they know is going to hurt somebody, not because any one television program or video game or movie will do it, but because we know that by the time a person becomes 18 in America, he or she has seen about 40,000 killings, and because we have a higher percentage of vulnerable people.

But we are determined to do this as a family. When we were at the White House, we sat around a big old table, and everybody was there, and everybody was asking, "What can I do?" And I say again to the Congress, this is not the time to let any interest group control doing things that are common sense. How in the world we can let somebody buy a gun at a gun show that they can't get in a gun shop because they've got a criminal background is beyond me. And this is a classic example—to go back to what my leaders said earlier—the people of Florida, not the most liberal State in America, voted last November, 72 percent to close the gun

show loophole with no ifs, ands, or buts, no wrinkles or curlicues or subterfuge.

So I say this is a time for all of us to do this. And how we deal with this, and whether we really come up with a kind of grassroots national campaign, like the campaign that Mothers and Students Against Drunk Driving launched that precipitously lowered deaths from drunk driving in America, like the effort that has been made that has precipitously lowered the teen pregnancy rate, like the grassroots effort business made that led to 10,000 business people hiring over 400,000 people off welfare—how we do this will have a lot to say about whether we're really going to build one community.

But there are other things we ought to do, too. And let me come back to Kosovo and talk about—you say, "Well, what's that got to do with this?" Well, first of all, all the studies, the reports indicate that these young men who were involved in this terrible tragedy at Littleton felt like they were a disrespected group and felt like they had to find some other groups to look down on or hate, the athletes, the minorities in the school.

And in Kosovo what you see and what you saw in Bosnia is people who have been ethnically cleansed. That's a sort of sterilized word for being systematically killed, uprooted, raped, having your property records destroyed, having your mosques and your museums and your libraries destroyed, having an effort to basically eradicate your existence.

But it's very interesting. Don't you find it ironic—especially those of you—I was talking to Steven the other day about my library, and we were talking about whether we could have some virtual reality effects in my library in the museum, you know. Sometimes I feel like I'm living in virtual reality, so I'm highly interested in this. *[Laughter]* This is the kind of thing you guys think about when you think about the 21st century, you know? Our kids are all on the Internet, and the human genome secrets have all been unlocked, and we all live to be 135, and we whiz around the world in safe airplanes that never have wrecks. And we'll be driving on the Los Angeles freeways, and there won't be any more traffic jams because all our cars will be computer programmed and directed and everything will be managed just fine. This is the exciting—and our kids will all have pen pals in Mongolia and Zimbabwe and Bolivia and

every place around the world. Technology will bring us together, and there will be a new golden age. That's our sort of image for our children in the 21st century.

Don't you think it is ironic that here we are in the last year of this millennium and that image is threatened by the oldest demon of human society, the hatred of the other? It starts as fear of the other, goes to hatred of the other, goes to dehumanization of the other, goes to killing of the other. Don't you think that's interesting? I mean, these people in Kosovo, they're not fighting over who gets the right to show the latest Hollywood movie in the theaters in Pristina. In Rwanda, they weren't killing each other over who got the latest software package. They're talking about how they worship God and what their ethnic group is, what real or imagined slights they have against one another as groups. And we are not free of it here.

I was in Texas the other day meeting with the daughter of James Byrd, the African-American who was dragged to death in Texas. The other night, I went to the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights dinner in Washington and recognized the mother of Matthew Shepard, the young man who was killed in Wyoming because he was gay. So America's got some work to do here, too. We ought to pass the "Hate Crimes Act" and the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," and we ought to—to show that we understand this.

But let me say, how we respond to Kosovo will determine what kind of world we're going to live in. I think all of you who know me know that I have worked for peace, that I deplore violence, that I have been heartbroken by the people who have been innocents in this battle who have perished.

You know, I'd a lot rather be in Northern Ireland giving speeches to my people about how they ought to put all their guns down. I want to go back and work on peace in the Middle East. I don't even think that we can intervene in all the ethnic conflicts in the world. We're not asking everybody to get along. We can't even ask them not to fight. But if we cannot stand, after the lessons of the 20th century, against the systematic killing of people and their uprooting because of their religion or their race or their ethnicity, then what kind of world are we leaving to our children?

You know, I had a wonderful day today. I spent the day with my daughter today, and

Hillary just got back from Macedonia. That's where she was in the refugee camps. And so we called her, and then we got lonesome, and we'd call her again. The three of us were talking about all this. And she was talking to me about these people and how they have lost everything and how they have loved ones they don't even know what happened to. There are tens of thousands of people who are unaccounted for. Nobody knows what happened to them. And she talked about this little girl that was holding her hand while she was speaking. The little girl had no idea what she was saying, just holding her hand.

I saw them in Germany when I was there, the young women and the Muslim families—where rape is an even worse thing than it is in our culture—saying, "I want to talk to you, but these are things I cannot discuss in my family." A 15-year-old boy stood up and said, "I cannot talk about Kosovo," and sat down and started crying.

I ask you to think about this. What Europe and the United States is doing, what we are now engaging the Russians in trying to do—we're not trying to redraw the map of Europe. We're not playing some power game. I don't want to control anybody's life. All I want to do is to create a world in which we do not idly turn away from systematic bigotry based on hatred of the other that leads to mass killing. And I believe, as difficult as all the questions are I have to answer here—God, I grieve for those Chinese people that were killed in that horrible mistake that was made. As difficult as all the questions I have to answer, I would rather answer these questions than answer the question of, why am I having a good time in Los Angeles tonight and we have not lifted a finger to help those people? That is the question I would have no answer to. I would have no answer to that.

They are a part of our community. If you want a world that will really be fit for your children to live in, if you want the benefits of the modern world, we need at home the philosophy the Democratic Party has brought that we're going to have all these benefits; we're not going to leave anybody behind if we can help it. We're certainly not going to leave anybody behind that's willing to work to be a part of it. But even more, we have to build a sense of community, where we not only tolerate each other, we actually relish our differences. And

we can have the security to relish them and make our lives more interesting because underneath we know that what binds us together is a whole lot more important than what's different about us.

And I want to close with this story. Tom Daschle told you that we had these tribal leaders come to the White House. And he didn't tell you the whole story.

We had the heads of 19 Indian tribes from the high northern plains, from the two Dakotas and Montana. They asked for a meeting at the White House through Senator Daschle and his colleagues. And then they came into the Roosevelt Room at the White House, which is in honor of Teddy, Franklin, and Eleanor Roosevelt, and Teddy Roosevelt's Nobel Peace Prize is hanging on the mantelpiece.

And so the tribal leaders said, "Well, could we sit in a circle? That is our custom." So we sat in a circle. And each in their turn, they stood up and said, "Well, here's what we'd like to have help on. Here's our education concerns, our health care concerns, our economic concerns." And I came into the middle of the meeting, listened to it all. It was just fascinating.

Then at the end, the guy who was sort of their main spokesman, the tribal leader, whose name was Tex Hall, interestingly enough, stood up and said, "Well, there's one other thing we want to do." He said, "Mr. President, we want to talk to you about Kosovo." He said, "You see, we know something about ethnic cleansing. And our country has come a long way. And we believe what you are doing is right. And so the chiefs have signed this proclamation supporting it."

And then at the end of the room, another young man who was a tribal leader stood up, and he said, "I would like to speak." He had

this beautiful silver necklace on. And he was very dignified, and he said, "Mr. President," he said, "I had two uncles. One landed on the beach at Normandy. One was the first Native American fighter pilot in the United States military." He said, "My great-great-grandfather was slaughtered by the 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee." He said, "We have come a long way from my great-great-grandfather's time, to my uncles' time, to this time." He said, "I have only one son, and I love him more than life. But I would be honored if he went to Kosovo to stand up for the human rights of people who are different from the majority."

That is the journey America has made. That is the journey I hope we can help the world to make. And if we do, you will take care of the rest of our challenges.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 p.m. in the Courtyard at the Greystone Mansion. In his remarks, he referred to event cohosts David Geffen, Steven Spielberg, and Jeffrey Katzenberg, founders, DreamWorks SKG studios; Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli; Gov. Gray Davis of California and his wife, Sharon; Senator Robert G. Torricelli, chair, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; Representative Patrick J. Kennedy, chair, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Mayor Sandra J. Levin of Culver City, CA; actress Goldie Hawn; Norm Pattiz, chair and chief executive officer, Act III Productions; Renee Mullins, daughter of murder victim James Byrd, Jr.; Judy Shepard, mother of murder victim Matthew Shepard; Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in San Diego, California

May 16, 1999

Thank you very much. I was hoping that no one in California had heard that joke I told. [Laughter] They liked it in Albany, however. [Laughter]

Let me say to Irwin and Joan, first of all, I want to thank you for opening this wonderful home and for giving me a tour of the art and a tour of your family. [Laughter] What a wonderful, big, beautiful group they are. And I

thank you for your philanthropy and for your commitment to so many good causes, and for bringing all of us together today. A lot of my old friends are here and some people that I've never had the honor to meet before. I appreciate that.

I'd also like to say how glad I am to be here with Bob and Jane Filner. You know, I deal with a lot of Members of Congress—on occasion, even Members of the other party deal with me. I can honestly say that I have never met and dealt with any Member of the House of Representatives who was more consistent and persistent in trying to get me and the White House to respond to the needs of his district than Bob Filner. There isn't anybody else who works any harder at that, and you can be very proud of that. He's done a very fine job.

I want to thank Assemblywoman Susan Davis for being willing to run for Congress; it's an arduous endeavor. It takes a lot of time, a lot of money, and a lot of heart.

When I was 27 years old in 1974, I ran for Congress, and I lost. I wonder if I'd be here today if I'd won. *[Laughter]* But I remember, I ran against a man who had 99 percent name recognition and 85 percent approval. And I ran for 11 months, and 6 weeks before the election, I was still behind 59 to 23, and I lost—I got 48½ percent of the vote. I say that just to encourage you. Every election has a certain rhythm, and my instinct is, if you go out there and talk about the things you have done so well in the assembly, the passion you have for educating our children, the role that Federal Government needs to play to support our local schools, and the other issues, I think you'll do very well. And I hope we can be of help.

I want to thank Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz and all the people on our team for working with the Democratic Party. And I'd like to say a word of appreciation to everyone in San Diego who is responsible for the selection of my friend of 30 years Alan Bersin, the new superintendent of schools. I thank you.

When I saw Alan today—he's got a great gift for one-liners, which I have appropriated over the last 30 years. And so he came through the line today; he looked at me and said, "And I thought you had a hard job." *[Laughter]*

But let me also say I have a very special feeling about this community. I've had some wonderful days here. I've had some wonderful family vacation days here. As you noted, Hillary

just got back from Macedonia and a trip to Northern Ireland—a brief trip to Northern Ireland, where we're working to try to close the last gaps in the peace process there—and couldn't be here. And I talked to her this morning on the way down, and she was quite jealous that I was coming back to San Diego. We have nothing but wonderful memories of this great place.

Also, in 1992, when the Vice President and I carried this county, it was the first time since Harry Truman had carried it in 1948 that a Democrat had carried it—and looking at the signs, pro and con, on the way in today, I would say there's still some disagreement about what ought to happen. *[Laughter]*

Let me say, you're here at a fundraiser for the Democratic Party. And I'm grateful for that. I'd like you to know why I'm here. I mean, I'm not running for anything. Maybe I'll try to get on a school board someday, but I won't be on the ballot in the year 2000.

I am here because I believe in what I have done and because I believe that whatever good has come of the country because of my Presidency, I should be grateful for. But I am under no illusion that the most important thing was me. The most important thing was the vision that we shared for America and the ideas we pursued. And I believe it needs to continue. That's why I'm here. And when you leave, I hope you'll be convinced that that's why you were here.

When I ran for President in late 1991 and '92, it was not something I had intended to do until just a few months before in that year. I was very concerned about the problems that our country was having and that there didn't seem to be any driving vision. And I don't think you can run any great enterprise without one.

I also believed as a Governor—as President Bush said, a Governor of a small southern State—that most of the rhetoric I heard in Washington, unfortunately often from both parties, bore so little relationship to the world I was living in and the problems I was facing and the way I was having to deal with them. And it seemed to me that we needed to change the nature of the debate and to come up with some basic ideas that were not then driving policy in Washington, that were new but rooted in the very old-fashioned vision of our country.

I have always believed that when Americans widen the circle of opportunity for all responsible citizens, when they deepen the meaning of freedom, when they strengthen the bonds of community, we do well. And so I went out and said I want a 21st century America where every responsible citizen has the chance to live out his or her dreams, where across all of the differences we have we are bound together more closely as one community and where we are still the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And I think to get there we have to think about things in a different way.

For example, I think that we have to think about rewarding entrepreneurs in a way that expands the middle class and gives more poor people a chance to work their way into the middle class. I think we have to believe that we can grow the economy and preserve and even improve the environment. I think we have to believe that we can create a country in which people can succeed, not only at work but at home, in the most important job of any society, raising children. I think we have to believe that we can reduce the welfare rolls and put people in the work force in a way that does not require them to stop being good parents to their children. I think we have to reduce the crime rate, not only by doing a better job of enforcement, but a better job of prevention—something Mr. Bersin did in his previous incarnation as your U.S. Attorney.

Anyway, those are just some of the ideas. I believe that we had to be a much more active force for peace in the world, but I thought we had to be willing to use our power to stand up against terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and ethnic and religious cleansing and killing. And most of the last 6 years have been an effort by the Vice President and our administration, our Cabinet, and all the rest of us, working with me to try to find ways to put those ideas into concrete policies and make them come alive in the country.

Along the way, we've given the American people the smallest Government they've had since John Kennedy was President. Federal establishment is now the smallest it's been since 1962. But it is more active in trying to create the conditions and give people the tools to solve their own problems. And I believe that these ideas resonate pretty well with Americans, whether they're Democrats or independents or

Republicans, because they make sense and because they are related to the world toward which we are moving.

Now, there is a lot of the future present in this room in what you all do. It seems to me that the two most dominant elements in the world of the 21st century toward which we're moving, are the explosion of technology and the increasing interdependence of people across national lines. Even our biggest threats grow out of that. We are increasingly vulnerable because of the openness of our society and the openness of our technology to people who would use this for destructive forces.

And what we have to do now is to look ahead to the unmet challenges of the country and bring sort of the same sort of commonsense commitment to that vision. It means politically we have to have good candidates properly financed to have a good message to run in the year 2000 for all of our positions. They have to know why they're running.

You know, whenever anyone comes up to me and asks me if they should run for office, I always say, "Why do you want the job?" And you better be able to tell a total stranger in 30 seconds and then have a 5-minute version on why you want the job. And if you can't answer that question, you shouldn't run. And if you can, ignore the polls and run.

And so I think it's important that we do that. But in the last election, where we had a historic victory in the House of Representatives, you should know that we were out-spent by \$100 million. But we still won seats in the House and didn't lose any in the Senate—a truly historic election—because we had a message. We knew what we were for; we knew what we were against; and we had enough to get it across. So it's very important that you're here.

Now, as we look ahead, let me say that in the next 2 years, with all the energy I have, I'm going to do what I can to get our country to reach across party lines to deal with the aging of America, to reform Social Security and Medicare and do something about making long-term care more available, and helping people save for their own retirement more. I'm going to do what I can to make sure that we finish our work of modernizing our schools, help to modernize facilities; make sure we hook all the classrooms up to the Internet; provide more opportunities for more charter schools, like you have in this school district; and other things that will

raise standards; and dramatically increase the resources we provide to local schools for after-school programs, summer school programs, mentoring programs, the kind of things that will help our kids, so that we can have more uniform standards of excellence in education. And there are many other things that I intend to do.

The Vice President has a livability agenda we worked very hard on that we're going to try to pass to try to help all of our communities deal more with traffic problems, with having the need for more green space, as well as setting aside more land in reserve.

I'm very—by the way, just parenthesis—I'm very proud of the fact that our administration has protected more land in perpetuity than any administration in the history of the Republic except those of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt. And I think 50 years from now people will be very grateful—even the people in the red rocks area of Utah, who are still kind of mad at me about it, I think they will be grateful.

So there are a lot of things that still have to be done. But I have to tell you, if you ask me to describe in a sentence what I think is the most important outstanding work of the country, I would say it is an attempt to get people to define community in terms of our common humanity instead of our evident differences, both at home and abroad.

And if you look at what happened in Littleton, there are many tragedies. And doubtless, a lot of the elements, as it's all unpacked, will turn out to be highly peculiar to the two young men in question and the whole psychology of murder-suicide. But there is also clearly an element of—part of what drove them over the brink was the fact that they were in a group that was disrespected, and they developed a grievance against those they thought were disrespecting them. And then since they thought they were disrespected, they looked around and they found another group—the minority students in the schools, in this case—that they could then look down on.

I was just in Texas with the daughter of James Byrd, Jr., the African-American who was dragged to death and virtually dismembered by people who killed him because he was black—you remember, about a year ago. I was, the other night in Washington, at the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights dinner with the mother of Matthew Shepard, the young man

who was killed in Wyoming not so very long ago because he was gay.

And I say this to point out, if America wants to do good around the world—I appreciate what Congressman Filner said about Kosovo, and I want to come back to that—but if you want to do good around the world, we've first got to try to be good at home. And we have to recognize that there is something deep within all of us that represents the oldest curse of human society, which is the propensity to hate the other people who are different from us.

And if you look, isn't it ironic—here we are, you and I were talking about how we had to break everybody's mindset of believing that in order to grow the economy, you had to have industrial age energy use patterns. We had to modernize energy use. But if you look at what they're fighting about in Kosovo or what they fought about in Bosnia or what they slaughtered over in Rwanda or what the continuing turmoil of the Middle East is about or Northern Ireland, they're not arguing about who is going to get the franchise to sell solar panels or who gets to represent Microsoft.

Interesting, isn't it? We're thinking—look at all the high-tech activity in this room. We're thinking about a 21st century in which we want our kids to have pen pals in every conceivable country of the world, travel around, you know, do unimaginable things because of all these technological wonders. We all expect to live to be 125 because by—within the next couple of years the human genome will be totally unpacked and the intersection of computer technology and biomedical discoveries will doubtless lead to breathtaking and, at present, unimaginable discoveries that will enable us to prolong life, prevent disease, cure disease.

But the biggest problem we've got is the oldest problem of human society. First, people are scared of people that are different from them, and their fear leads them to hate them, and their hatred of them leads them to dehumanize them, and then that legitimizes killing them. And this has been a factor in human relationships since people first joined together in tribes—before there was any writing or any language or anything else. And here we are, on the edge of this great modern age, beleaguered with this.

And so I say to you, to me that is very important. One of the people at our table was telling me that she was a native of Sarajevo and that

these are old and deep differences here. That is true.

I do not believe—if I could move to Kosovo for a minute—I don't believe the United States can intervene in every ethnic conflict. I don't think we can ask people to like each other. I don't think that can be a requirement of international law or a justification for military intervention. We can't even ask people not to fight each other if one group wants to secede and the other doesn't.

But we can say that in the international arena there ought to be certain limits on this. And what is now euphemistically called "ethnic cleansing"—when you unpack it, what does that word mean? That means you look at people who are of a different—in the case of the Balkans, religious group, and therefore—and with a different ethnic history—and you say, "I'm afraid of you; I don't like you; I hate you; I dehumanize you, therefore, I can kill you; I can rape your daughters; I can blow up your mosques; I can blow up your museums; I can destroy your historical records; I can take your own property records, and I can burn them up. I can take the young people of military age and wrap them up and set fire to them while they're still alive. I can do these things because this is my land, and our greatness depends upon our ability to get rid of you."

And in the most benign form, "We'll burn all your villages and run you by the hundreds of thousands off your land, because we can't share this land with you, because you're Muslims and we're Orthodox Christians; you're Albanians, and we're not. And, oh, by the way, 600 years ago the Muslims came through here and had a big battle in Kosovo, and we've hated you all ever since."

Now, what our position ought to be in this is not that we're telling other countries how to live; not that we're telling them how—what their governmental arrangements have to be, but that in Europe—and by the way, I think, anywhere else that the United Nations or others have the power to stop it—we say we know there will be ethnic conflicts; we know there will be civil wars. There's a terrible, regrettable conflict going on right now between Eritrea and Ethiopia, who once were one and then split, and now they're, in effect, having their tribal conflict over the border.

No one has suggested—10,000 people have been killed there—no one has suggested that

some third party should intervene and fight both of them. That is not what is going on in Kosovo. That is not what Bosnia was about. That was about ethnic cleansing; it's a mass killing of people because of their ethnic and religious background. And if we can't stop that in the underbelly of Europe on the edge of the 21st century, then we're going to have a very difficult world ahead of us, because there will be a lot more of it. They will get aligned with organized criminals, with terrorists, with people who have access to weapons of mass destruction. They will use all this technology and all these open airports and all this other stuff, and these conflicts will not stay confined to the land on which they occur.

So this is in America's interest, but it is also morally the right thing to do. Think about these children who were here today. What do you want their children's America to be like? What do you want their children's world to be like? The 21st century can and should be the most interesting period in all of human history, in a largely profoundly positive way. But it will not happen unless we find ways to deal with our differences which, after all, as we see in America, make life much more interesting if they can be respected and celebrated but limited in their impact.

When there is no limit to what you can do to somebody else who's different from you, life quickly becomes unbearable. That is really what is at stake here. Yes, there are many difficulties in this endeavor we have undertaken, we and our NATO Allies, in Kosovo. And you may have many questions in your mind.

But let me ask you this: How would you feel, in this gorgeous setting today, with the birds singing outside and the ocean before us, in all of our comfort, if I came here asking you to give money to the Democratic Party, and I was having to explain to you why we were sitting on our hands and not lifting a finger while those people were killed and uprooted and dislocated? I prefer to answer the hard questions about what we're doing than the hard questions I would never be able to answer to you if we had done nothing in the face of this travesty.

But, remember what I said: We should have a higher standard for ourselves at home. Abroad we are simply saying, "You can have your fights; you can have your arguments; but we're against ethnic cleansing and the slaughter that goes

along with it—and if we can stop it, as an international community, we ought to.” At home, we have to do better than that. We have to say, “The differences that we have make us stronger, make us better, when we respect and celebrate them, but when we’re not consumed by them.”

And therefore, I want to say again what I said yesterday and the day before. We need a national campaign to protect our kids from violence. We will never get there unless we first of all teach people respect for one another and, secondly, find a way to connect with every one of our children in a very personal way. A lot of people are strangers in their own homes, and they are lost to their parents, to their classmates, and to others. This is a very hard job.

And we will never get there unless all of us ask not, “Who is to blame?” but “What can I do?” That’s what the entertainment industry ought to do, not because any movie or television or video game caused those young men or others in these other school killings to do what they did, but because the average 18-year-old sees 40,000 murders by the time he or she is 18, because there are 300 studies now—300—which show that sustained exposure to violence diminishes—and it diminishes one’s sensitivity to the consequences of violence; and because we know that we have a higher percentage of kids who spend more time in front of various media and less time with their families, or with their friends doing other things, than virtually every other country, and we have a higher percentage of kids who are at risk. And we don’t give families the support we should give to balance family and childrearing—work and childrearing.

So if you have more kids at risk, more vulnerable, and you bombard them with things that will desensitize them, you will increase the number who will fall over the line. It’s just like the guns. The NRA slogan is actually, of course, literally true, that guns don’t kill people, people do. That is literally true. But people with guns kill more people than people without them. [Laughter]

And again, I say if you have more—if you have more vulnerable people and it’s easier for them to get assault weapons, or other weapons they have no business getting their hands on, then more of them will fall over the line and you’ll have more violence. A lot of you have been involved in that, and I would just close

with this—the Government has its responsibility in this crisis, too. And one of our responsibilities is to give both law enforcement and citizens the help they need by having sensible gun restraint measures.

There was a police officer out at the airport today when I stopped at the marine base on the way over here. And when he said, “Mr. President,” he said, “I’m a police officer; I’m off duty today; I came out here with my family, and I just want to thank you for taking on that gun fight.” He said, “We need all the protection we can get out there and so do the kids.”

And all we’ve done—look what I’ve asked them to do. I’ve asked them to close this gun show loophole so you can’t buy a gun at a gun show if you can’t buy it in a gun shop. We’ve asked them to—and the Senate has voted to close the loophole allowing big, multiple-ammunition clips to come in from foreign countries, and to raise the handgun age to 21.

We’ve asked them to strengthen the Brady bill and reinstate the 3-day waiting period. We’ve asked them to do a background check on people who buy explosives—which, after Littleton, you will see, is very important—very, very important—and do some other common-sense things that help us to trace and keep records on these weapons. This is crazy, that we would permit our society to put more children at risk than any other society in the world would when we already know we’ve got more of them that are fragile.

Now, we don’t have to point fingers at each other. We should all sort of say, “Forget about who’s to blame. We’re showing up for duty tomorrow. What can I do?” That’s what everybody ought to be asking. But the Congress of the United States needs to pass this legislation, and I was very encouraged that some of the Senators, after the American people expressed their feelings, have begun to change their votes.

But I want to see this as a part of our struggle to be one community. Most of the people—there was a great article in the Los Angeles Times today about a woman from Colorado, rural Colorado, who had her rifle and used it to run off wild wolves that were going to kill her livestock, and who felt so threatened in her way of life by all these city folks, like us, trying to regulate her guns. Well, of course, nobody’s trying to regulate her guns. She’d just been told that. And if she needs something other—that

she has to do a background check on, she's got nothing to fear.

But I understand, there is that whole other culture out there of people who are law abiding; they pay their taxes; they show up for duty when we need them to fight for our country, to defend us, to do whatever else; and a lot of them just think that this is some big urban conspiracy to take their guns away. Well, it isn't. And we all need to be talking to each other. We need to quit this sort of—you know, trying to make this chapter 57 in the culture war for someone's political benefit.

So I say that to you—hey, if you ask me, yes, I hope we get—before I leave office, I will be very disappointed if we haven't reformed Social Security, committed ourselves to pay down the debt over the next 17 years, reform Medicare, pass my education and my environmental agenda. But the American people will get the rest right if we decide to do what it takes to be one America, if we decide to do

what it takes to reach out across all the lines that divide us and say, "You know, our common humanity is more important than our interesting differences."

And if we do that, then we will be able to lead the world to a better place and give our children the future they deserve. That's what I think my party represents. That's what I've worked for 6 years to bring to the American people. And when you leave here today, I hope that's why you believe that you came.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Irwin and Joan Jacobs; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Renee Mullins, daughter of murder victim James Byrd, Jr.; and Judy Shepard, mother of murder victim Matthew Shepard.

Statement on National Crime Statistics May 16, 1999

Today the FBI released preliminary data showing that crime fell another 7 percent in 1998, with an 8 percent decline in murder and an 11 percent decline in robbery. Crime is now down for a remarkable seventh year in a row. More community police on our streets and fewer guns in the hands of criminals have helped make our communities the safest they have been in a generation.

But tragic events like the Littleton shooting remind us that our work is far from done. We

in Washington have a responsibility to support law enforcement officers and pass commonsense gun legislation. We should start by closing the gun show loophole that allows criminals and juveniles to buy guns at gun shows without so much as a background check. In this way, we can keep the crime rates coming down.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release until 6 p.m.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Reception in Las Vegas, Nevada May 16, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. First, I would like to say to Elias and Jody, we're grateful to be here, and thank you for turning the Muzak off. [*Laughter*] And all the televisions—I couldn't compete with them. [*Laugh-*

ter] And I thank you for being my friend for so many years, when I was up and when I was down, and for being my mother's friend, something I will never forget, and for having me into your home for the second time.

I thank Senators Reid and Landrieu and Senator Bryan and Bonnie for being here; and Representative Berkley, newly married—glad that Larry came. And your attorney general, Frankie Sue Del Papa; Mayor Jones; and former Governor Miller and his wife who, as of this morning, is Dr. Miller, so we have to be appropriately respectful there. Former Congressman Bilbray, my good friend; and Chairman Andrew; and Beth Dozoretz, our national finance chair, and her husband, Ron. And to all of you, my old friends in Las Vegas, and some of you I have not met before. I'm delighted to be here.

I was sitting here thinking—you know, I've had a rather rigorous schedule. Last week I went to Europe, to Germany, to see our forces who are involved in the operation in Kosovo and then to meet with the refugees. And then I had to go right down to Texas and then to Oklahoma to see the aftermath of the worst—the most powerful tornado ever measured in the history of the United States down there.

And then I came back to Washington, and then I came right back out here a couple of days later; and I was in Seattle, northern California, Los Angeles, San Diego, and now I'm here. So I'm slightly disoriented. And I was wondering if maybe Rich Little would come and give the speech for me. We would never know the difference. [*Laughter*] And if you got tired of me, then you could hear President Carter, President Reagan, President Nixon, you know—[*laughter*—sort of a little walk-through of American history. Thank you for coming.

Rich Little. Oh, it's a pleasure.

The President. I won't take a lot of time today. I enjoyed having a chance to visit with all of you in the line. I would like to begin with what is to me the most obvious thing about this day. I want to thank all of you who brought your children here. I'm delighted to see all these young people here.

When I ran for President in 1991, when I made the decision, it was, believe it or not, a rather difficult one for me to make, because our daughter was in the eighth grade, or then finishing the seventh grade. She was as happy as a clam and doing well, and Hillary and I were doing well. We had our friends, and I had been Governor for, at that time I was in my 11th year. And believe it or not, I was still having a great time. I loved my State; I loved my job.

And I decided to run because I was convinced that our country was sort of stumbling toward the 21st century with no governing vision that would create an America where every person who would be responsible enough to work for it would have opportunity; where all the diversity that you see so glittering in this room, all the differences among us would be respected, even celebrated, but where our common sense of humanity would give us a stronger American community as we grow more diverse; and where our country would still be the world's most important force for peace and freedom and prosperity.

I knew—I believed, and now I believe more strongly—that to have that kind of vision come alive in the 21st century, we had to be able to deal with what was going on here that is different. And what is going on here that is different? We're in the middle of the biggest explosion of technology in the history of the country, in the history of the world. We also are seeing the shattering of all kinds of barriers, making people ever more interdependent and drawing us closer and closer together across all national lines.

Most of that is quite good, but we know there are some serious problems. The global economy and the information revolution has made untold numbers of new millionaires, but it threatens to leave people without an education behind. Drawing closer together has given greater mobility, greater knowledge, greater access to things through the Internet and through travel than ever before; but the open borders and the Internet technology mean that people who want to use it for bad ends can learn how to make bombs on the Internet, and that the possibilities for collision of terrorism and organized crime and weapons of mass destruction are greater, and we have to deal with that.

And so what I have tried to do for the last 6½ years is to lead first the Democratic Party and then the Nation to a whole different approach to politics nationally, to say that we have enough tough decisions to make, but we're going to put behind the false ones. We believe, for example, we can grow the economy and reward entrepreneurs and still expand the middle class and give poor people a chance to work their way up.

We believe that working people should be able to succeed at work, but also at home, because the most important job of any society is

to raise its children well. We believe we can improve the economy and actually improve—not just protect but improve—the environment, because we no longer have to use the same energy patterns of the industrial age to grow the economy. We believe we can reduce crime by not only prosecuting it more vigorously but by doing a better job of preventing it in the first place. We believe we can reduce the welfare rolls without hurting the children on welfare.

These are things we believe we can do. We believe we can be a force for peace from the Middle East to Northern Ireland and still stand up against ethnic cleansing and terrorists. And in large measure, the work that Hillary and I and the Vice President and our Cabinet, our administration and our allies in Congress have done the last 6 years has been a vigorous effort to take these ideas and turn them into policies so they could be made real in the lives of the American people.

We also have tried to change our notion of the primary role of Government. I have downsized the Government dramatically. Most people have a hard time believing this, but the Federal establishment is now almost exactly the size it was when John Kennedy was President in 1962—smallest Federal Government in 37 years now. But it is more active, and we focus on two things. One, creating the conditions for prosperity and for security, and two, giving people the tools to solve their own problems and to make the most of their own lives.

And I am very grateful for all the good things that have happened in America and for whatever force for good we've been in the world in the last 6 years. And I'm grateful for the people who have expressed their support for me through thick and thin. But I am here today for the Democratic Party because what I want you to understand is, that while I am grateful I had a chance to serve—and I hope that my leadership had something to do with the good things that have happened—the most important thing is, we had the right vision and the right ideas; we had a sense of teamwork, and we got up and went to work every day doing the right things.

And that's why it's important that your Congresswoman be reelected, that we elect a new Democratic Senator from this State, that we win the Presidential election, and that we keep the country on the direction it is going.

I am very grateful to the citizens of this State for voting for me and Al Gore twice, when most people didn't think any Democrat would ever win here again. And I'm very grateful to Governor Miller and your two Senators for making sure that I never made a mistake on a local issue, so that at least I wouldn't fall off the knife edge we were on and we could hold on to our victory.

But what I want to know when you leave here today is, it's important that people who have supported me all these years understand that no person, not even the President, can have a good impact unless you have a good vision, good ideas, a good team, and you're doing the right things. And all of that will be here when I am gone. I won't be on the ballot in 2000. But all these issues really matter. It matters where we stand on these issues.

If I could just mention two or three things today. In the next 2 years, I'm going to do a lot to try to keep this going. We were talking—the Senators and I were, on the way in—we want to have our version of saving Social Security and Medicare, helping people deal with long-term care, helping people to save more for their own retirement. We want to see this debt paid down. Who would have ever thought we'd be paying the debt down? First, you thought you'd be grateful to see the budget balanced. We now have the biggest surplus ever. I want to pay the debt down. I want to pay it down. I'll tell you why. I'll tell you why.

I want to pay it down because I know the more we pay it down, the more we'll have low interest rates, high investment, more jobs, and better incomes. And the less we need to borrow money around the world, the more our friends who are in trouble, who are our trading partners and our neighbors, will be able to borrow money. The Japanese are in trouble today. We want to help them. When they do well, we do well. If they need to borrow money, they can borrow it at less cost if we're paying our debt down. This is a good thing.

I want to do some more things in education. I'm going to spend an enormous amount of time both trying to raise educational standards, to bring technology and good facilities and good teachers to all of our kids, and continue to open the doors of college to all Americans. I want to do that. And there are lots of other things. But what I want to say today, I want to think about one thing. We look at these kids. And

look at this audience. Look how different we all are. Look at Elias' background—the story of the American dream—coming out of the Middle East, coming here without a nickel to his name, struggling through college, doing all the things that he has done, and then marrying way above himself. [Laughter]

Elias Ghanem. I agree. I agree with you.

The President. Having all these wonderful children. Look at all these kids here. I want you to listen. This is the most important thing. You know, if tonight I woke up in the middle of the night, and the good Lord appeared to me, and he said, "I'm sorry, but you've already had a heck of a good life, and I'm not going to let you do all these things. But I will let you do one thing for the next 18 months. You only get to do one thing." And then here's what my answer would be: I would think about Littleton, Colorado, and I would think about Kosovo, and I would say, "It seems to me supremely ironic and very humbling that here we are on the edge of the 21st century, where we have all these wonderful, high-tech dreams for our kids, right?—I mean, these kids can have pen pals in Mongolia and Botswana and Singapore. They can look forward to going everywhere, doing everything; maybe we'll all be living to be 125 years old within 20 years. We'll unlock the mysteries of the human gene and all that.

"Isn't it ironic that on the verge of such an incredible era of discovery and potential, that what we are bedeviled by at home and abroad are the oldest demons of human society—these children talking in Littleton about how they were disrespected by the athletes, so they hated them. And then they had to look for someone they could disrespect, so they looked down on the minority kids."

I was in Texas the other day with the very pregnant young daughter of James Byrd, the African-American man who was dragged to death not very long ago there, trying to help them pass the hate crimes legislation, the Texas legislation. The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights had its annual dinner last week in Washington, and I went by and acknowledged the presence of Matthew Shepard's mother, the young man who was murdered in Wyoming because he was gay.

Don't you think it's interesting that here we are, celebrating all this wonderful, high-tech, modern future, and what bedevils us most is the darkness of the heart, the fear of the other?

It is as old as when people first had to join into tribes to stay alive in the cold and to kill game and to live in caves, before there was language, before there was writing, before there was anything. And maybe at some point there was some rational reason for it.

And then as people developed their religious faiths, very often they fought more over their religious faiths than the fact that the color of their skin or the nature of their history was different. But when you strip it all away, it starts with: You're different from me; I'm afraid of you; therefore, I don't like you—no, I take it back, I hate you; therefore, I will dehumanize you; therefore, it's okay for me to kill you. It is a very short step.

And it is easy for us to demonize others, but the truth is, every one of us gets up every day with a little light and a little darkness inside. And it's almost like they're on scales, and we fight this lifelong battle to make sure that the light always outweighs the darkness on the scales.

So if I were given one wish, I would say I would like to build a stronger sense of community in America, and I would like to do something to advance a sense of common humanity around the world. Because if we could do that, you and people like you all over our country would take care of the other problems.

That's why I'm for the hate crimes legislation. That's why I'm for the nondiscrimination in employment bill. That's why I'm for all these sensible gun control measures. That's why I've asked the whole country to join with Hillary and me and Al and Tipper Gore in a national campaign to reduce violence against children. That's why I've spent all my life trying to advance the cause of civil rights. That's why I've worked for peace in the Middle East and Northern Ireland and why I'm proud that we stopped the war in Bosnia and why I'm trying to stop it in Kosovo.

We can't stop every war. People have a right even to fight, sometimes. That's how we, after all, created our country. But on the eve of the 21st century, we should say, "You know, you don't have to like each other around the world, but we won't tolerate mass killing based on religious and racial and ethnic differences."

I know that in a world where we're used to seeing the news be different every day, it is frustrating to some people that this difficulty in Kosovo is not yet done. And I know there

are many questions about it. I wish I had time to spend 3 or 4 hours here and answer your questions. But I can tell you this: I would far rather be here today, where we are, standing up against ethnic cleansing, standing for the rights of a different people not to be exterminated—because they happen to be Muslims and they happen to have Albanian heritage and they happen to have no guns—than if I were here asking you to give money to me and to our party, and we were sitting on our hands enjoying the sunshine, and I had not lifted a finger to stop it.

And so I leave you with that thought. I have tried to make our party a party where all people of good will could feel at home and, more importantly, our country.

Life is infinitely more interesting because it's more different, more various. Look around this room. This is an incredible group of people from all over, everywhere. And if we can respect and celebrate our differences, our lives are literally more fun and almost always more profitable. But if there are no limits on the importance to which we give our differences, life can quickly become unbearable. So I ask you to think about that and help us.

I thank you for your contributions. I thank you for your support. I thank you for your friendship to Elias and Jody. I thank you for helping me be President.

But remember, what has made these last 6½ years, and what will keep America going for the next 220 years, is not any one leader, but it's having the right vision and the right ideas and working together. And we need more of that.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Elias and Jody Ghanem; Senator Richard H. Bryan's wife, Bonnie; Representative Shelley Berkley's husband, Larry Lehrner; Mayor Jan Laverty Jones of Las Vegas; former Gov. Bob Miller of Nevada and his wife, Sandy; former Representative James H. Bilbray; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; impersonator/comedian Rich Little; Renee Mullins, daughter of murder victim James Byrd, Jr.; and Judy Shepard, mother of murder victim Matthew Shepard.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Las Vegas

May 16, 1999

Well, thank you very much. First of all, we've already had a wonderful conversation. I want to thank all of you for that. I want to thank Brian and Myra for taking me in; and I want to thank Amy for coming back to work for me. [Laughter]

Brian was up here talking, and I was thinking, you know, the only thing that has been sort of a required part of our friendship—besides his mentioning of the nuclear waste issue—is a regular golf outing. And I nearly never beat him. But I was thinking—after all, this is probably the fifth or sixth event we've done here in the last 6 years—I'm the most expensive golf partner he ever had. [Laughter] He would probably dearly like to reconsider this whole deal.

But we've been friends for 30 years now, and then some, and I'm very grateful to be here. Every time I come here and I spend the night

here, I feel a renewed gratitude. I also know that all of you felt as I did tonight, all of you who are from Las Vegas were delighted that Elias and Jody came over here and that they threw the reception over at their house, and we had a wonderful time with their children and their friends, and our prayers are with them. And I was very glad that they came over and spent a few minutes with us tonight.

Since we've been talking at the table and because it's quarter to 11, which for us three from the east coast over here is a quarter to 2 in the morning on our body, I'll be quite brief. But I'd like to just ask you to think about a couple of things.

The first is that our country has done very well these last 6½ years, economically and socially: crime rate's down; the welfare rolls are down; homeownership is at an all-time high;

minority unemployment, the lowest ever recorded. A lot of things are going well. What I would like to say is that I first feel grateful that I've been able to be President, and I hope I have had something to do with that. And I believe we have.

But the reason I'm here tonight, since I'm not running for anything anymore, is that I know that the reason we were able to follow good policies and do good things is that we started out with a vision and ideas that have now been embraced by my party, by the Democratic Party. And they make a difference. And they're different. They're different from what we were doing before, and they're certainly different—as you can tell if you just pick up the paper in the morning—from what the other party believes in Washington.

Whether the issue is how to take the first big step to get rid of the deficit, or whether we should have a Brady bill or an assault weapons ban, or whether we should target a tax cut so that we can honestly say we've now opened the doors of college to all, because we've got—we've got some friends from Georgia here; we've got a national version of Georgia's HOPE scholarship now—or whether the issue is, now, in the aftermath of the terrible tragedy at Littleton, whether we should have a law passed that closes the loophole that allows, now, people with criminal or mental health histories to buy guns at gun shows they couldn't buy in gun stores or we should also require a background check for people who buy explosives, since we now know that's a very serious problem—we have had two examples, one at Littleton and one in Oklahoma City, which makes, I think, a very compelling case that it's hard to justify a background check on handguns and not have a background check on explosives. And I could give you lots and lots of other examples, but the point I want to make is that ideas matter and vision matters.

And what we've been trying to do, Al Gore and our Cabinet and everybody associated with me for the last 6½ years, is to make real what we pledged to the American people in 1992, that we wanted a country where every responsible citizen would have opportunity and where we would be coming closer together, across all the lines that divide us, into a stronger community and where we continue to be the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And we have largely been able to do that. So ideas matter, and that's why parties

matter. And that's why I'm grateful for your presence here.

The second point I would like to make is that it's very important for the Democrats to do two things: one, to keep working every day between now and 2000, and not to just get into the same-old, same-old in Washington I used to see, where the two parties fight all the time and nobody shows up for work. I sometimes think that everyone who works in Washington should be required to spend a week, a month somewhere else, because no other enterprise could survive if people spent all their time fighting and never had to do anything.

So we need to produce results. We need to deal with the aging crisis, the educational challenges we face. I think we ought to pay the debt down dramatically. I think it will really add to our long-term economic health. There are lots of challenges out there. I'm going to work until the last hour, the last day I'm President to try to get things done.

And the third point I want to make is that it's very important that we have good candidates adequately funded to implement these ideas in the 2000 election. Which is why I'm glad you're here and why I'm here.

I said something over at the Ghanems' I'd like to close with. If tonight in the middle of the night I were to wake up and God were standing over my bed saying, "I'm sorry, you can't do all this stuff for the last 2 years; I'm just going to let you do one thing—what do you want to do?" In the aftermath of Littleton and what I've seen in Kosovo, I would say, "Well, I think it's pretty ironic that in this glitzy, high-tech global economy age where we're about to uncover the mysteries of the human genome so we may all be able to map out our future and live to be 125, that the biggest problems we've got in the world today come from the hatred of the human heart and people's—rooted in our fear of people who are different from us, with religious or ethnic or racial or any other kind of differences."

And if you just think about America's most traumatic moments in the last several years—Oklahoma City, Timothy McVeigh, a government hater, whatever that is; think about poor Matthew Shepard in Wyoming, killed because he was gay, at the outset of his life; James Byrd in Texas, dragged and torn apart because he was black; even in Littleton there were suggestions that these young men felt disrespected

by the athletes in their school and therefore they wanted to get even with them, but by the way, they needed to find somebody they could disrespect, so they disrespected the minority kids in their school and they targeted them, too.

And I just want you to think about this. The oldest demon of humans living together begins with fear of people who are not in your clan—literally, when we came out of the caves—people who are different from you. And once you fear somebody, it's not very far until you hate them. Then it's not very far from that until you can dehumanize them. Then it's not very far from that until you can justify killing them—not very far.

We've had a lot of experience in that, in America. We had people who thought God told them to throw the Indian tribes off their lands. We had people who seriously preached in this country from the pulpit that God ordained the slavery that enslaved African-Americans here. We've had experience with what we now see going on in the rest of the world today.

But what I want to say to you is it is not endemic, in the sense that it's inevitable. You know, when the Hutus and the Tutsis fought in Rwanda, and 700,000 people died in 100 days—almost all from machetes—I heard people say, "Well, you know, those are African tribal wars, and the countries are all wrongly drawn, and everything." That's not true. In Rwanda, the borders have been pretty well the same for 500 years. And most of the time people got along.

Now I hear in the Balkans, "You know, those people always fought. They just can't get along." That's not true, either. For most of the last 600 years, those people did get along. They did work together. They managed their ethnic and their religious diversity.

And I just want you to think about that. I want you to think about—you know, we think about, we want our kids to know about computers and speak foreign languages and zip around the world and uncover all these great biological mysteries, and what a wonderful world it's going to be. And that's the world I've been working for. It is threatened by the most primitive impulse in human society, fear of people who are different from us.

And if we want America to do good around the world, we have to be good at home, first. Second, if we want to lead the world for peace

and freedom, we've got to stand up against ethnic cleansing and mass killing. That's what Kosovo is about. I know it's a thorny, complex problem—you and I, we talked about it around the table tonight. All I can—I can't answer every question, maybe, but I can tell you one thing: I'd a lot rather be answering the questions I'm answering tonight and sitting here having dinner with you, looking at those people being run out of their country and being killed and all that stuff, than with America and Europe sitting on its hands and not doing anything to help them. I prefer to answer the questions I'm answering tonight than the questions we would be answering had we done nothing.

And I'll just close with this little story I've been telling the last few days. Last week, when I got back from Europe, and then I got back from Oklahoma, seeing the folks after the hurricane—I mean, the tornado. We had a fascinating meeting at the White House with 19 tribal leaders from the northern high plains. I've spent a lot of time with the Native Americans since I've been in office, trying to work through a lot of their challenges.

And Senator Daschle, our leader, Democratic leader, and Senator Johnson and the two Democrats in North Dakota and Senator Baucus from Montana, they said, "Well, would you please meet with these 19 tribal leaders from these three States, because they're the poorest Indian tribes in America; because it's very hard to get any investment up there, and it's cold and there's a lot of problems?" If you don't have—not all Native American tribes have casinos and make fortunes; that's a big myth. So they said, "You've got to meet with these people."

So we had our—a lot of our Cabinet people came. Then the tribal leaders said, "Now, can we sit in a circle; that is our custom." So we're in the Roosevelt Room at the White House, which has Teddy Roosevelt's Nobel Peace Prize in it and a wonderful bust of Eleanor Roosevelt. It's a great little room. So we get rid of the table, and we all sit around in a circle.

And they talked, you know, each in their turn about their—you know, it's the education issue or the jobs issue or the housing issue or the health care issue or whatever. And then at the end their spokesperson stands up—and his name was Tex Hall, which I thought was an interesting name for an Indian chief. But anyway, he said, "Mr. President," he said, "I have this proclamation here that our tribal leaders have signed,

endorsing what you are trying to do in Kosovo.” And he said, “You see, we know something about ethnic cleansing.” And he said, “We’d like—and here we are in the White House today, and we can’t turn away from this.”

And then this young man across the room in the circle stood up, and he said—he had this beautiful Indian jewelry around his neck. And I mean, when this guy started talking, it just took all the oxygen out of the room. He was very dignified, and he said, “Mr. President,” he said, “My two uncles—I had two uncles. One was on the beach at Normandy. The other was the first Native American fighter pilot in our history.” He said, “My great-great-grandfather was slaughtered by the American 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee.” He said, “We’ve come a long way from Wounded Knee, to my uncles, to me standing here in the Roosevelt Room, talking to the President.” He said, “I just have one child. He means more to me than anything. But I would be honored to have him go to fight against the destruction of the people of

Kosovo, so they don’t have to go through all that we have been through.”

And I thought to myself, I just wish every American could see this. This is what I ran for President to lift up.

So remember that. If we can learn to get along together and work together and stand for our common humanity, then you and talented people like you all over this country, you’ll figure out how to solve the rest of this stuff. It’s the most important thing.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 p.m. in a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Brian L. and Myra Greenspun, and their daughter, Amy; Nevada State Athletic Commission Chairman Elias Ghanem and his wife, Jody; Timothy McVeigh, who was convicted of bombing the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK; Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Statement on the Election of Ehud Barak as Prime Minister of Israel

May 17, 1999

On behalf of the American people, I want to extend my warmest congratulations to Ehud Barak upon his election as Israel’s new Prime Minister. The people of Israel have given the new Prime Minister a strong mandate.

I have just spoken with Prime Minister Netanyahu to thank him for his dedicated service to Israel. I also spoke with Prime Minister-

elect Barak to congratulate him and reaffirm our Nation’s steadfast support for Israel and its people. I will continue to work energetically for a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace that strengthens Israel’s security. I look forward to working closely with Ehud Barak and his new government as they strive to reach that goal with their Palestinian and Arab partners.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With King Abdullah II of Jordan and an Exchange With Reporters

May 18, 1999

President Clinton. Well, let me just begin by saying how delighted I am to have His Majesty here today. The United States values our relationship with Jordan very much. We hope to have a discussion about the opportunity and the obligation we have to continue the peace proc-

ess in the Middle East. I think we’ve both talked to Prime Minister-elect Barak about that.

And we are also very much committed to Jordan’s economic renewal. And the supplemental appropriation bill now working its way through the Congress has, among other things,

\$100 million in support for Jordan, and I believe it will pass in the next few days, so I'm very encouraged by that.

And I'm delighted to have you here, Your Majesty.

Israeli Election and Middle East Peace Process

Q. What would be the first step, Mr. President, towards a renewal, a revival of the peace process? Do you have anything in mind, I mean, have you set any dates?

President Clinton. No. Well, we have to, first of all, await the formation of a government in Israel. They probably have only known for a few hours what the distribution of the vote is by parties, in terms of what the composition of the Knesset will be. And so I think General Barak is entitled to a few days to put a government together.

Q. Why do you have so many hopes about this? I mean, why are you suddenly encouraged?

President Clinton. Well, I think that, clearly, the whole issue of the peace process was an issue; and I think because of his military service, the question of General Barak's devotion to the security of Israel is not in question. But he has evidenced an intention to continue the peace process. And if he's willing to do it, I think that we're certainly both willing to do it and we're hopeful that we'll have a chance to do so.

Q. Mr. President, what can the United States do to help further this peace process at this point?

President Clinton. Well, we have an accord at Wye to implement, and we have a lot of work to do on the final status issues. I think the roadmap is out there. And we'll do what we've always done. I've been working at this for 6 years, and I'm looking forward to continuing. I'll do what I have done under all the previous leadership of Israel and what we have worked very closely with Jordan to do.

Jordanian Economy

Q. Mr. President, the U.S. and you, personally, have been very supportive to Jordan in the past few months. What immediate plans do you have now to help Jordan's economy, in addition to the \$100 million?

President Clinton. Well, that's what—we're going to have a conversation about that. I hope that Jordan can receive some relief on its debt problem from other countries. The United

States has already done about all we can on that; we've done quite a bit. But I think other nations could do more to help Jordan, and I know His Majesty has been working on that. And I would like to see more action on that, and I will do what I can to support that.

NATO Military Action in Kosovo

Q. Why is the United States, sir, stalling the use of Apache helicopters in Kosovo?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think that's a mischaracterization. This is a military campaign with clear objectives. And military leaders will make their decisions about when and under what circumstances to use the Apaches. As General Clark and others have made clear, when the weather is good, as it generally is at this time of year, most of what the Apaches could do can be done with the A-10's at less risk.

But those are judgments there being made; I don't really understand this implication that the United States is stalling. They're a military asset that's there; they're there to be used under appropriate circumstances when the military commanders decide that it should be done. It's not a political decision in any way, and it should not be.

Q. With the air war now in its second month, are you giving more consideration to ground troops?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think the air war has accomplished quite a bit, and there's a lot more that it can accomplish. I, and everyone else, has always said that we intend to see our objectives achieved and that we have not, and will not, take any option off the table.

But we are making progress, and I am convinced that we will achieve our objectives one way or the other. And I'm very hopeful, obviously, that the diplomatic efforts that are being made in the State Department and with the Russians will bear some fruit. But if they do not, we will continue to press ahead. But I do believe that they've done an excellent job and—now over 20,000 sorties—a great deal of what we have been trying to accomplish has been done. I don't think that we or our Allies should take any options off the table, and that has been my position from the beginning, but we ought to stay with the strategy we have and work it through to the end.

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Jordan-U.S. Relations/Middle East Peace Process

Q. Your Majesty, what do you hope your talks with the President will result in? And do you think the climate in Israel now is more conducive to making progress in the peace process?

King Abdullah. Well, I think we have many issues to discuss with the President, and one of the main things is to thank the overwhelming support that the President has shown Jordan over the many years, but especially with the passing away of His Majesty. And again, the President went out of his way, and the American administration and Government, to support us through this very difficult time.

Vis-a-vis, obviously, the elections in Israel were very, very optimistic. I just had the opportunity to speak to Prime Minister-elect Barak and wish him well. And we had the opportunity of seeing him in Jordan only several days ago, and we see eye-to-eye on many issues, and we're very optimistic of taking the peace process forward.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak of Israel; and Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Withdrawal of the Nomination of J. Brian Atwood To Be Ambassador to Brazil

May 18, 1999

Today Brian Atwood asked me to withdraw his nomination to be the United States Ambassador to Brazil. I have accepted his request with reluctance and regret.

Few people in public life have better combined the qualities of professional competence and moral purpose. Brian Atwood has served with distinction as Administrator of the Agency for International Development, making it more effective while tenaciously defending its mission and its independence. He has helped put the fight against poverty, civil strife, and disease in the developing world at the heart of our foreign policy, where it belongs, and where I am confident it will stay. When I asked him last month to lead America's effort to bring aid to the refu-

gees escaping Kosovo, I knew we would be getting the very best. That is what America gets every time Brian Atwood goes to work.

In his statement today, he said that Washington owes us nothing but the "opportunity to serve." I believe we owe Brian Atwood something more: our gratitude for continually making a difference in the lives of millions of people around the world.

I thank him for his many contributions and for his willingness to stay on as our AID Administrator, where he is doing an outstanding job as our Kosovo humanitarian coordinator. And I am confident he will have many opportunities to serve our Nation again.

Statement on Senate Action on Legislation To Require Child Safety Locks for Guns

May 18, 1999

I want to commend the Senate for reversing its position of last year and voting overwhelmingly today to require that child safety locks be provided with every gun sold. This was a courageous, commonsense vote that will help

prevent tragic shootings and gun-related accidents in the future.

I also want to thank Speaker Hastert for agreeing that we should close the gun show

loophole and raise the age of handgun ownership from 18 to 21. The Senate should likewise put progress over politics and give its strong backing to these reasonable measures to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals.

I urge Senator Lott to let the Senate keep working on the juvenile crime bill and give every Senator the chance to vote on these common-sense provisions.

Statement on the Sierra Leone Cease-Fire Agreement *May 18, 1999*

I welcome the signing of a cease-fire agreement today in Lome, Togo, by President Kabbah of Sierra Leone and the leader of the Revolutionary United Front rebels, Foday Sankoh. I want to express my appreciation to my Special Envoy for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the Economic Community of West African States, and to the U.N. for helping to bring about this agreement which marks an important first step towards peace.

The conflict in Sierra Leone has killed tens of thousands of people—6,000 in the first month of this year alone. Half a million men, women, and children have become refugees, and one-

fifth of Sierra Leone's population has been uprooted.

With the continued commitment and engagement of both parties, the cease-fire and the confidence-building measures outlined in the agreement today can pave the way for the negotiation of a durable peace agreement. I welcome the agreement as a step toward providing for guaranteed safe and unhindered access by humanitarian agencies to all people in need, and hope that the world might soon witness an end to the needless suffering of Sierra Leone's people.

I urge all parties to implement the agreement in good faith.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Burma *May 18, 1999*

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to Burma is to continue in effect beyond May 20, 1999.

As long as the Government of Burma continues its policies of committing large-scale re-

pression of the democratic opposition in Burma, this situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond May 20, 1999.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 18, 1999.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on Proposed Legislation To Reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

May 19, 1999

Good morning. I'm delighted to be joined this morning by the Secretary of Education and by my Domestic Policy Adviser, Bruce Reed, to discuss the very important issue of our children's schools.

In my State of the Union Address this year, I said that in order to meet our responsibility to create 21st century schools for all our children, we have to do a far, far better job of spending the \$15 billion in Federal aid we send to our schools every year.

Building these kinds of schools has been a passion for me, for the Vice President, for Secretary Riley, for our entire administration. We have worked with Members of Congress and education leaders, people in every State of the country, for over 6 years now. We have supported higher standards, better teachers, new technology, modern facilities, innovations like charter schools, character education, school uniforms.

But we know fundamentally that if we are going to change the way our schools work, we must change the way we invest Federal aid in our schools.

On the way down here, just down the walk, the Secretary of Education said we have been working very hard to promote school standards around the country; now we have to get the standards actually into the schools. This week I am sending legislation to Congress designed to do just that.

First, this legislation strengthens accountability for results. It says that States and school districts that choose to accept Federal aid must take responsibility for turning around failing schools or shutting them down. It says they must give parents report cards not just on their children but on the children's schools. It says school districts must have strong discipline codes that are fair, consistent, and focused on prevention. It says they must make sure that teachers actually know the subjects they are teaching. It says they must stop the practice of social promotion, not by holding students back but by making sure they have the support to meet the higher standards.

This legislation triples funding for after-school and summer school programs, provides for smaller classes, and requires other early interventions that lift students up.

Second, this legislation will put more highly trained teachers in our Nation's schools. It requires that all new teachers pass subject matter and skills tests, that all teachers be given the support they need to improve their knowledge and skills. It allows Congress to finish the job we started last fall of hiring 100,000 new, highly trained teachers to reduce class size in the early grades.

Finally, the legislation will help give all our children safe, healthy, and disciplined learning environments. For the first time, it will require schools to adopt comprehensive school safety plans, use proven antidrug and antiviolence prevention programs, intervene with troubled youth, establish security procedures for schools, and give parents an annual report of drug and violent incidents at their children's schools.

It also expands the character education efforts the Secretary of Education has done so much to advance, promotes alternative schools for disruptive students, and strengthens our policy of zero tolerance for guns by requiring that any student expelled for bringing a gun to school receive appropriate treatment and counseling before being allowed back into class.

As I said yesterday, we must do everything we can to keep guns out of the hands of our children. I want to commend the Senate for yesterday's overwhelming, bipartisan support for child safety locks. And I commend Speaker Hastert for his leadership in supporting background checks at gun shows and for raising the age of handgun ownership to 21. I urge the Senate to keep working on the justice bill—the juvenile justice bill—and to bring these commonsense measures to a vote.

Now, these education ideas are not Democratic or Republican, nor were they dreamed up in Washington. They were invented and proven successful in the laboratories of democracy at the school, city, and State levels. They preserve and enhance the flexibility that States and districts need to run successful schools. If

the Federal Government fails to act, the best of these practices will spread, but much more slowly. Just remember, it took 100 years for laws mandating universal education to spread from a few States to every State. That pace of change might have been all right in the 19th century; it won't do in the 21st. We do not have the luxury of waiting and continuing to subsidize failure.

Nothing we can do will more surely unite our people and strengthen our Nation than giving all of our children a high-quality education.

We know what works. Our schools, our educators have shown us what works. It is time to put that as a condition of success in the investment of Federal aid in every child in America. And I want to thank the Secretary of Education and Mr. Reed and everyone else who has worked on this program.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:40 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for New York City.

Remarks at the Launching of the Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation in New York City

May 19, 1999

Thank you very much. Chairman Gargano, Governor, Secretary Slater, thank you all for all you have done to make this day come to pass. I thank the leaders of Amtrak, the MTA, the Port Authority, the Post Office; Mr. Peck, the Commissioner of Public Buildings; the distinguished architect who has drawn a beautiful plan. Speaker Vallone, Mr. Green, Senator D'Amato, thank you for pushing this. And Mrs. Moynihan, you haven't yet been acknowledged, but you had a lot to do with the arm twisting on this, and I thank you, too. Thank you very much.

Senator Moynihan has been called the Nation's best thinker among politicians since Lincoln, and its best politician among thinkers since Jefferson. Today we might say he also may be the best arm twister since Farley. *[Laughter]* You know, it was said that Jim Farley actually knew the names of 50,000 people by heart. Pat Moynihan knows 50,000 ways to get any politician to do what he wants. *[Laughter]*

I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the fact that he gave me an opportunity to be a small part of this day and this project. For decades he has worked to give voice to the dreams of New Yorkers, to create a new Penn Station truly worthy of the name and of this wonderful city.

If I can borrow a few words from the famous inscription on this building: Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night could have

stopped Pat Moynihan from bringing this day to pass.

Throughout his public career, which has spanned so many different jobs in so many different places in the United States and abroad, Senator Moynihan has always cared about preserving our history and our spirit through our great buildings. Nearly 40 years ago, President Kennedy challenged him to revitalize Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue, to bring back civic pride to the heart of our Nation's Capital. He never gave up on that goal, a job he completed with the dedication of the Ronald Reagan Building a year ago this month.

Thirty-five years ago, when I went to Washington, DC, for the first time as a wide-eyed college student, Pennsylvania Avenue was a mess and a disaster. Today, it is a tribute to our history, to our values, and to our future, thanks to the vision of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Many people also forget that in addition to helping to rescue Union Station in Washington and Grand Central Station here—which he was whispering in my ear about while we were waiting for our turn—back in 1962 he authored the wise principles that guide the Federal Government's architecture decisions today. In the words of your distinguished architect, David Childs, Senator Moynihan is a true inspiration to everyone working in architecture and urban design.

This latest project also, as he and others have said, is an example of how this Senator and his allies have also fundamentally changed the way we invest in transportation. He has secured vast resources not simply for concrete and for mass transit but for communities, for historic preservation, and for advanced technologies to meet the 21st century needs of America.

I thank him and Senator D'Amato and Secretary Slater for fighting to see that we did not turn the transportation bill in Washington into just another road-building bill, without any concerns for the needs of urban America and others who need mass transit, intermodal transportation, and a broader vision of how we will reconcile our desire to have livable, sustainable communities and to get around in a hurry. He did that, along with the others, and I thank them all. New York can be very, very proud of every one of them.

Let me finally say that this Penn Station—I was astonished by how brief Senator Moynihan was, but I noticed that the closer he comes to getting his way, the shorter his speeches get. [Laughter] Back in '93, when he first talked to me about it, I got the whole load of wax, man. [Laughter] I knew everybody—I knew the people who had planted the explosives on Penn Station in the sixties. [Laughter] I knew the whole history of the thing. And as we made progress, you know, his words became fewer as his satisfaction increased. But I think it's worth noting that this journey to this moment has not only been a public service but a point of personal pride for this quintessential New Yorker and American.

Senator Moynihan grew up in this neighborhood, shined shoes around the corner. As a young ensign, he used to fall asleep in the rooms off Penn Station's grand ticketing hall as he waited for his train back to Norfolk. Grand public buildings like the old Penn Station and the New York Public Library became like home, especially for a boy whose family kept moving to a new apartment just about every year.

I tell you this story not only to capture what this journey must mean for him but to remind us of the fundamental significance of our great public buildings, because whether you are a wealthy industrialist or just a person with a few dollars to your name, you can feel ennobled, as people did—ordinary citizens and great ones alike—in the old glass and steel cathedral that was Penn Station. People without tickets could

come to the old Penn Station in the afternoon just to dream about what it would be like to get on the train, and watching the crowds go by.

When I was a young man, I used to go to train stations and watch people and wonder what they were doing, where they were going, and I always felt better when I walked out than when I walked in. I'll bet nearly everybody here has had a similar experience.

Now, Mr. Childs' design is not intended to replicate the old Penn Station, but it will have, as you see, the same stunning effect for everyone. Here in this beautiful McKim, Mead, and White building the Postal Service has graciously now agreed to share, this design will take the best elements of the past and create a remarkable station for the future.

Of course, there will be some hurdles—the environmental and historic preservation requirements, which I'm quite certain will be met—but the other hurdle is money. One of Clinton's laws of politics is, if someone stands up and shakes his finger and says to you, "This is not a money problem" he is almost always talking about someone else's problem. [Laughter] I want to do what I can to help close the funding gap. I will ask the Congress to increase the Federal commitment to this project by \$60 million over the next 3 years.

As a tribute to Senator Moynihan, and because it's the right thing to do, I hope that Members in both parties, in both Houses, will join with me to secure this funding. We're not quite there yet. Others will have to do more as well. But if we all do our part, we can honor one of the first great buildings of the 20th century and create the first great public building of the 21st century. In so doing, New York once again can provide a model for the entire Nation.

The First Lady and I have worked very hard to help communities to honor the past and preserve it as part of our gift to the new millennium. Just today she awarded the first Save America's Treasures grants to help meet urgent preservation needs across our Nation, from conserving the second largest collection of Thomas Jefferson's personal correspondence to restoring Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Ebenezer Baptist Church.

I know our Nation is still young, and sometimes still we lose sight of the enormous value of the history that is embodied in our buildings,

our documents, our artifacts, our monuments. We must do better in preserving the past and in building new buildings and monuments which capture our vision of the future, the enduring commitment we have to our freedom, and the public space that makes community more possible and reminds us of our common humanity across all the lines that divide us.

That is what this building will do. I hope at this moment of great prosperity and optimism for the United States, we will use the example of this project to redouble our determination to build great buildings and dream big dreams for the future.

Again, I want to thank all of you who never gave up on this ambitious project. I want to urge you never to give up on it until it is com-

pletely finished. And on behalf of Senator Moynihan, Senator D'Amato, myself, and all others who will be out of office when it is finally done, I hope you'll invite us to the building dedication.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at the James A. Farley Building. In his remarks, he referred to Charles A. Gargano, chairman of the board, Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; architect David Childs; Peter F. Vallone, New York City council speaker; Mark Green, New York City public advocate; former Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato; and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's wife, Elizabeth.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in New York City *May 19, 1999*

Thank you very much. First of all, I want to say a real thank you to Jack and to Phyllis for having us here. I've been in their home in New Jersey; I've never been here before, and I wanted to come. And as you can see from the pictures on the wall, the Vice President has been here. *[Laughter]* And I've been rather jealous of this. *[Laughter]* To say this is an interesting house would be an understatement. *[Laughter]* And I'm just delighted to be here. And I thank them for opening their home to us.

I also want to thank Gerry Ferraro for being here. And Congressman Kostmayer, thank you for being here. And I want to thank Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz and Fran Katz and everybody at the DNC for the work they've done.

You know, Joe and I, we just finished a western swing; Joe and Beth and I, we've been out on the west coast. And about every time he got up to introduce me, he said, "You know, we're going to win every election from the White House to dogcatcher." And I keep pointing out to him that that is not such a great distance. *[Laughter]* He acts like that's such an encompassing term, you know. He hasn't been paying attention to Washington lately. *[Laughter]*

But let me say, I just came—a lot of you know this, but I just came from a remarkable event with Senator Moynihan and the Governor and a lot of the transportation authorities here. We announced new plans for the new Penn Station and the old Farley Post Office Building. And a lot of you—you probably saw, the last day or 2, the New York Times had a nice piece on the architectural plans and what was going to be done. But this is something that Pat Moynihan talked to me about way back in '93. And I also announced that we were going to put \$60 million in our budget over the next 3 years to help pay more of the Federal share to build this. But I wanted to sort of use it as a metaphor for the point I want to make here.

For whatever reason, I think nearly everybody who has been involved in this project has been captured by the idea of it. And most everybody with any sense of the past at all deeply regrets the fact that the old Penn Station was destroyed, and with it a lot of memories of New York and a magnificent architectural creation.

And so anyway, this little project, it was like a lot of Pat Moynihan's ideas. It was a little bit ahead of its time, and it took a while to catch hold. But I signed on early and told him to just call me back when there was something to do.

And so slowly it sort of picked up steam, and people kind of got together. So we announced it today, and everybody felt so good about it. And I was trying to think to myself why they felt so good about it. I think it's because it captures the past, and it also throws people into the future in a way they feel good about, because beautiful public spaces really help us to build a community across all the lines that divide us; maybe because nearly everybody alive can remember sometime in his or her life, maybe when we were all much younger and had more free time, when we were sitting in a train station just watching people go by, felt free and kind of elevated by it.

But I say that because, to me, what I've tried to do for the United States is to give us a sense that we could meet all our challenges but that we had to meet them together. That meant that everybody had a role to play and some citizen responsibility. It also means that with all of our diversity, which ought to be celebrated, not just tolerated but celebrated, we have to realize that what binds us together is even more important.

And the story of the last 6 years has been an effort to try to take the ideas that I developed over a long period of time and that I developed a belief in, and that I talked to the American people about in '92 and again in '96, and turn those ideas into policies that then could be made real in the lives of the American people.

And I'm very grateful for the good things that have happened in this country. But I came here today to say to you that for whatever role I played in it, I think the far more important contributing factor was that we had the right ideas, rooted in the right vision of America, and we had a good team, and we showed up for work every day—[laughter]—and we intend to continue doing it down to the last day.

That elicited a few laughs, but anybody that's ever watched any national capital in politics knows that it's no small achievement to get your team to show up for work every day, because an enormous amount of time and energy is always devoted to trying to divide your team and distract them and wonder who's dropping the dime on whom in the morning paper, so they won't work. Instead, they'll spend all their time calling each other names or being torn up and upset or worrying about something other than the people's business.

So I am here today because for whatever role I have played in this, I know the most important thing was that we had the right vision and the right ideas, and we brought teamwork, and we showed up for work every day. And we need to keep doing that.

And America needs to make that decision again. And every time you give the people a chance to have a referendum on whether they want politics to be about politicians and the politics of personal destruction or whether they want it to be about people and progress and unity, they always make the right choice. But you have to put the choice before them, which means we need good candidates and they have to be adequately financed, and we have to keep the message out there.

The other point I'd like to make rather briefly is that I think it's quite important for us, even though we have now reached a point where Presidential elections almost take 2 years, which I think is wrong—I actually—I announced in October of '91, 13 months before the election. And that was a short campaign. I waged a short campaign. But I think it's very important, particularly for the Democrats, because we have been the party of vision and progress and of trying to pull the country together and not drive wedges among the people—it's particularly important for us to keep working, to keep working, to keep producing.

There are things which won't wait until 2001. For example, Jack mentioned that we'd balanced the budget, and we now have the biggest surplus ever. I have offered the Congress a plan that would save Social Security and Medicare and actually pay the publicly held debt of the United States down to its lowest point since before World War I in 15 years.

Now, why do I think that's a good idea? Because I think it will keep interest rates lower and investment higher and create more jobs and raise incomes. It will also make us relatively less dependent on international capital markets at a time when I am doing my very best to stabilize them, so we don't have another Asian financial crisis, and we don't have to worry about spending an enormous amount of money to keep it from spreading to Brazil or all the things that those of you in finance know we have been working on the last 2 years.

But I can't say for sure what will happen 10 years from now. I can say for sure, 10 years from now, that if we have a terrible recession

and we have to deficit spend, it will be a lot better to do it if we've got a much lower debt base than we have. I can say for sure that if there's another round of global turmoil 10 years from now, we'll be much more immune to it if we've got a smaller debt and our interest rate structures are smaller.

So these are important things. We need to do them now. We don't need to be waiting around. We need to continue our efforts at educational excellence. Today I introduced a bill into Congress—I announced it just before I came up here—every 5 years we have to reauthorize the general bill by which we give Federal money to public schools in New York and everywhere else. It's called the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. By and large, this money is given to help schools that have a lot of poor kids or a lot of kids whose first language is not English or a lot of kids who have special needs—disabilities—their targeted aid. And a lot of it is given to provide for other kind of special purposes, technology in the schools and things like that.

None of it, however, is related to results. I have been working for 6 years to get everybody to embrace the idea that we had to have standards and accountability, and we ought to do a better job making sure teachers know the subjects they're teaching and all this. But we've never really been able to move these standards into the schools. So it's basically—whether they're being observed or not is a function of the character of the local leadership or the commitment of the local political leadership or the State leadership.

We now have a chance to actually change the way schools work. If we say, okay, for the next 5 years we're going to take all the research that has been done and take the uncontestable findings and make the pursuit of those findings a condition of the money—no social promotion but don't say the kids are failures; give them all summer school or after-school programs—this works. Identify the schools that are failing and turn them around or close them down, let the kids go some place else. Have charter schools, have districtwide school choice. Do something to give the kids other choices.

Those are just a couple of examples of the kinds of things that I think we have to do. We also—I have to tell you, though, it's not—the Federal Government and others are going to have to find a way to put more money into

teaching because we're going to have a 2-million teacher shortage the next decade, with more kids coming into the schools.

Now, we already have too many teachers out there teaching science and math courses, especially, for which they have not been academically prepared and in which they, themselves, have not passed performance exams. So it's all very well—we've got to invest more money in this, and we've got to be more flexible about getting people into teaching, in all kinds of ways, that actually know the subjects we expect them to teach.

So these are some of the things that are in this bill. I think this is quite important. This could have a lot to do with what America looks like 10 years from now. If we can't give—everybody knows we've got the best higher education system in the world and, relatively speaking, a higher percentage of people going into colleges than other countries. No one seriously believes that we're giving all of our kids the best elementary and secondary education in the world. And until we can do that, we won't be able to take full advantage of this astonishing diversity in our student body.

And I think this is, by the way, a huge asset for us in the global economy, to have all these kids from all these different countries. Just go to the New York school system and look. This is a big deal. This is a plus, not a minus. This is a good thing in a global society to have this but only if we can give these kids a chance to learn what they need to know to do well in the world they will become adults in.

Let me just mention one or two other things. The aftermath—Hillary and I are going out to Littleton, Colorado, tomorrow. And the aftermath of that shooting, I think, has had an even more profound impact on the country than all the school shootings last year did. And you can see it by what is happening in the Congress now. I think there is finally a feeling that it's time for everybody to stop making excuses; it's time for everybody to stop trying to place blame and instead just basically say, "I would like to assume whatever my share of responsibility is for giving a safe childhood back to our children."

And there's something for the gun people, the entertainment people, and the Government people to do. There's also something for the school people and the parents to do, and the

kids, themselves. But I would just like to make a couple of points.

Number one, the American people can take a lot of pride in the fact that in the United States Senate—that would never have passed any reasonable gun control on a bet 6 months ago—over 70 Senators last night voted to impose child trigger locks on the gun manufacturers. They voted to raise the age of handgun ownership to 21. And they voted on—I don't like the bill they voted for because it's got too many loopholes, but at least they're moving toward closing the gun show loophole.

The Speaker of the House yesterday came out for closing the gun show loophole and for raising the gun ownership age to 21. This is good. The Democrats who have been for this for years should reach out the hand across the aisle and say, "Look, this is good."

We've come a long way since 1994 when one of the principal reasons we lost the House of Representatives in the '94 election was the lobbying of the NRA against our Members who voted for the crime bill, with the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. Ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania; he knows. We lost at least a dozen and perhaps as many as 20 seats solely because of this. This is a different country than it was then.

And the grieving of the American people for these children and the recognition that these two young men, who had gone to such a dark place in their own minds, had a Tec-9 and were making bombs, large numbers of them, I think it really registered on people. And we have a chance, therefore, to do something good.

While I was in California last weekend, I told the entertainment community I thought that they should stop advertising what is violent that might be shown to kids who couldn't see the movies or rent the movies or the video games; that the advertising—people who are exposed to the advertising ought to be rated in the same way that the people who are exposed to the underlying product, and that the whole rating system ought to be reevaluated in terms of gratuitous violence.

Now, this doesn't mean that the people that manufacture guns or the people that manufacture movies or video games are personally responsible for anything. But it does mean—we know this—we know that kids are spending more time on their own, less unsupervised time, that their parents, when they're with them, are

more tired because they're often working two jobs, than at any previous time. We know this. And therefore, we know that there will be more of them who will be vulnerable.

And if that is true and you have easier access to guns and explosives, on the one hand, and on the other hand, you have now over 300 studies that say that sustained exposure to violence—and the average 18-year-old has now seen 40,000 televised murders on movies or TV or a video screen—40,000—and we know that the vulnerable among us are made more vulnerable, then the whole mixture is a caldron out of which some dramatically terrible things will happen.

And you don't have to blame anybody personally for this, but we all have to say, "Look, we've got to do something about this." Then I think there has to be a national grassroots campaign in every community involving religious institutions and schools and other groups patterned on what the Mothers and Students Against Drunk Driving did, patterned on the national anti-teen-pregnancy campaign—grassroots, value-based, personal contact with all these kids to try to really dramatically reduce this. And believe me, it can be done.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I've been in a lot of schools and there are—some schools do better than others with counseling programs, with peer mediation programs, with intervention programs that ultimately lead to mental health for the kids who need it, and also with just trying to set an environment in which people are encouraged to be in groups, but the groups are not encouraged to look down on one another and provoke social discord. I mean, there's a lot that can be done in the schools by the students.

And finally—a person came up to me the other day—everybody says, we need to do more to try to make it easier for parents not to lose touch with their kids. And anybody who has ever raised a child through adolescence knows that it's an interesting challenge. I mean, you want your child to become independent, to have space, to begin even to have things that aren't necessarily shared with you. But you don't want to lose the connecting cord.

And we have—it's interesting, isn't it, that we think we should get help in education and instruction and support for everything from losing weight to improving our athletic skills, to figuring out how to use a computer to how to make money in the stock market. And yet,

we don't think anybody ought to have instruction in the most important things in life. And this grassroots campaign ought to be out there helping parents to deal with the challenge of having their children come of age and get that independence they're entitled to without severing the cord that they don't want severed. This is a big deal.

And you know, our family and Al and Tipper Gore, we've worked on a lot of these issues for years and years and years. And we're going to spend a lot of time on this in the next 18 months.

The last thing I'd like to say—I'd like to say just a word about the world, because people are so interested, especially in the crisis in Kosovo now. We have tried in the last 6 years to be a force for peace, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Bosnia. We've tried to be a force for reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and we've made a lot of progress in that and for standing up against terrorism and the emerging threats of biological and chemical weapons in the hands of organized criminals or terrorists. We've worked on all that. And we've tried to expand global prosperity through trade initiatives.

But I think it's ironic—and Jack said it at lunch, he said, "It's interesting to me, in this great, modern world we live in, we still can't figure out what to do about genocide"—since that's what World War II was really about. And I think if you think about what characterizes the modern age in a positive sense—an explosion of technology, especially in the telecommunications area; computer science increasingly being merged with the biological sciences, so that when the human genome project is completed we'll be able to get a map of—the genetic map of ourselves and our children and our grandchildren, and it should move us very rapidly over the next 15 years to another dramatic increase in life expectancy. So that's the first thing, this explosion of technology and its immersion with telecommunications and with the biological sciences.

And then the second thing is the world getting closer together, national borders becoming more porous, the interconnections of people becoming closer. Isn't it ironic when we're dreaming of our children all learning how to speak different languages, having E-mail pen pals in Asia and Africa and Latin America, and all this sort of interesting stuff that we want to dream

about, that the number one problem we're facing in the world today is the incredible, durable persistence of the oldest demon of human society, the fear of people who are different from us. And the fear leads to loathing. The loathing leads to dehumanization. The dehumanization leads to the justification of killing. And the justification of killing then often leads to the justification of systematic killing, based on racial or ethnic or religious difference.

But it is the oldest problem of human society. And it is a true irony that when we—I look at these young people here, and I think: Gosh, the world they'll live in 30 years from now will be full of things that I can't even imagine. Will they really be burdened by this primordial madness that manifested itself in Bosnia or in the little villages of Rwanda, where 700,000 people at least were hacked to death in a hundred days, in a country not a colonial creation, those people had been living together for 500 years, or Bosnia, where a quarter of a million people died, and 2½ million people were made prisoners, and mosques were burned, and libraries and museums were burned up, and books were destroyed that were priceless—or what's going on in Kosovo?

Will the people of Northern Ireland take the last step that's still hanging them up to make peace? Will the evident desire of the voters in Israel for peace and security find a concrete expression in the next few months?

The biggest problem to all of it is when it gets right down to the lick log, it's hard to hold hands with somebody who's really different from you and jump off into a common future. It's hard.

And I know a lot of people that question what I have done and how I have done it in Kosovo. All I can tell you is I'm convinced that I've done the right thing in the best available way. And one of the things you hire a President to do is to think about all the implications of all the options that are available. But I would far rather be here today answering the questions that I have to answer to the American people and to the press about what we have done and why we have done it and how we have done it, than I would like to be here today asking you to contribute money to our party and to our cause if I were sitting on my hands and letting those people be butchered and thrown out of their homes and plundered and their records erased.

And I think the fact—it's amazing to me how many American Jews have told me they support what we are doing for Kosovar Muslims. It is a great thing. It is something special. We have no territorial ambitions there. We have no economic ambitions there. We, in fact, are going to have to spend more money to help them rebuild the area and build it higher than it was. What we want is for our children to be able to live in the world where they can maximize the explosion of technology and maximize the openness of borders, and you cannot do that in a world where you're worried about being blown up by a terrorist who is driven by ethnic, religious, or racial hatred.

That is what this is about. It's very much in our security interests to do this. But it's because of the world toward which we're going. If this were 1950, it wouldn't be. The world we're going to live in does not need a Europe consumed, even at its edge in southeastern Europe, by this kind of hatred.

Let me just close with this story. I've been telling this for 5 days now, but I was overwhelmed last week. I had an experience which to me embodies the best in this country. Last week, at the request of our leader in the Senate, Senator Daschle, and the other four Democratic Senators from North and South Dakota and Montana, we hosted in the White House a meeting of 19 Native American tribal leaders from the upper plains States.

They are the poorest of all of our Indian tribes. And most of them don't have any gambling. They don't have any population density. And it's long way from here to there, so they don't get a lot of new investment. And they haven't been part of this great booming economy. They haven't noticed that the stock market went from 3,200 to 11,000 in the last 6½ years. It just totally escaped them. I mean, they haven't felt this.

So they came to the White House. And the first thing they did was, they said, well, now—and we met in the Roosevelt Room, which is a room that some of you have been in—it's commemorated, basically dedicated to Franklin and Eleanor and Theodore Roosevelt. And Theodore Roosevelt's Nobel Peace Prize is on the mantelpiece there, which he got for helping to end the Russo-Japanese War in 1905.

So they say, "Well, can we get all this stuff out of here and sit in a circle? That's our custom." So we get the table out, and everybody

is sitting in a circle. And a lot of Cabinet members were there. And their spokesperson was a 6'6" tribal chief named Tex Hall—not exactly your Native American name, but anyway, that's his name. [Laughter] So he gets up and speaks, and then everybody speaks, and they talked about the education concerns and the health care and the economic concerns. And I came in about midway through the meeting; they all were talking. So at the end, Chief Hall, he stands up again, and he said, "I want to tell you something." He said, "There's something else we want to do before we go." He said, "We have a proclamation here we have signed, supporting what you are doing in Kosovo"—representing the poorest Americans, right, and the first Americans. He said, "You see, Mr. President, we know something about ethnic cleansing. And our country has made a lot of progress, and here we are today, and we think we should stand up against it."

And then this other young man said that he wanted to speak. And he represented one of the tribes in South Dakota. He wasn't very tall, and he had this beautiful piece of Indian jewelry on around his neck, silver jewelry. And he said this—you think about this when you leave here today, about what kind of country you want in the 21st century—he said, "Mr. President, I had two uncles. One of them was on the beach at Normandy. The other was the first Native American fighter pilot in the history of the American military. My great-great-grandfather was slaughtered by the 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee," he said, "and here I am in the White House." He said, "We have come a long way from my great-great-grandfather to my uncles to this day. I have only one son, and he means more to me than anything. I would be proud for him to go and fight against ethnic cleansing in Kosovo." He said, "We know what is right now." And you could not hear anyone breathe in that room.

I ask you to think about that. This is a different country than it was 6½ years ago. It needs to be a different country 6½ years from now. We have still so much to do. But if you made me choose one thing I could do in the next nearly 2 years I've got left, it would be to bring the American people closer together, not to give up our fights and our disagreements and our arguments but to just remember this is quite an extraordinary place. We have had quite a journey. We have a lot to do at home

and abroad, and we'll be able to do it if we don't forget that what binds us together is more important than all the things that divide us.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Jack and Phyllis Rosen; former Vice Presidential candidate Geraldine A. Ferraro; former Congressman Peter H. Kostmayer; Joseph

J. Andrew, national chair, Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, and Fran Katz, national finance director, Democratic National Committee; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; Columbine High School gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold; Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Improve Work Incentives for Persons With Disabilities

May 19, 1999

I commend the House Commerce Committee for its overwhelming bipartisan support for the "Work Incentives Improvement Act" today. By unanimously endorsing this legislation, the committee has taken an important step towards removing significant barriers to work for one of our Nation's most significant untapped resources—millions of people with disabilities. The committee's action, under the leadership of Chairman Bliley and Congressman Dingell, parallels the overwhelmingly bipartisan support that the Roth/Moynihan/Jeffords/Kennedy version of this legislation received from the Senate Finance Committee.

Americans with disabilities can and do bring tremendous energy and talent to the American workforce, but the unemployment rate for all working-age adults with disabilities is nearly 75 percent. One of the most glaring problems is

that people with disabilities frequently become ineligible for Medicaid or Medicare if they go back to work. This puts people with disabilities in the untenable position of choosing between health care coverage and work. The "Work Incentives Improvement Act" would improve job opportunities for people with disabilities by increasing access to health care and employment services.

Justin Dart, one of the foremost leaders of the disability community, has said that the "Work Incentives Improvement Act" is "one of the boldest since the landmark passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act." As I indicated in my State of the Union Address, I could not agree more with him. I urge Speaker Hastert and Majority Leader Lott to move promptly to schedule votes on this important and long overdue legislation.

Memorandum on Assessment of Space Launch Vehicles

May 19, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Assessment of Space Launch Vehicles

Our national space transportation capabilities are critical to the overall strength and stability of our commercial, civil, and national security space sectors.

As we enter the 21st century, reliable access to space will be more important than ever in

accomplishing our national goals. It is vitally important that we fully understand the root causes behind the recent launch vehicle failures and take corrective action. Therefore, I request that you, in coordination with the Director of Central Intelligence and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), provide me with an interim report in 90 days and a final report in 180 days on the

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causes of these failures and actions required to ensure our future access to space.

I have asked Dr. Neal Lane, my Assistant for Science and Technology, to work closely with you, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Administrator of NASA on this important issue.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

CC: The Director of Central Intelligence, The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, The Assistant to the President for Science and Technology

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

May 19, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). My last report consistent with Public Law 102-1, was transmitted on March 3, 1999.

Overview

There have been no United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) or International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections in Iraq since December 15, 1998. On January 30, 1999, the UNSC established three assessment panels on Iraq to address disarmament, humanitarian, and Kuwait-related issues. Brazilian Ambassador to the United Nations Celso Amorim, who chaired the panels, presented the panels' conclusions to the Security Council on April 6.

The disarmament panel confirmed UNSCOM's earlier findings that Iraq has failed to comply with its obligations under UNSC resolutions, and that significant disarmament issues have not yet been resolved. It also confirmed the validity of the disarmament and monitoring plan endorsed by Resolution 715.

The humanitarian panel noted that, despite considerable improvements in the humanitarian situation since the oil-for-food program began, serious problems remain. The report highlighted the Government of Iraq's failure to order and distribute critical supplies, and its inequitable distribution practices. It also identified a significant shortfall in revenue for the oil-for-food pro-

gram. This problem has been largely caused by low oil prices during the last year, but Iraq's limited oil production capabilities have also been a factor.

The Kuwait-issues panel cited Iraq's failure to comply with its requirement to provide information on Kuwaiti and other missing persons from the Gulf War, as well as its failure to comply with the requirement to return property stolen during the Gulf War, including Kuwait's national archives.

The 6-month reports submitted to the Security Council by Ambassador Butler and IAEA Director-General Mohammed El Baradei in April 1999 reflected the refusal by Iraq to add substantively to their ability to resolve outstanding disarmament and monitoring issues. In New York, UNSCOM continued to implement its mandate: by assessing the situation on the ground in Iraq after the military action in December, by choosing new sites for future inspection, by refining inspection protocols, by continuing a dialogue with member nations to obtain information about Iraq's past and present activities, and by continuing to improve the Export-Import Monitoring Mechanism.

The United States continues to support the international community's efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the oil-for-food program.

We are convinced that as long as Saddam Hussein remains in power, he will continue to threaten the well-being of his people, the peace of the region and the security of the world. We will continue to contain these threats, but over the long term the best way to address them is through a new government in Baghdad.

To that end, working with the Congress, we have deepened our engagement with the forces of change in Iraq to help make the opposition a more effective voice for the aspirations of the Iraqi people.

U.S. and Coalition Force Levels in the Gulf Region

Saddam Hussein's record of aggressive behavior compels us to retain a highly capable force in the region in order to deter Iraq and respond to any threat it might pose to its neighbors, the reconstitution of its WMD program, or movement against the Kurds in northern Iraq. We demonstrated our resolve in mid-December when forces in the region carried out Operation Desert Fox to degrade Iraq's ability to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction and its ability to threaten its neighbors. We will continue to maintain a robust posture and have established a rapid reinforcement capability to supplement our forces in the Gulf, if needed.

Our forces that deployed to the region include land- and carrier-based aircraft, surface warships, a Patriot missile battalion, a mechanized battalion task force and a mix of special operations forces deployed in support of U.S. Central Command. To enhance force protection throughout the region, additional military security personnel are also deployed. Because of the increased air-defense threat to coalition aircraft, we have also added a robust personnel recovery capability.

Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch

The United States and coalition partners enforcing the no-fly-zones over Iraq under Operations Northern Watch and Southern Watch continue to be subject to multiple anti-aircraft artillery firings and radar illuminations, and have faced more than 35 surface-to-air missile attacks. Additionally, since the conclusion of Desert Fox, Iraqi aircraft have committed over 120 no-fly zone violations.

In response to Iraq's repeated no-fly-zone violations and attacks on our aircraft, I have authorized our aircrews to respond directly and forcibly to the increased Iraqi threat. United States and coalition forces are fully prepared and authorized to defend themselves against any Iraqi threat while carrying out their no-fly zone enforcement mission and have, when circumstances warranted, engaged various compo-

nents of the Iraqi integrated air defense system. As a consequence, the Iraqi air defense system has been degraded substantially since December 1998.

The Maritime Interception Force

The multinational Maritime Interception Force (MIF), operating in accordance with Resolution 665 and other relevant resolutions, enforces U.N. sanctions in the Gulf. The U.S. Navy is the single largest component of the MIF, but it is frequently augmented by ships, aircraft, and other support from Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Kuwait, The Netherlands, New Zealand, the UAE, and the United Kingdom. Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) provide logistical support and shipriders to the MIF and accept vessels diverted for violating U.N. sanctions against Iraq. Kuwait was especially helpful in providing significant naval and coast guard assistance. We are expanding our efforts to encourage participation in the MIF from nations in northern Europe and South America.

Although the export of refined petroleum products through the Gulf has significantly declined since Operation Desert Fox, the MIF continues to patrol the waters to prevent a resurgence of petroleum-product smuggling. Furthermore, the MIF provides a deterrent to ships smuggling prohibited items into Iraq in violation of U.N. sanctions and outside the parameters of the humanitarian oil-for-food program. In early April, the MIF conducted the latest in a series of periodic search operations in the far northern Gulf near the major Iraqi waterways. These operations disrupted smuggling in the region without interference from Iraq. Kuwait and the UAE have stepped up their own enforcement efforts.

In December 1998 and again in April 1999, Iraq relocated surface-to-surface missile batteries to the coastal area of the Al Faw Peninsula. The missiles in question, with a range of nearly 60 nautical miles, could reach far into the North Arabian Gulf and posed a serious threat to the MIF. The deployment of these missiles to a position from which they could engage coalition naval forces was carried out in concert with the increased attempts to shoot down aircraft enforcing the no-fly zones and constituted an enhancement of Iraq's offensive military capability in southern Iraq. On both occasions, coalition aircraft responded to the threat posed by these

missiles and are authorized to continue to do so as necessary.

Chemical Weapons

April reports to the UNSC President reconfirmed January's findings that UNSCOM identified as priority chemical weapons disarmament issues: VX; 155mm mustard shells; an Iraqi Air Force file of chemical weapons documents; R-400 bombs filled with CBW (field inspections needed); and chemical weapons production equipment (field verification is needed for 18 of 20 shipping containers UNSCOM knows were moved together). The reporters identified as key monitoring priorities the ability to verify Iraqi compliance at listed facilities and to detect construction of new dual-use facilities.

Biological Weapons

April reports to the UNSC President reconfirmed January's findings that UNSCOM identified as priority outstanding biological weapons disarmament issues Iraq's incomplete declarations on "the whole scope of the BW program." The declarations are important because "Iraq possesses an industrial capability and knowledge base, through which biological warfare agents could be produced quickly and in volume." The report also identified the importance of monitoring dual-use biological items, equipment, facilities, research and acquisition at 250 listed sites. The effectiveness of monitoring is "proportional to Iraq's cooperation and transparency, to the number of monitored sites, and to the number of inspectors."

Long-Range Missiles

April reports to the UNSC President reconfirmed January's findings that UNSCOM identified as priority missile disarmament issues: 50 unaccounted for, SCUD conventional warheads; 500 tons of SCUD propellants, the destruction of which has not been verified; 7 Iraqi-produced SCUDs given to the army, the destruction of which cannot be verified; truckloads of major components for SCUD production that are missing; the concealment of BW warheads; and the lack of accounting for VX-filled warheads. The report identified the capability to monitor declared activities, leaps in missile technology, and changes to declared operational missiles. There are 80 listed missile sites.

Nuclear Weapons

In a February 8, 1999, report to the UNSC President, IAEA Director General Mohammed El-Baradei summarized previous IAEA assessments of Iraq's compliance with its nuclear disarmament and monitoring obligations. The report restates that "Iraq has not fulfilled its obligation to adopt measures and enact penal laws, to implement and enforce compliance with Iraq's obligations under resolutions 687 and 707, other relevant Security Council resolutions and the IAEA OMV plan, as required under paragraph 34 of that plan."

The IAEA continues to plan for long-term monitoring and verification under Resolution 715. In its February 8 report to the Security Council, it restated that monitoring must be "intrusive" and estimated annual monitoring costs would total nearly \$10 million.

Dual-Use Imports

Resolution 1051 established a joint UNSCOM/IAEA unit to monitor Iraq's imports of allowed dual-use items. Iraq must notify the unit before it imports specific items that can be used in both weapons of mass destruction and civilian applications. Similarly, U.N. members must provide timely notification of exports to Iraq of such dual-use items. Following the withdrawal of UNSCOM and IAEA monitors, there is no monitoring by UNSCOM or IAEA inspectors of dual-use items inside Iraq, although some limited monitoring in certain sectors can be carried out by OIP inspectors. This factor has presented new challenges for the U.N. Sanctions Committee and is taken into consideration in the approval process. The United States has placed holds on a number of contracts that might otherwise have been approved as a result.

The U.N.'s Oil-for-Food Program

We continue to support the international community's efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the oil-for-food program. Transition from phase four to phase five (authorized by UNSC Resolution 1210) was smooth. As in phase four, Iraq is again authorized to sell up to \$5.2 billion worth of oil every 180 days. However, because of a drop in world oil prices, Iraq was only able to pump and sell approximately \$3.1 billion worth of oil in phase four; recent increases in

world prices should provide increased revenue for this phase of oil-for-food.

As of April 5, under phase five of the oil-for-food program, 340 contracts worth nearly \$1 billion have been approved. As of April 5, the United States had 145 phase four and 13 phase five contracts on hold pending clarification of questions about the proposed contracts.

Three assessment panels were formed in January to look at Iraqi disarmament, the humanitarian situation in Iraq, and Iraq's obligations regarding Kuwait. The panels presented their reports to the Security Council in April. The United States supported an examination of the current situation and exploration of ways to improve humanitarian conditions, particularly with regard to vulnerable groups such as children under age five and pregnant and nursing women. The United States has expressed its support for raising the cap on Iraqi oil exports under the oil-for-food program in order to meet humanitarian needs, and for certain other proposals made by the humanitarian assessment panel.

Resolution 1210 maintains a separate oil-for-food program for northern Iraq, administered directly by the United Nations in consultation with the local population. This program, which the United States strongly supports, receives 13 to 15 percent of the funds generated under the oil-for-food program. The separate northern program was established because of the Baghdad regime's proven disregard for the humanitarian needs of the Kurdish, Assyrian, Yezidi and Turkoman minorities of northern Iraq, and its readiness to apply the most brutal forms of repression against them. In northern Iraq areas where Baghdad does not exercise control, the oil-for-food program has been able to operate relatively effectively, as documented by the humanitarian assessment panel. The Kurdish factions have set aside their differences to work together so that Resolution 1210 is implemented as efficiently as possible.

Humanitarian programs such as oil-for-food have steadily improved the life of the average Iraqi living under sanctions (who, for example, now receives a ration basket providing over 2,000 calories per day, a significant improvement in nutrition since the program began) while denying Saddam Hussein control over oil revenues. We will continue to work with the U.N. Secretariat, the Security Council, and others in the international community to ensure that the hu-

manitarian needs of the Iraqi people are met while denying any political or economic benefits to the Baghdad regime.

Northern Iraq: Kurdish Reconciliation

Since their ground-breaking meeting with Secretary Albright in September 1998, Massoud Barzani, President of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and Jalal Talabani, Chairman of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), have met four times to continue their work towards full reconciliation. Both parties have condemned internal fighting, pledged to refrain from violence in settling their differences, and resolved to eliminate terrorism by establishing stronger safeguards for Iraq's borders. In particular, both parties have committed themselves to deny sanctuary to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), to eliminate all PKK bases from the region and to safeguard the Turkish border. The parties believe that key decisions on Iraq's future should be made by all the Iraqi people together at an appropriate time and through a regular political process. Their work is thus meant to implement a framework of regional administration until a united, pluralistic, and democratic Iraq is achieved. A Higher Coordination Committee (HCC) made up of senior representatives from the PUK and the KDP meets regularly in northern Iraq, and Officials of the State Department are in frequent contact with the parties to further the reconciliation process.

The United States is committed to ensuring that international aid continues to reach the north; that the human rights of the Kurds and northern Iraq minority groups such as the Turkomans, Assyrians, Yezedis, and others are respected; and that the no-fly zone enforced by Operation Northern Watch is observed. The United States will decide how and when to respond should Baghdad's action pose an increased threat to Iraq's neighbors, to regional security, to vital U.S. interests, and to the Iraqi people, including those in the north.

The Human Rights Situation in Iraq

The human rights situation in Iraq continues to fall far short of international norms, in violation of Resolution 688. For over seven years, the Iraqi government has refused to allow the U.N. Human Rights Commission Special Rapporteur for Iraq, Max Van der Stoep, to visit Iraq. U.N. human rights monitors have never

been allowed in. Meanwhile, increasingly disturbing reports of the most serious nature continue to emanate from Iraq. For example, 2,500 political prisoners have been summarily executed without due process of law since Fall 1997, according to detailed reports Mr. Van der Stoel received. Often, the bodies are said to have been returned to the victim's families showing clear signs of torture.

The assassination of three of Iraq's most senior Islamic clerics is of special concern. In February, Ayatollah Mohammed al-Sader—the most senior Shia cleric in Iraq—was assassinated, along with two of his sons, after attending Friday prayers in Najaf. This follows the similar killing of Sheikh Borojourni in April 1998 and Ayatollah Ah al-Gharawi in June 1998. In each case, the killings reportedly followed months of arrests and interrogations by government security services, and have been widely attributed to agents of the regime. The deaths also come in the context of a resurgence of repression in southern Iraq, as the regime works toward the destruction of the Marsh Arabs' way of life and the unique ecology of the southern marshes. The regime also continues to ignore appeals by Mr. Van der Stoel and others for access by human rights monitors to investigate these reports.

In the north, outside the Kurdish-controlled areas, the government continues the forced expulsion of ethnic Kurds and Turkomans from Kirkuk and other cities. In recent months, hundreds of families have reportedly been expelled from Kirkuk. Reports from the Kurdish-controlled areas where the displaced persons are received indicate that they are forced to leave behind almost all of their personal property. Due to a shortage of housing, many are still living in temporary shelters.

The Iraqi Opposition

We are deepening our engagement with the forces of change in Iraq, helping Iraqis inside and outside Iraq to become a more effective voice for the aspirations of the people. We will work toward the day when Iraq has a government worthy of its people—a government prepared to live in peace with its neighbors, a government that respects the rights of its citizens.

On April 7–8, the Executive Council of the Iraqi National Congress met at Windsor, in the United Kingdom. The meeting produced three important results: it elected a seven-member in-

terim "Presidency Committee;" it created an "outreach committee" to expand the INC's membership and build links to regional states; and it decided that a meeting of the INC National Assembly would be held no later than July 7, at a site to be determined. We applaud the Council members for this constructive, forward-looking meeting.

Senator Bob Kerrey of Nebraska attended the meeting as U.S. observer along with Special Coordinator for the Transition of Iraq, Frank Ricciardone, as well as other State Department officials and staff from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I believe the joint U.S. Executive-Congressional team underscores the deepening cooperation within the U.S. Government on this important issue.

The interim INC Presidency Committee met for the first time on April 10. The group reportedly established a principle of rotating leadership and discussed plans to send a delegation to the United Nations to express views on humanitarian and human rights issues.

The United Nations Compensation Commission

The United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), established pursuant to Resolutions 687, 692, and 1210, continues to resolve claims against Iraq arising from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The UNCC has issued over 1.3 million awards worth over \$7 billion. Thirty percent of the proceeds from the oil sales permitted by UNSC resolutions have been allocated to the Compensation Fund to pay awards and to finance operations of the UNCC. Pursuant to decisions of the UNCC Governing Council, certain small claims are to receive initial payments of \$2,500 toward the amounts approved on those claims before large claims of individuals and claims of corporations and governments may share in the funds available for claims payments. As money from Iraqi oil sales is deposited in the Compensation Fund, the UNCC makes these initial \$2,500 payments on eligible claims in the order in which those claims were approved by the UNCC. To date, the U.S. Government has received funds from the UNCC for initial installment payments on approximately 1,685 claims of U.S. claimants.

Conclusion

Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and security. I remain determined to see Iraq comply fully with all of its obligations under

Security Council resolutions. The United States looks forward to the day when Iraq rejoins the family of nations as a responsible and law-abiding member. I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks on Departure for Littleton, Colorado May 20, 1999

School Violence

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I have just met with my foreign policy team, but before I speak on the situation in Kosovo, I want to say a few words about school violence. As all of you know, in a few moments I am leaving for Littleton, Colorado, where Hillary and I will meet with students and families from Columbine High School.

The news this morning of another school shooting, this one in Rockdale County in suburban Atlanta, is deeply troubling to me, as it is to all Americans. We thank God that the injuries to the students do not seem to be life threatening. This incident, again, should underscore how profoundly important it is that all Americans come together in the face of these events to protect all of our children from violence.

There is debate going on in the Senate today relevant to that, and we must press ahead aggressively with the national campaign that we met about here a week ago Monday. We have got to do this.

Situation in the Balkans

The national security team has just briefed me on what has been accomplished to date in Kosovo by the air campaign, on the progress of our diplomacy with our allies in Russia, on the humanitarian situation on the ground. I want to speak about some of the recent developments, but first I want to say a word about one person who has been critical to our efforts in Kosovo, and indeed, to our entire national security program. I am pleased to announce that I have nominated General Hugh Shelton to a second term as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Over the last 2 years, he has provided extraordinary leadership, unwavering dedication to our men and women in uniform, unstinting efforts on behalf of military readiness and modernization. Our Nation is fortunate that this critical post will continue to be filled by someone of his experience, ability, and character.

Now, he also has, as all of you have noticed, great stature. We were joking in there a few moments ago, in a situation that is not really funny, that we had a vote about whether I should renominate General Shelton; and Secretary Cohen, Secretary Albright, Mr. Berger, and I voted for it, and he voted against it. But we overruled him, and he's going to serve another term.

Let me say that our effort in Kosovo was strengthened by the vote in the House of Representatives to approve the supplemental funding we requested last month. It is absolutely imperative that the Senate follow suit without delay. The measure will allow us to keep bringing aid to the refugees until they go home, to help the neighboring countries feeling the brunt of the crisis. Most important, it will give our military what it needs to see its mission through while maintaining the readiness of our forces around the world.

As all of you know, there are some things in the bill that I did not support, but it is terribly important that this aid be released as soon as possible to those other countries and to the refugees and that we get the support for the military. I will sign the bill as soon as it gets here, and it is important that it be passed without delay.

Now, let me again say what we are doing. The refugees must go home with security and self-government. The Serbian forces must leave

Kosovo. An international security force with NATO at its core must deploy to protect people of every ethnicity and faith in Kosovo. On this, our country is speaking with a single voice, as we see by the strong bipartisan support for the measure.

From the beginning, we have said that we believe that a peaceful resolution that meets these conditions would serve our interests, and we will continue to pursue one with our Allies and with Russia. We will also continue our military campaign until the conditions are met. I believe the campaign is working. Each day we hear reports of desertions in the Serbian Army, dissension in Belgrade, unrest in Serbian communities. President Milosevic should know that he cannot change the fundamental terms that we have outlined, because they are simply what is required for the Kosovars to go home and live in peace.

The question is not whether ethnic cleansing will be reversed but how much of the military will be destroyed because of his intransigence along the way; how much damage will be done to Serbia because of his delays? NATO is united in our determination to persist as long as it takes to achieve these goals.

Let me just make one other point about Kosovo. In the last few days, we have seen more disturbing evidence of the atrocities committed against innocent Kosovars, including some of the first photographic proof of massacres of unarmed people. In trying to divert attention from these crimes, Serbian forces are only committing more by placing civilians around military targets. It's like pushing someone in front of an oncoming train and then trying to blame the train for running them over. We will not allow this cruel tactic to deceive or divert us from our goal. We need to stay focused and patient in pursuit of our simple objective, to defend the right of a people to exist on their land without being subject to mass expulsion and mass murder. With continued support from Congress and the American people, that is exactly what we intend to do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks to the Columbine High School Community in Littleton

May 20, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Do that cheer for me one more time.

Audience members. We are Columbine! We are Columbine! We are Columbine!

The President. Thank you.

Dr. Hammond; Mr. DeAngelis; President DeStefano and the State legislators, county commissioners; Attorney General Salazar; especially Governor Owens, thank you for being here. To all the officials who are here; most especially to the students of Columbine and the students who are here from Chatfield and Dakota Ridge. And Heather Dinkel, thank you for standing up here in front of this big crowd and making a fine talk. Weren't you proud of her? She did a good job representing you today. [Applause]

I want to say a special word of thanks to the families who met with Hillary and me before we came over here, for telling us the stories

and showing us the booklets commemorating the lives of their very special children. I also want to thank the fine young people who still are hospitalized with whom I spoke by telephone yesterday—two of them, Patrick Ireland and Sean Graves, are here today. They left the hospital to be here.

I know there are some other people here who are also still injured who have come. I thank all of you for coming. This has been a long, hard month for all of you, and as Hillary said, it's been a hard month for America.

You heard her say that part of our job in these last 6 years, more than we ever could have imagined when we moved to Washington after the election in 1992, has been to be with grieving people, after the Oklahoma City building was blown up and the Embassies were blown up and our airmen were killed in the

bombing in Saudi Arabia and so many other occasions—and last year several times—after violence in schools. But something profound has happened to your country because of this. I want you all to understand that. I'm not even sure I can explain it to you.

One of the incidents of school killing last year occurred in my home State. It's a small State. I was Governor there 12 years. I knew the people involved; it was heartbreaking. One of the mothers of one of the children who was killed still works with us for safer schools and safer childhoods. And all America grieved. But I think they thought, "Oh, this is terrible; I wish somebody would do something about this."

But somehow, when this happened here—maybe because of the scope of it, and I think mostly because of you, how you reacted, all of you, the relief workers, the law enforcement people, the family members who were brave enough to speak—there was a different reaction. People thought, "This has happened in my neighborhood; what can I do?" I say that because you have a unique chance—a chance—to make sure that the children of Columbine are never forgotten.

But first, you have to deal with you and your lives. You're all left with searing memories and scars and unanswered questions. There has to be healing. There has to be answers. And for those things that will not heal or cannot be answered, you have to learn to go on with your lives.

I hope you have been comforted by the caring not only of your neighbors but of your country and people from all around the world. All America has looked and listened with shared grief and enormous affection and admiration for you. We have been learning, along with you, a lot about ourselves and our responsibilities as parents and citizens.

When America looks at Jefferson County, many of us see a community not very different from our own. We know if this can happen here, it can happen anywhere. And we see with admiration the fundamentally strong values and character of the people here, from the students to the school officials, to the community leaders, to the parents.

I think most Americans have looked at you and thought, among other things, that—God forbid—if something like this should ever happen to us, I hope we would behave as well. I hope we would also hold on to our faith as well.

I am impressed that you are moving forward. Most of the children have returned to school, even returned to sports and other activities. I am proud of all of you who are, in your own way, going back to living your lives, looking toward the future, to commencement or college or a summer job or just getting back to the ordinary business of life, which takes an extraordinary effort now. But I have to say, I think what's impressed me most is the way, in the midst of this, you have held on to your faith.

One of the greatest moments of grief in my life occurred 15 years ago, when Hillary and I had to go to the memorial service for a young man who was a senior at Yale University, a Rhodes Scholar, on the football team, the editor of the newspaper, the leader of his class academically. This young man happened to come from an African-American family in our hometown and a poor family at that. His father was a minister in a very small church. And we had the service in the high school auditorium.

His father was lame, and he walked with a pronounced limp. And he gave his son's eulogy, walking down in front of us with his limp, saying, "His mother and I do not understand this, but we believe in a God too kind ever to be cruel, too wise ever to do wrong, so we know we will come to understand it by and by."

In the Scriptures, Saint Paul says that all of us in this life see through a glass darkly. So we must walk by faith, not by sight. We cannot lean on our own wisdom. None of this can be fully, satisfactorily explained to any of you. But you cannot lose your faith.

The only other thing I really want to say to you is that throughout all your grief and mourning and even in your cheers and your renewal and your determination to get on with your life and get this school back together and show people what you are, there is something else you can do, and something I believe that you should do for yourselves and your friends, to make sure they will be remembered. Every special one of them.

Your tragedy, though it is unique in its magnitude, is, as you know so well, not an isolated event. Hillary mentioned there was another school shooting in Atlanta today. Thankfully, the injuries to the students don't seem to be life threatening. But there were several last year which did claim lives.

We know somehow that what happened to you has pierced the soul of America. And it

gives you a chance to be heard in a way no one else can be heard, by the President and by ordinary people in every community in this country. You can help us to build a better future for all our children: a future where hatred and distrust no longer distort the mind or harden the heart; a future where what we have in common is far more important than what divides us; a future where parents and children are more fully involved in each other's lives, in which they share hopes and dreams, love and respect, a strong sense of right and wrong; a future where students respect each other even if they all belong to different groups, or come from different faiths or races or backgrounds; a future where schools and houses of worship and communities are literally connected to all our children; a future where society guards our children better against violent influences and weapons that can break the dam of decency and humanity in the most vulnerable of children.

One thing I would like to share with you that I personally believe very much: These dark forces that take over people and make them murder are the extreme manifestation of fear and rage with which every human being has to do combat. The older you get, the more you'll know that a great deal of life is the struggle against every person's own smallness and fear and anger and a continuing effort not to blame other people for our own shortcomings or our fears.

We cannot do what we need to do in America unless every person is committed to doing something better and different in every walk of life, beginning with parents and students and going all the way to the White House. For the struggle to be human is something that must be a daily source of joy to you, so you can get rid of your fears and let go of your rage and minimize the chance that something like this will happen again.

Because of what you have endured, you can help us build that kind of future, as virtually no one else can. You can reach across all the political and religious and racial and cultural lines that divide us. You have already touched our hearts. You have provoked Hillary and me and the Vice President and Mrs. Gore to reach out across America to launch a national grassroots campaign against violence directed against young people. You can be a part of that.

You can give us a culture of values instead of a culture of violence. You can help us to keep guns out of the wrong hands. You can help us to make sure kids who are in trouble—and there will always be some—are identified early and reached and helped. You can help us do this.

Two days from now, you're going to have your commencement. It will be bittersweet. It will certainly be different for those of you who are graduating than you thought it was going to be when you were freshmen. But as I understand it, there will be some compensations. Even your archrivals at Chatfield will be cheering you on. When you hear those people cheer for you, I want you to hear the voice of America, because America will be cheering you on. And remember that a commencement is not an end. It is a beginning.

You've got to help us here. Take care of yourselves and your families first. Take care of the school next. But remember, you can help America heal, and in so doing you will speed the process of healing for yourselves.

This is a very great country. It is embodied in this very great community, in this very great school, with these wonderful teachers and children and parents. But the problem which came to the awful conclusion you faced here is a demon we have to do more to fight. And what I want to tell you is, we can—together.

I close here with this story. My wife and I and our daughter have been blessed to know many magnificent people because the American people gave us a chance to serve in the White House. But I think the person who's had the biggest influence on me is the man who is about to retire as the President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela.

He is 80 years old; he served 27 years in prison. For 14 years he never had a bed to sleep on. He spent most of his years breaking rocks every day. And he told me once about his experience. And I asked him: "How did you let go of your hatred? How did you learn to influence other people? How did you embrace all the differences in, literally, the centuries of oppression and discord in your country and let a lot of it go away? How did you get over that in prison? Didn't you really hate them?"

And he said, "I did hate them for quite a long while. After all, look what they took from me—27 years of my life. I was abused physically and emotionally. They separated me from my

wife, and it eventually destroyed my marriage. They took me away from my children, and I could not even see them grow up. And I was full of hatred and anger.” And he said, “One day I was breaking rocks, and I realized they had taken so much. And they could take everything from me except my mind and my heart. Those things I would have to give away. I decided not to give them away.”

I see here today that you have decided not to give your mind and your heart away. I ask you now to share it with all your fellow Americans. We love you, and we need you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:37 p.m. in the gymnasium at Dakota Ridge High School. In his remarks, he referred to Jane Hammond, superintendent, Jefferson County Schools; Frank DeAngelis, principal, Columbine High School; Jon DeStefano, president, Jefferson County School Board; State Attorney General Ken Salazar and Gov. Bill F. Owens of Colorado; and Columbine High School students Heather Dinkel, student body president, and Patrick Ireland and Sean Graves, students wounded in the April 20 attack. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Statement on the Shooting at Heritage High School in Conyers, Georgia May 20, 1999

Today’s shooting at Heritage High School in Georgia was deeply troubling to us all. In the wake of these terrible incidents, all Americans must come together and do everything we can

to protect children from violence. I applaud the Senate for today’s historic vote to close the gun show loophole and keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children.

Statement on Senate Action on 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Legislation May 20, 1999

Today the Senate approved the emergency resources I requested to support our mission in Kosovo. Congressional support for this mission means our military forces can sustain the air campaign until we prevail. It sends a clear signal to the Milosevic regime that the Congress and the American people are committed to this mission. And the resources I requested for the Defense Department will keep our military readiness strong.

At the same time, the bill includes resources critical to helping the international community and the frontline countries of southeast Europe cope with the massive humanitarian crisis and other immediate spillover effects of the conflict and Milosevic’s brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing.

This emergency funding package will also provide urgently needed resources to help Central Americans repair and rebuild after the devasta-

tion of Hurricane Mitch. With these funds, farmers can plant new crops in the final weeks of the growing season; roads, hospitals, and schools can be rebuilt; and Central Americans can look to the future with hope, knowing that America is standing with them. The legislation will support the improving prospects for peace in the Middle East by providing additional assistance to strengthen Jordan’s economy and security. This emergency funding also provides resources for victims of natural disasters at home, and for our farmers in distress due to depressed crop prices.

While I am pleased that Congress has finally acted to fund our mission in the Balkans, to support the Middle East peace process, and to help American farmers and the victims of Hurricane Mitch, it is unfortunate that Members tacked unnecessary and ill-advised special projects onto essential emergency legislation.

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Were it not for the pressing needs in Kosovo, Central America, the Middle East, and America's heartland, I would have rejected several of these measures that reward special interests, weaken environmental protection, and undermine our campaign to stop teen smoking. This is no way to do the people's business, and I will not tolerate this kind of special interest meddling as we complete the annual budget process.

This final legislation does show significant improvement upon Congress's earlier versions. Gone are the Congress's proposed cuts that weakened anti-terrorism programs, especially Embassy security upgrades; that threatened to undermine global economic stability by denying U.S. funds to multilateral development banks; and that imperiled the Government's ability to continue fixing its computers for the year 2000. Congress also removed or modified certain objectionable riders that, for example, would have blocked our efforts to protect the sensitive waters in Alaska's Glacier Bay, and weakened the Endangered Species Act.

It is a mistake for Congress to use this bill as a vehicle for a range of special interest provisions harmful to the environment and to the prudent stewardship of our Nation's natural resources. Several highly objectionable provisions remain in the final bill. For example, there are provisions that undermine our ability to ensure that mining on Federal lands is done in an envi-

ronmentally responsible manner. And by extending a moratorium on the Department of Interior's proposed oil valuation rules, the Congress is preventing the collection of fair royalty payments from the oil companies that extract oil from public lands. Again, I want to be clear that, were it not for the truly emergency needs to which this bill responds, I would be rejecting these environmental riders. I call on Congress to end these stealth attempts to weaken environmental and public health protections. I have vetoed bills in the past because they contained anti-environmental riders and, if necessary, am fully prepared to do so again.

Finally, Congress passed up an important opportunity to protect our children from the death and diseases caused by tobacco. This is wrong. I am also extremely disappointed that the Congress acted against recoupment of funds collected by the States from tobacco manufacturers and does not require States to use even a portion of those funds to prevent youth smoking. Even though 3,000 young people become regular smokers every day and 1,000 will have their lives cut short as a result, most States still have no plans to use tobacco settlement funds to reduce youth smoking. I will closely monitor State efforts in this area, and I will continue to fight for a nationwide effort to reduce youth smoking through counter-advertising, prevention activities, and restrictions on youth access to tobacco products.

Radio Remarks on Disaster Relief Provisions in 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Legislation

May 20, 1999

On behalf of the many thousands of citizens struggling to put their lives back together following the recent string of devastating tornadoes, I want to thank the Congress for its approval of the supplemental budget. Some \$900 million in funding will go immediately to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to ensure there will be no interruption in assistance to the disaster victims in Oklahoma, Kansas, Tennessee, Texas, and other States.

Vice President Gore and I saw the devastation first hand. We know that many families lost not only loved ones but also everything they

own. All these families remain in our prayers. And we want them to know that their Government will continue to be there for them throughout their time of need.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 6:30 p.m. in the Oval Office on May 19 for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 20. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Budget Surplus *May 21, 1999*

Today I am pleased to announce that we are on track to reach the largest annual budget surplus ever. Thanks to solid fiscal discipline, the surplus at this point in the fiscal year is \$64.7 billion, the largest in history over a comparable period.

When I came into office just over 6 years ago, we faced a deficit that had already risen to a staggering \$290 billion and was projected to be over \$400 billion in this fiscal year. The Vice President and I, working with Congress, set this country on a new course of fiscal discipline, enacting two strong budget packages in 1993 and 1997. As a result, we have begun to pay down the Nation's debt. In this quarter alone, we expect to pay down \$116 billion of privately held marketable Federal debt, the largest sum ever in a single quarter.

Reducing the debt lowers long-term interest rates for home mortgages and autos and lowers borrowing costs for businesses, fueling private sector investments for continued economic growth. Despite the good news, this is not a time for complacency. We must renew our commitment to this sound economic strategy by making responsible investments in our people, working for open markets, and maintaining the fiscal discipline that is beginning to lift the crushing burden of debt from our children and grandchildren. It is especially critical that we create a bipartisan consensus for saving the surplus and paying down our national debt in a way that strengthens the solvency of both Social Security and Medicare.

Statement on Signing Legislation Authorizing Appropriations for the Peace Corps *May 21, 1999*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 669, a bill authorizing appropriations for the Peace Corps for Fiscal Years 2000 through 2003, which passed the Congress with bipartisan support. This legislation represents a major step toward a goal that the Congress established for the Peace Corps in 1985, and that I reaffirmed in January 1998: expanding the Peace Corps to 10,000 volunteers. This is an important day in the history of the Peace Corps, and I wish to thank the many Members of the Congress who helped make passage of this legislation possible. I also wish to congratulate Mark Gearan for his leadership and outstanding work as the Director of the Peace Corps.

The Peace Corps and the women and men who serve our country as volunteers embody some of our finest traditions and values—a spirit of service, a strong sense of altruism, and an enduring commitment to make the world a better place. Peace Corps volunteers have touched the lives of many people in more than 130 coun-

tries, and every American can take great pride in their service.

This bill will help ensure that many more of our citizens can offer their skills and serve our country as Peace Corps volunteers. This legislation is a strong statement of our Government's continued, bipartisan support for the work of our volunteers and their contributions to international understanding. In particular, I thank Senators Jesse Helms, Joseph Biden, and Paul Coverdell, who served as Director of the Peace Corps under President Bush, and Christopher Dodd, who served as Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic. I also express my appreciation to Representatives Ben Gilman, Sam Gejdenson, Tom Campbell, David Bonior, Donald Payne, and Earl Pomeroy. I also want to express my gratitude to the other returned Peace Corps volunteers who have continued their service to our country as Members of Congress: Representatives Tony Hall, Sam Farr, James Walsh, Christopher Shays, and Tom Petri.

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Finally, I wish to thank the thousands of Peace Corps volunteers who are serving our country around the world. At the end of this fiscal year, more volunteers will be serve overseas than at any time in the last 25 years. Our country owes you a debt of gratitude for your service.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

May 21, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 669, approved May 21, was assigned Public Law No. 106-30.

Statement on Signing the 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act

May 21, 1999

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1141, the "1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act" providing the emergency resources I requested to support our mission in Kosovo, to assist the victims of Hurricane Mitch, and to provide relief to our farmers. I welcome the Congress support for our continuing military efforts in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This important supplemental appropriation to fund the continuation of our military operations sends a clear signal to the Milosevic regime that the Congress and people of the United States are committed to the NATO efforts in Operation Allied Force.

We and our allies have been very clear about what Milosevic must do. The refugees must go home, with security and self government. For that to happen, Serbian forces must leave Kosovo and an international security force with NATO at its core must deploy to protect innocent people of every ethnicity and faith.

By providing the resources I requested for the Department of Defense, this bill will keep our military readiness strong. At the same time it includes resources critical to helping the international community and the frontline countries of Southeast Europe to cope with the massive humanitarian crisis and other immediate spill-over effects of the conflict and Milosevic's brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing.

This emergency funding package will also provide urgently needed resources to help Central Americans repair and rebuild after the devastation of Hurricane Mitch. With these funds, farmers can plant new crops in the final weeks of the growing season; roads, hospitals, and schools can be rebuilt; and Central Americans

can look to the future with hope, knowing that America is standing with them. The legislation will support the improving prospects for peace in the Middle East by providing additional assistance to strengthen Jordan's economy and security. The bill also provides resources for victims of natural disasters at home and for our farmers in distress due to depressed crop prices.

I am pleased that the bill repeals a provision of law that had threatened to interrupt funding for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, and other agencies. In addition to removing this funding restriction, the bill provides the added resources needed to continue preparations for a decennial census. My Administration will work with the Congress to ensure that next year the Census Bureau has the funding needed to conduct the most accurate census possible.

While I also am pleased that the Congress has finally acted to fund our mission in the Balkans, to support the Middle East peace process, and to help American farmers and the victims of Hurricane Mitch, it is unfortunate that members attached unnecessary and ill-advised special projects onto basic, essential emergency legislation. Were it not for pressing needs in Kosovo, Central America, the Middle East, and America's heartland, I would have rejected several of these measures that reward special interests, weaken environmental protection, and undermine our campaign to stop teen smoking. This is no way to do the people's business. The Congress should not permit, and I will not tolerate, special interest meddling as we complete the annual budget process.

This bill does show significant improvement over earlier versions. Gone are proposed cuts

that weakened anti-terrorism programs, especially embassy security upgrades; threatened to undermine global economic stability by denying U.S. funds to multi-lateral development banks; and imperiled the Government's ability to continue fixing its computers for the Year 2000. The Congress also removed or modified certain objectionable riders that, for example, would have blocked our efforts to protect the sensitive waters in Alaska's Glacier Bay and weakened the Endangered Species Act.

Congress should not have used this bill as a vehicle for a range of special interest provisions harmful to the environment and to the careful stewardship of our Nation's natural resources. Several highly objectionable provisions remain in the bill. For example, there are provisions that undermine our ability to ensure that mining on Federal lands is done in an environmentally responsible manner. And by extending a moratorium on the Department of the Interior's proposed oil valuation rules, the Congress is preventing the collection of fair royalty payments from the oil companies that extract oil from public lands. I want to be clear that were it not for the truly emergency needs to which this bill responds, I would reject these environmental riders. I call on the Congress to end these stealth attempts to weaken environmental and public health protections. I have vetoed bills in the past because they contained anti-environmental riders and, if necessary, I am fully prepared to do so again.

I am extremely disappointed that the Congress failed to require States to use even a portion of the funds collected from the tobacco companies to prevent youth smoking. Even though 3,000 young people become regular smokers every day and 1,000 will have their lives cut short as a result, most States still have no plans to use tobacco settlement funds to reduce youth smoking. This bill represents a

missed opportunity by the Congress to protect our children from the death and disease caused by tobacco. This is wrong. I will closely monitor State efforts in this area, and I will continue to fight for a nationwide effort to reduce youth smoking through counteradvertising, prevention activities, and restrictions on youth access to tobacco products.

I hereby designate the following amounts as emergency requirements pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended:

Department of Defense

- Military Personnel, Reserve Personnel, Army: \$2,900,000
- Military Personnel, National Guard Personnel, Army: \$6,000,000
- Military Personnel, National Guard Personnel, Air Force: \$1,000,000
- Operation and Maintenance, Operation and Maintenance, Army: \$50,000,000
- Operation and Maintenance, Operation and Maintenance, Navy: \$13,900,000
- Operation and Maintenance, Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps: \$300,000
- Operation and Maintenance, Operation and Maintenance, Air Force: \$8,800,000
- Operation and Maintenance, Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide: \$21,000,000
- Operation and Maintenance, Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid: \$37,500,000

Federal Emergency Management Agency

- Disaster Relief: \$372,000,000

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 21, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 1141, approved May 21, was assigned Public Law No. 106-31.

May 21 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Radio Remarks on Agriculture Provisions in the 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act *May 21, 1999*

We are living through the longest peacetime expansion in our Nation's history, the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest unemployment in nearly 30 years, over 18 million new jobs since 1993.

Our farmers and ranchers helped to create this new prosperity, giving us good, inexpensive food at home and exporting a lot abroad. Unfortunately, today, too many of them are not reaping the benefits of the prosperity they helped to create. In fact, many of our farmers and ranchers are in the grip of the worst crisis in over a decade. We have to do more to help them.

Three months ago, I called on Congress to give farmers the loan assistance they needed to start the spring planting. Congress didn't act then, and every day they waited brought more farms closer to foreclosure.

So in March our administration took extraordinary action to make \$300 million in loans available to America's farming families now, instead of at the end of the year when they normally would have come up. Congress, Friday, acted to provide funds for those loans and more. On Friday I signed an emergency appropriations bill that will restore the \$300 million to the

loan program to help our farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

But with thousands of them still in danger of failing, we must continue our efforts. My balanced budget for next year includes additional help for agriculture. Unfortunately, next week the House of Representatives will vote on a bill that would gut some of those commitments, and the Senate is considering even deeper cuts. Our farmers and ranchers feed us. They've helped us to get this prosperity we're enjoying. Now they're in need, and we should help them.

After passing a bill that will do so much good, it would be a real shame and a bad mistake for Congress to reverse course and cut back on our commitment to America's farming and ranching families. I'm committed to working with Congress to give them the support they need.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 1:30 p.m. on May 21 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation To Reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act *May 21, 1999*

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit for your immediate consideration the "Educational Excellence for All Children Act of 1999," my Administration's proposal for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and other elementary and secondary education programs.

My proposal builds on the positive trends achieved under current law. The "Improving America's Schools Act of 1994," which reauthorized the ESEA 5 years ago, and the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" gave States and

school districts a framework for integrating Federal resources in support of State and local reforms based on high academic standards. In response, 48 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have adopted State-level standards. Recent results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show improved performance for the economically disadvantaged and other at-risk students who are the primary focus of ESEA programs. NAEP reading scores for 9-year olds in high-poverty schools have improved significantly since 1992, while mathematics achievement has also increased nationally.

Students in high-poverty schools and the lowest-performing students—the specific target populations for the ESEA Title I program—have registered gains in both reading and math achievement.

I am encouraged by these positive trends, but educational results for many children remain far below what they should be. My proposal to reauthorize the ESEA is based on four themes reflecting lessons from research and the experience of implementing the 1994 Act.

First, we would continue to focus on high academic standards for all children. The underlying purpose of every program within the ESEA is to help all children reach challenging State and local academic standards. States have largely completed the first stage of standards-based reform by developing content standards for all children. My bill would support the next stage of reform by helping States, school districts, schools, and teachers use these standards to guide classroom instruction and assessment.

My proposal for reauthorizing Title I, for example, would require States to hold school districts and schools accountable for student performance against State standards, including helping the lowest-performing students continually to improve. The bill also would continue to target Federal elementary and secondary education resources on those students furthest from meeting State and local standards, with a particular emphasis on narrowing the gap in achievement between disadvantaged students and their more affluent peers. In this regard, my proposal would phase in equal treatment of Puerto Rico in ESEA funding formulas, so that poor children in Puerto Rico are treated similarly to those in the rest of the country for the purpose of formula allocations.

Second, my proposal responds to research showing that while qualified teachers are critical to improving student achievement, far too many teachers are not prepared to teach to high standards. Teacher quality is a particular problem in high-poverty schools, and the problem is often exacerbated by the use of paraprofessionals in instructional roles.

My bill addresses teacher quality by holding States accountable for stronger enforcement of their own certification and licensure requirements, while at the same time providing substantial support for State and local professional development efforts. The Teaching to High Standards initiative in Title II would help move

challenging educational standards into every classroom by providing teachers with sustained and intensive high-quality professional development in core academic subjects, supporting new teachers during their first 3 years in the classroom, and ensuring that all teachers are proficient in relevant content knowledge and teaching skills.

The Technology for Education initiative under Title III would expand the availability of educational technology as a tool to help teachers implement high standards in the classroom, particularly in high-poverty schools. My bill also would extend, over the next 7 years, the Class-Size Reduction initiative, which aims to reduce class sizes in the early grades by helping districts to hire and train 100,000 teachers. And the Title VII Bilingual Education proposal would help ensure that all teachers are well trained to teach students with limited English proficiency, who are found in more and more classrooms with each passing year.

Third, my bill would increase support for safe, healthy, disciplined, and drug-free learning environments where all children feel connected, motivated, and challenged to learn and where parents are welcomed and involved. The recent tragedy at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, reminds us that we must be ever vigilant against the risks of violence and other dangerous behaviors in our schools. Our reauthorization bill includes several measures to help mitigate these risks.

We would strengthen the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act by concentrating funds on districts with the greatest need for drug- and violence-prevention programs, and by emphasizing the use of research-based programs of proven effectiveness. Moreover, with respect to students who bring weapons to school, this proposal would require schools to refer such students to a mental health professional for assessment and require counseling for those who pose an imminent threat to themselves or others; allow funding for programs that educate students about the risks associated with guns; expand character education programs; and promote alternative schools and second chance programs. A new School Emergency Response to Violence program would provide rapid assistance to school districts that have experienced violence or other trauma that disrupts the learning environment.

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My High School Reform initiative would support innovative reforms to improve student achievement in high schools, such as expanding the connections between adults and students that are necessary for effective learning and healthy personal development. This new initiative would provide resources to help transform 5,000 high schools into places where students receive individual attention, are motivated to learn, are provided with challenging courses, and are encouraged to develop and pursue long-term educational and career goals.

Fourth, in response to clear evidence that standards-based reforms work best when States have strong accountability systems in place, my proposal would encourage each State to establish a single, rigorous accountability system for all schools. The bill also would require States to end social promotion and traditional retention practices; phase out the use of teachers with emergency certificates and the practice of assigning teachers “out-of-field;” and implement sound discipline policies in every school. Finally,

the bill would give parents an important new accountability tool by requiring State, district, and school-level report cards that will help them evaluate the quality of the schools their children attend.

Based on high standards for all students, high-quality professional development for teachers, safe and disciplined learning environments, and accountability to parents and taxpayers, the Educational Excellence for All Children Act of 1999 provides a solid foundation for raising student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers. More important, it will help prepare all of our children, and thus the Nation, for the challenges of the 21st century. I urge the Congress to take prompt and favorable action on this proposal.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 21, 1999.

The President’s Radio Address *May 22, 1999*

Good morning. It’s been just over a month since 15 students and a teacher lost their lives at Columbine High School. On Thursday Hillary and I traveled to Littleton, Colorado, to visit with the families of the victims and the students of Columbine. They’re brave, good people, full of faith, determined that the children lost will not be forgotten, dedicated to doing whatever they can to make our schools and our children safe. All of us in Washington and in every community in America owe them the same dedication.

As if we needed another reminder, on Thursday, as I was going to Littleton, a young man opened fire at his high school in Conyers, Georgia, wounding several of his classmates. No child should have to worry that a classmate is carrying a loaded gun to school. No parent should have to fear sending a child to school. And no American should tolerate this level of violence against our children. There is no task more urgent. Every one of us has a role to play.

First, Government must do more to protect our children from guns. We’re making progress. This week was a turning point in our long efforts. I’m so pleased that the Senate passed key elements of my commonsense plan to address gun violence: mandatory child safety locks with every new handgun; a lifetime ban on gun purchases by violent juveniles; a nationwide ban on the importation of high-capacity ammunition clips and juvenile possession of assault weapons; and finally, after a tie-breaking vote cast by Vice President Gore, mandatory background checks on gun sales at gun shows.

I’m pleased that Speaker Hastert has agreed that we should also close that deadly loophole and also raise the age of handgun ownership to 21. Now I call on the House to take immediate action. I hope the House of Representatives will pass every one of these commonsense efforts that the Senate has passed to protect our children from guns. And I hope they’ll do it before school lets out.

Protecting our children from guns is important, but it's just one step. The media and entertainment industry have enormous power in our children's lives, and they must take responsibility, too. By the time he or she reaches 18 years old, the average child has watched 40,000 killings over the media. There are now hundreds of studies that show that these viewings actually desensitize our children to the horror and the evil of violence and its consequences and that this has greater impacts on more vulnerable children.

Now, here, too, we've made some progress, with the TV ratings and the V-chip to enforce them, with video ratings, with new screening devices for the Internet which parents can use. But we must do more. Last week I issued three specific challenges to the entertainment community, from keeping guns out of ads and previews that children might see, so that we don't market violence to children when we say we're not showing it to them in the programs; to strictly enforcing the ratings in theaters and video stores, where they're often not enforced at all; to reevaluating the PG rating itself, to ensure that movies approved for viewing by our children do not contain gratuitous violence.

Schools must also do more with violence prevention and peer mediation efforts, with effective counseling programs and, when necessary, access to mental health services. Next month, under the leadership of Tipper Gore, we will host a White House Conference on Mental Health and talk about how we can reach out to troubled young people.

Students should work harder to promote respect among all groups at schools, not the kind of hostility and demeaning conduct and remarks we too often see when groups become gangs or cliques.

Finally, parents must take primary responsibility, paying attention to the shows their children watch, the webpages they visit, refusing to buy products that glorify violence, and, above all, staying involved in their children's lives,

making sure that no child crosses the line between the healthy desire for independence and the potentially deadly alienation.

Last week at the White House, we committed to launch a national campaign to turn back the tide of violence. We need a grassroots effort in every community, involving all sectors of society to connect every child, to help all parents do their jobs better, to use every known prevention technique, to lobby for sensible changes in the law and in practice. It worked when Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and then Students Against Drunk Driving, decided we didn't have to tolerate the death on our highways. It's working now with grassroots efforts on teen pregnancy all across America and with efforts among grassroots business people to hire people off welfare. It will work here if the American people determine to make it work.

Now, here in Washington, we can't once again let the gears of politics as usual grind our urgency into dust. The signs of the past week are very hopeful, but we have to keep at it. We can't forget the children of Columbine and all the other children who were lost because their culture, their society, is too violent, their laws too lax.

The American spirit is stronger than the forces of hate. This is a very good time for our country, and we have made so much progress. Now we must, and we will, find the strength to do whatever it takes to give our children a safer future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:20 p.m. on May 21 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 21 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Thomas J. (T.J.) Solomon, Jr., alleged gunman in the Heritage High School shooting in Conyers, GA, on May 20.

Remarks at the Sons of Italy Foundation Dinner May 22, 1999

Thank you very much, Larry. Larry King, there's a great Italian-American for you. [*Laughter*] And congratulations on your new baby. Paul Polo—yes, let's give him a hand. That's great. [*Applause*]

I want to thank Paul Polo and Phil Piccigallo and all of you for giving me another chance to come by here. And I think Congresswoman Morella is in the audience, and Ambassador Salleso, who does a wonderful job for his country and for ours.

I want to congratulate Andy Giancamilli of Kmart and Tony Bennett for their awards tonight. We have the president of one of our great retailers and America's greatest living pop singer; that's a pretty good representation of the gifts that Italian-Americans have given to our Nation, and you should be proud of them.

I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Tony Bennett for being a good friend to me and to my wife and our family. I wanted to be here for you tonight; you've been here for our country for a long time. God bless you, and thank you, my friend. Thank you.

You know, there have been so many years when I have spoken to you or other Italian-American groups, and I've been almost embarrassed by the number of Italians in my administration. Secretary Cuomo was waiting for me tonight when I got here. You know, I've had two Italian-American Chiefs of Staff, Leon Panetta—who introduced me in Rome, in Italian—and John Podesta. And you know, ever since Podesta took over from Erskine Bowles, we've had people like Steve Richetti, Karen Tramontano, Loretta Ucelli, Ginny Apuzzo coming to work for me. I don't know what's been going on here. [*Laughter*] Maybe this is the new plot to take over America that we've been hearing about. [*Laughter*]

I saw Phil on the way in, and I thank him, too, for giving me the opportunity that I had the last time I was with you to meet with your young scholarship recipients, because those you honor tonight for their gifts—from physics to music to political science to community service—prove that people of Italian descent will continue to make enormous contributions to our country in the century just ahead.

I thank you, too, for your emphasis on education, and I ask you to remember tonight that even though we live in a time of unprecedented prosperity, for which we should thank God and the labors of our people—that we have the longest peacetime expansion in our history and the lowest unemployment in a generation, the highest homeownership ever, welfare rolls cut by more than half in the last 6 years, crime dropping to a 30-year low—we all only have to look around ourselves and our lives to know that we have a lot more to do, especially in areas that have historically been of enormous concern to Italian-Americans.

First, of course, in education: We have a great agenda before the Congress—and I hope it will be acted upon—for higher standards, for no social promotion, for after-school and summer school programs, for more and better prepared teachers, modern schools, and technology.

But tonight I want to talk just a moment about something else, and I particularly appreciated what Larry said when he introduced me. I want to talk about family in the literal sense and family in the larger sense and what it means to our future as a country.

Hillary and I, on Thursday, went to Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. We met with the families of the children and the wonderful teacher who lost their lives. We saw other children still in wheelchairs from their grievous wounds. We saw thousands of kids, just like any group of kids anywhere, still full of enthusiasm and hopes for the future. After the ceremony, we spent quite a long time there just shaking hands with them and talking to them, listening to them, and trying to answer their questions.

I say that to say what is self-evident to you, which is that the most important job of any society is not the creation of wealth but the creation of richness and wholeness in the lives of the children. There is no more important work. And in this day and age, when technology and the explosion of global commerce and culture is bringing us closer and closer and closer together, we cannot connect all of our children to a positive reality unless they are both connected to their literal families, and then they

see others who may differ from them—they may differ in race or ethnicity or religion or politics or sexual orientation or just what they like to do—but they have to be seen as part of our larger family.

There are things for all of us to do to give our children safe and wholesome childhoods and to try to support that for the children of the world. Here in Washington we actually had quite a good week, with some of the most responsible action in the history of Congress to try to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals. And I particularly thank—[*applause*—I particularly thank the Vice President for being there to cast the tie-breaking vote on the gun show loophole issue, something I know quite a bit about; and I am thankful for that. I hope that before the House of Representatives goes home this week for the Memorial Day recess, they will follow suit and pass the same bill.

There are things to be done by those who have influence on our larger culture, who make our movies, our television programs, our video games. It is true that no movie or game could ever cause a child to take another child's life. But it is also true that in our society, the faster we move and the busier we are, and the harder and harder parents have to work outside the home, the more kids are left on their own, the more vulnerable children we have. And if you have a larger number of vulnerable children, it stands to reason that more bad things will happen if it's easier for them to get guns, especially assault weapons, and if they are subjected to a torrent of violent impulses.

You know the average 18-year-old has seen 40,000 murders already on television, in the movies, and in video games? And there are 300 studies already which show that—let me say that again: 300 serious professional studies already—that show that by the time this happens to you, for 18 years, it diminishes your sensitivity to violence and your feeling for the consequences of it.

Now, if you have more kids who are at risk than other societies, and it's easier for them to be flooded with guns—including assault weapons—and they're being subject to sort of psychological stimuli repeatedly, hours and hours and hours a day, year after year after year after year, it only stands to reason that more of them will fall over the line.

So there's something for everyone to do. But in the end, the most important thing we can do is to try to help families reconnect to their children and to try to help communities and schools organize themselves so that a connection is made to every child.

I saw a remarkable book about 3 years ago—I wish I could remember the title tonight—but it was a portrait of children who had grown up in the most unimaginable, difficult circumstances, who had done wonderfully well in life. Many of them had brothers and sisters who had already been killed or imprisoned or whatever. These kids, they all did well, and they had one thing in common, and only one thing: Each of them, by some miracle, had had a consistent, long-term, caring relationship with one responsible adult. And so I say to you, this is a challenge ready-made for the Italian-American.

My wife told me, and we have adopted as a national crusade, that she and I and the Vice President and Tipper Gore will help to organize a grassroots national campaign in the way that Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Students Against Drunk Driving did to sensitize the whole country; it worked there. We had a national campaign to get employers to hire people off welfare. People told me it would never work. They've hired hundreds of thousands of people. There's been a national grassroots campaign to reduce teen pregnancy; it's gone down 5 years in a row. The American people can give our children back their childhood, and I hope you will help us to get that done.

But there's something else that I want you to do, because you are so much a part of our larger family. Our children have to be taught to be proud of themselves and what is special about themselves without thinking people who are different are lesser than they are. One of the disturbing elements of this incident in Columbine was the imagined and real grievances that these kids had built up to a boiling point over people showing them disrespect, because they were supposed to be sort of lower class people at the school.

And they had the same reaction, I might add, that we saw—I saw—in the South when I was a kid. Because they were looked down on, they not only resented the people that looked down on them; they looked around for somebody they could look down on. And they picked out the

minority kids in this school—with one devastating consequence, as I'm sure all of you know.

That is a natural psychological reaction when it is not nipped in the bud. I grew up in a State where the per capita income was barely half the national average the year I was born, right after World War II. I grew up among white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, or Irish or Scottish Protestants, who were largely uneducated and made very limited livings and thought they were looked down on as rednecks by other people. And they, therefore, were disproportionately likely to have racist feelings against African-Americans. And I can tell you, that exists all over the world today.

We have to prove to our children—by the way we live, and what we say, the way we conduct ourselves—that we think every decent person has a home in America and that they're all part of our family.

No one doubts, as we conduct this very difficult operation in Kosovo, that our military is the best in the world. That's not bragging. Others could have great militaries. We've invested a lot of money and time and effort. But one of the reasons it is, is because they are so diverse.

I just got back from Germany, visiting with the young people who are working in the humanitarian operation, and the young pilots and their support crews who are flying those dangerous missions. And there they were, from every conceivable ethnic and racial group, all here.

I never will forget when I took the Pope—I didn't take him, but I escorted the Pope—to Regis College in Denver, the first time he came to America. He went out there, after I took office, and we were going up and down the line shaking hands with the students, and there was a young man in the Army of the United States of America who began speaking Polish to the Pope. And he proudly told him that he was born in Poland, but he was now in our country and proud to serve in the military. And I could give you countless examples of that.

Tonight I have been told that there are parents of one of our brave servicemen flying F-15's in Kosovo, Joe and Dorothy Simile. Thank you. [Applause] Their son is a captain flying those missions. I want you to know, Joe and

Dorothy, I'm very proud of him and all the men and women who are serving today.

I'd also like to say a special word of thanks, before I forget it, to the Government and the people of Italy, who have been indispensable to our mission in Kosovo. It is our united mission, but they have paid a much bigger price. They have had airports closed. They have had economic hardship. Their Prime Minister has been a rock of stability and concern for a quick but just outcome, and I am very grateful. And Mr. Ambassador, I thank you for what your country has done to stand up for freedom and against ethnic cleansing.

The mission of America has always been to widen the circle of opportunity and deepen the meaning of freedom by strengthening the bonds of our community. That is the story of America. You know, the people that started our country off, with the bold declaration that all people are created equal by God, were not fools; they were smart people. And they knew good and well we weren't living up to it. When we got started, slaves were counted as 60 percent of white people, and only white male property owners could vote. They knew this was not a manifestation that all people are created equal. But they knew that the ideal had to be out there, and we had to continue to push and push and push for it.

I think it is supremely ironic that on the verge of a new century and a new millennium, with our kids learning how to use computers and having pen pals on every continent, with the mysteries of the human gene about to be unlocked, with the prospect of dramatic increase in the length and quality of life, that we are bedeviled today in this great modern age by the oldest demon of human society, the fear of people who are different from us. And once you fear somebody, then you have to dislike them. Once you dislike them, it is easy to hate them. Once you hate them, it is quite easy to treat them as if they're not people at all and dehumanize them. And then it's a very short step to saying, "It's too bad, but we have to kill them, or run them out, or blow up their houses of worship, or eradicate their cultural symbols, or burn all their old books, or destroy their personal property records."

That's what this whole deal is about. We can't require people to like each other or get along. We can't even ask them to stop fighting. But when we are able to do it, we ought to stand

up and say we will not tolerate ethnic cleansing that leads to mass murder, mass rape, mass dislocation, and the destruction of everything we believe in.

I want to close with this story. It's not about Italian-Americans, but you will identify with it. And it captures everything, to me, that is special about our country and everything that you have given to America.

The other day, shortly before Hillary and I went to Colorado, I had a meeting on my schedule with 15—no, 19—Native American tribal chiefs from the northern high plains. The Senators from those States, the Dakotas and Montana, had asked me to meet with them because they are the poorest of our Indian tribes. They don't have big casinos, and there aren't a lot of people out there, so nobody's been rushing to invest big new money there. And this wonderful economy that has taken the stock market from 3,200 to 11,000 has largely left them untouched. And they wanted to come and see the President about it, and the President's Cabinet.

Secretary Cuomo came, Secretary Riley and a number of our other Cabinet members—Secretary Babbitt. So they said, "First, we would like to sit in a circle, as is our custom, so that we can all see each other." So we were in the Roosevelt Room, we got rid of the table, and we all sat in a circle. They started their meeting, and I came in, and each one in his turn stood up and talked about, "Well, here's our education needs, our health care needs," and so on.

Then at the end, the chief who was the spokesperson—who, ironically, was named Tex Hall—was a very large man, and he stood up and he said, "Before we go, Mr. President, I would like to give you this proclamation we have signed for you. And in it, we support the actions of the United States in Kosovo." He said, "You see, we know something about ethnic cleansing. And we have come a good way, and we think we should stand against it everywhere."

Then, across the room, another young man stood up who represented his tribe, one of the

Sioux tribes. And he stood very erect. He wasn't particularly tall, and he had a beautiful piece of silver Indian jewelry around his neck. And he said, "Mr. President, I have two uncles. One of them was on the beach at Normandy. The other was the first Native American ever to be a fighter pilot for the United States military. My great-great-grandfather was slaughtered by the 7th Army at Wounded Knee." He said, "I am here talking to the President." He said, "I only have one son. He's the most important thing in the world to me. But we have come a very long way from my great-great-grandfather, to my uncles, to my being in the White House. We have learned a great deal. We are living together. Though I love my son more than life, I would be proud for him to go and stand against a new version of ethnic cleansing. We have to live together."

I will never forget that moment as long as I live. We in the United States have been on a long, imperfect, and unfinished journey. You have made immeasurable contributions to it. Perhaps as much as any group of Americans, you can help us to rebuild the bonds of family here in the United States and to stand up at least for our common humanity around the world.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. in the Great Hall at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Cable News Network interview show host Larry King and his son Chance; Paul S. Polo, Sr., president, and Philip R. Piccigallo, national executive director, Sons of Italy Foundation; Ambassador Ferdinando Salteo and Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy; Andrew A. Giancamilli, president and general merchandise manager, U.S. Kmart; singer/entertainer Tony Bennett; Joseph and Dorothy Simile, parents of Capt. Joseph Simile, Jr., USAF; Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Commencement Address at Grambling State University in Grambling,
Louisiana
May 23, 1999

The President. Thank you. Good morning.

Audience members. Good morning.

The President. I thank you for the wonderful, wonderful welcome. President Favors, thank you for the degree. I'm beginning to feel smarter already. *[Laughter]* My good friend Reverend Jones, thank you for your wonderful invocation and reminding us why we are here on this Lord's day. Mayor Williams, thank you for making me feel welcome, and I thank the other mayors and councilmembers who met me. Dr. Jindal, thank you for your remarks.

I must say, I was especially impressed by the remarks of your student government president, Tony Eason, and Miss Grambling, Martha Fondel. After they spoke, I wasn't quite sure I wanted to give my speech. *[Laughter]*

Let me also say that I am delighted to be joined today by your distinguished Senator, Mary Landrieu, and Congressman William Jefferson from New Orleans, by our Secretary of Transportation and, like me, a neighbor of yours to the north, from Arkansas, Secretary Rodney Slater; I thank him.

You know, when I heard that I might be able to come to Grambling, there was very little discussion about this in the White House. Now, usually when the President has a chance to go someplace, there's always an argument about it because they think you should be somewhere else—somebody who works for you thinks you should be somewhere else. But I told my staff that I wanted to take a day away from Washington, DC. Now, Washington is a town where everybody thinks they're somebody—*[laughter]*—and I wanted to come to the place “where everybody is somebody.” I also was not about to miss a chance to hear the best band in the land. And I thank you for the musical tribute. And I'm glad at least the tuba players were standing up and dancing. I would have missed that, too.

I also—

Audience member. I need a job!

The President. *[Laughter]*—Hey, I'm just getting warmed up, you know? Come on. *[Laughter]*

To the last Grambling class of the 20th century, this is an important day in your lives. In so many ways—

Audience member. I need a job!

The President. Well, you'll be able to get one now. *[Laughter]*

In so many ways, the story of this institution embodies the whole 20th century experience of African-Americans. In 1901 not a single public school in this part of Louisiana would welcome an African-American into its classes. But the visionary farmers of this community, the children and grandchildren of slaves, were determined to give their children the education and pride and power to rise above bigotry and injustice. And so, even though they didn't have much, they scrounged around and raised some money and wrote a letter to Booker T. Washington, asking him to send a teacher to help build a school in the piney woods.

Out of that determination, Grambling has truly grown into a university for the 21st century. You have nurtured some of our Nation's best educators and lawyers, pastors and public servants, nurses and business leaders. Of course, the NFL recruits here, thanks to Eddie Robinson and his successor, Super Bowl MVP Doug Williams. Of course, you're known for your band and your other athletic teams.

But America's top technology firms recruit here, too, because Grambling confers more computer and information science degrees to African-Americans than any other university in the Nation.

So you join a proud tradition today, and I congratulate you all. You have gained knowledge that will enrich you for the rest of your lives, and I can just see by looking at you, you've made friends who will stay with you for the rest of your lives. Through long hours in the class and late nights in the library, through moments of both self-doubt and triumph, you have today gained the prize: an education that will help you succeed in one of the most exciting eras in all of human history.

I'd also like to congratulate and honor today your parents, your grandparents, your aunts and uncles, all those who had a hand in raising you.

They should be proud of you, but they should also be proud of themselves. To raise a child from infancy to college graduate is no small feat—you hear the “amens” from the audience on that one. [Laughter]

One of the most beloved presidents of Grambling, Ralph Waldo Emerson Jones, I understand often said to his students, “When you go home, be sure to kiss everybody—including the mule”—[laughter]—“because the mule is the one who pulls the plow and keeps the family going.” Well, I’m not going to ask the graduates to kiss any mules today, but I do ask each of you before this day is over to say a special thank-you to the people who kept your families going.

I asked for some research on some of the families. I’d just like to mention two. People like Joyce Gaines of Vallejo, California—listen to this: Even through the pain of five ruptured disks in her back, she worked three jobs and commuted 200 miles a day to put her daughter, Tiaesha, through Grambling. Where are you? Stand up there. [Applause] Today she’s graduating with a degree in sociology, and she plans to open a home for abused children. She is a tribute to her mother’s love and sacrifice. And we thank you.

People like James and Lilly Bedford of Shreveport: James is a plumber; Lilly is a cook. Both took on extra work at night and on weekends to help their youngest son, Terrence, pay for college. She was a student at Grambling back in the fifties, but Lilly had to leave before graduating. Now Terrence is the second of the seven Bedford children to earn a Grambling degree, and he’s the senior class president. Congratulations to the Bedfords. Where are you? Thank you. [Applause]

Stories like this remind of us what people can achieve when they set their minds to it, but they also remind us of how hard it can be to raise a child right, especially today in our very busy society with its very demanding economy. Now, this is the serious part of the talk. I want you to have a good time today, but I want you to listen to this.

This spring I’m going to speak to seniors about how this new economy is transforming every aspect of our lives. Next month, at the University of Chicago, I’ll talk about how we must put a human face on the dynamic but often disruptive international marketplace. But today I want to talk to you about what we as

a Nation must do to help families like those I just mentioned—and those will be your families—master the challenges of the new economy.

I’ve been thinking a lot about family lately, and I expect a lot of you have. In the aftermath of the terrible tragedy at Littleton and the other school shootings we’ve had in our country, they’ve forced us to confront the need not only to make guns less available to criminals and children, not only to make our culture less violent and our schools safer but also to make the bonds that tie parents to children stronger.

The spate of hate crimes that we have seen, taking the lives of James Byrd, Jr., in Texas, Matthew Shepard in Wyoming, and others, force us to confront the need to raise our children to respect others who are different from themselves and to recognize that all hard-working, law-abiding people are part of our national family. The horrible ethnic cleansing of this decade in Bosnia, then Rwanda, now Kosovo, demonstrate in stark terms what can happen when a people raise their children without the fundamental premise embodied in our Declaration of Independence, that we are all created equal, equally endowed by God with the right to life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It all begins with family, with parents who love their children more than life and raise them to live their dreams. Most of you today are probably thinking more about the adventures of the work that awaits you at this marvelous time in your lives. And well you should be. But most of you also will become parents. When that happens, it will be the most important work you’ll ever do. You will have the awesome responsibility of your children’s physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development, while at the same time pursuing your own lives in a society that will reward your knowledge and skills, empower and entertain you with its explosions of technology and mobility, and keep you very, very busy.

For those without your level of education in your time, just earning enough to pay the bills may be a chore, especially if there are children to be raised.

Now, the class of 1999 is entering an era of unparalleled opportunity and possibility with, for example, the lowest African-American unemployment and poverty rates ever recorded and the highest African-American homeownership in history. To give more people like you a chance to participate fully in this economy, we’ve

opened the doors of college to more and more Americans, with the HOPE scholarship tax credit, larger Pell grants, lower-cost student loans, tools many of you have used to finance your education.

Now, with your diplomas in hand, you will have the chance to reap the benefits and shape the future of this new era—your time; to lead lives of greater accomplishment and affluence than most of your parents even dreamed of. But as you form your own families, you will no doubt feel the pressure of trying to balance the demands of work and family and doing a good job at both in a world that moves faster and faster and often leaves parents less and less time and energy for their children.

Today's working parents too often feel enormous stress and bring the stress home with them. This is a problem not confined—I want to emphasize this to you—it is not confined just to people who work for low and modest incomes. Most of the parents I know have had problems balancing work and family. And as you move through your careers, unless we act now, this problem will get worse. Therefore, I believe it is imperative that your country give you the tools to succeed not only in the workplace but also at home. If you or any American has to choose between being a good parent and successful in your careers, you have paid a terrible price. And so has your country.

I asked the President's Council of Economic Advisers to study the sweeping changes the modern economy has brought to our families. Now, no offense to anybody on the faculty here, but you know, it's been said that if every economist on Earth were laid end to end, they still would not reach a conclusion. [*Laughter*]

But on this question, these economists did reach a conclusion, one that conforms to common sense and common experience. They found that because more and more parents were working outside the home, they have less and less time for their children. The percentage of married mothers in the work force has nearly doubled in a generation, from 38 percent in 1969 to 68 percent in 1996. Because more mothers are working outside the home and because the number of single parent families has grown—listen to this, because this will be your life—parents in the average family now have 22 fewer hours each week to spend at home. That's nearly one full day less time per week for parents to devote to their children. That means by the

time a child reaches the age of 18 in today's world, those 22 hours a week amount to over 2 years more the parents are away from home.

We as a nation must find a way to give your generation of parents some of that time back even as you've gotten an education to succeed in the work force.

Most of today's parents, the vast majority, are doing everything they can to do right by their kids. But they still worry that no matter how hard they try, it won't be enough. They worry that waking up early and staying up late to make time for their children may not be enough when a child still has to come home to an empty house after school.

They worry that all those Sunday morning sermons about a world of love might not be enough when TV and movies their children watch, the music they listen to, the video games they play show too much hate and violence. They worry that all those nights working overtime to buy a computer so that a child can visit some of the world's finest libraries on the Internet might not be enough, when the same Internet can also lead them to recipes for pipe bombs and explosives, or to website discussions of dark visions of life and society so very different from the ones the parents have tried to impart.

Last week Hillary and I took a sad journey to Colorado to visit with the students and the families of Columbine High School. I came away from that experience more certain than ever that as we work to strengthen our gun laws, we also have to work to strengthen our families.

Now, it seems to me that the modern economy you're going to be a part of poses four great challenges for you as parents. The greatest and most obvious, as I've said, is time. In our around-the-world, around-the-clock economy, there just don't seem to be enough hours in the day for parents to do everything they need to do. I'm proud that the first bill I signed as President was the Family and Medical Leave Act, and since 1993, millions of Americans have used it to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a newborn or a sick relative without losing their jobs. It has been a great thing.

But to be truthful, the current law just meets a fraction of the need. Too many people, too many family obligations aren't covered at all. Too many families can't take advantage of the law because they can't afford to take the time

off because they can't live without their paychecks. For all of this Nation's pro-family rhetoric, the hard truth is that other countries with advanced economies do a lot more to support working parents than we do. We must think bigger and do better.

On the eve of the 21st century, we ought to set a goal that all working Americans can take time when they need it to care for their families without losing the income they need to support their families. Achieving that goal cannot come overnight and will require a significant shift in how our Nation helps families to succeed at home and work. But it can make all the difference in your lives. It will demand thought and creativity, a willingness to experiment. It has to be done in a way that gives families flexibility and doesn't undermine our dynamic and growing economy.

Today, using my executive authority as President, we're going to take an important step toward that goal. I am directing the Office of Personnel Management, whose director, Janice Lachance, came down here with me today, to allow all Federal workers to use the sick leave they've earned to take time off to care for other sick family members.

Now, what this means is, on sick leave you get paid. Currently, the most sick leave a worker can use in these kinds of cases is 13 days a year. With the new policy I propose today, Federal employees will be able to take up to 12 weeks paid sick leave to nurse an ailing child or parent back to health. If every company in America that offers sick leave to its workers adopted the same policy we're adopting today, half of all the American work force would have this important benefit for their families.

We have to find other creative ways to help Americans use benefits they've worked for to finance the time off they need for their families. Let me give you another example. A few States have asked the Federal Government if it would be possible to try a bold idea: allow workers who have earned unemployment insurance coverage to collect unemployment payments while they're on leave caring for a newborn or a newly adopted child. This is a very promising idea.

Today I'm directing the Secretary of Labor to issue a rule to allow States to offer paid leave to new mothers and fathers. We can do this in a way that preserves the soundness of the unemployment insurance system and continues to promote economic growth. As the First

Lady said in her book, "It Takes a Village," those first weeks of life are critical to the bonding of parents and children, and they can have long-term positive developments for the children. No parent should have to miss them.

I also am challenging Congress to help. I have proposed expanding unpaid family leave to cover more workers and more parental responsibilities, and Congress ought to respond positively. Parents should not have to fear a boss' wrath because they left work to take a child to the doctor. They shouldn't have to call in sick to attend a parent/teacher conference at the school.

The second challenge parents face is finding affordable high-quality child care, and a lot of you will face that. Low income families spend up to a quarter of their income on child care. Studies show that only one in seven child care centers meets all the standards of good quality. Now, I'm supporting subsidies for child care and tax credits, better training for caregivers, stronger enforcement of safety standards. And I want business to do more by helping their own workers find and afford quality child care.

In addition to that, you know, today millions of working parents—and a lot of them right here in north Louisiana—start looking at the clock every day about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, wondering if their kids have come home from school, wondering how they'll fare at home alone. The hours after the school bell rings and before parents come home are a perilous time for children, the time they're most tempted to try drugs and alcohol, most likely to become victims of a crime. That's why I have asked Congress to triple our investment in quality after-school programs. I challenge school districts all across this country: Unlock those empty classrooms in the late afternoon; fill them with the sounds of children playing and learning.

The third challenge parents face, since they're more and more at work, is that they're literally physically apart from their children more. Now, because of some modern developments in the work force, we can actually close that distance by bringing back a very old idea: letting children who can be, be with their parents more at work.

When I was a young child, I often went to work with my grandfather, who worked as a night watchman in a sawmill outside Hope, Arkansas. And I often went to the little grocery store he ran. And I tried not to be in the way too much or to eat too many cookies that I didn't pay for. *[Laughter]* But I learned lessons

there that have stayed with me for the rest of my life.

As I became President, I realized that as a father, with a daughter who was then still in junior high school, I had the privilege of, in effect, living above the store. The place where I worked was only a 2- or 3-minute walk to have dinner every night with my family. When I was Governor—I still remember when I was Governor—I had a little desk over in the corner of my office for my daughter. And I still have vivid memories: I would be at my desk; she would be at hers with her crayons drawing me little pictures.

Now, because of changes in the work force, we can't do this for everybody, but we can do it for more. More of America's employers can use technology to bring workers and children closer together by allowing more employees to telecommute at work; that is, work at home with a modem where it's feasible. More employers can open more onsite child care centers, and I have seen them working very well in this country. I support tax breaks to help them afford to do that.

More employers can team up with school districts to build public schools at worksites if they're large enough. Dozens of companies have already built innovative public schools. That's what you've done here at Grambling; that's what the lab school is, isn't it? It's a school at a work site, especially friendly to education. These are good things to do. And I challenge the employers of this country to look at them closely.

Finally, the last great challenge parents face in the modern economy is cultural. The new economy has enriched our lives with lower-priced electronic gear and a growing variety of media entertainment, and it sure is interesting. But too often, TV, radio, the Internet bombard our children with images and ideas that no parent would ever want them to see.

We need tools to protect free speech and give parents more control over what their young children see, hear, and read. Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, those tools are now being crafted. Soon, half of all the TV sets sold in our country will come with V-chips, so parents can basically make the most of the new TV ratings system. These devices enable parents to screen out violence, sex, or any program they don't want their children to see. Soon, with just a click of a mouse, parents who have the courage to learn how to use a com-

puter will be able to take offensive websites off their children's screens.

The entertainment industry must also do its part. They should stop showing guns and violence in ads children can see, when they can't see the movies in the first place. They should enforce the movie rating system more strictly, and they ought to reexamine that rating system to see whether it's too loose when it comes to giving a PG-13 rating to films full of gratuitous violence. These are tools that can help working parents succeed at the most important job you'll ever have, raising children. But Government's responsibility is to make tools available; your responsibility is to use them.

Dr. King once wrote, "It is quite easy for me to think of a God of love, mainly because I grew up in a family where love was central and loving relationships were ever present." I hope and pray that the class of 1999 will have the chance to build those ever-present loving relationships with your children. To raise your children well, you will have to make many sacrifices. But then, as we learned again today and as you showed by your applause for them, your parents made many for you.

I ask you to think one more time about how you got here today, to be sitting in the hot sun. [Laughter] I'm sort of sorry I'm in the shade; I ought to be in the sun, and you ought to be in the shade, since I'm talking.

But think about this. How many of you would be here today if it weren't for one or more people in your families who were reading to you, or telling you stories when you were little; who were helping with your homework; who were attending your school events, even if they were dog-tired after work; imparting wisdom over dinner; working with you to give you chances they didn't have; giving you that unconditional love, support, and faith that says, you are the most important person in the world to me? Your parents have worked and sacrificed. If you ask them today, was it worth it, you know what they would say.

But until you watch your own children grow up, you can't really know how proud your parents are of you today and how sure they are that all the sacrifices were more than worth it. No matter what else you accomplish in life, and many of you will accomplish a very great deal, your children will still matter most. We have to make sure that you and they get all the benefits of this fabulous modern world and

still keep the enduring gift of your devotion and love.

As you journey into the new millennium, I wish you success and fulfillment at work and with your children.

Congratulations, good luck, and God bless you.

[At this point, Dr. Steve A. Favors, president, Grambling State University, jokingly offered the President a faculty position.]

The President. Let me say—I must say, when I was invited to come back and teach and I was told all about the food and all the perks of the job and then the president said he wasn't serious, I was getting into this. [Laughter] I've got a good pension; I can work pretty cheap. [Laughter]

Let me say one thing seriously—I very much hate that I have to go back now but I have—as you know, we have got a lot going on overseas, and it's 6 hours ahead there, and I have to make a lot of phone calls today and do a lot of work. Otherwise I wouldn't leave. I would like to stay here until midnight—not talk until

midnight, just stay here until midnight. [Laughter]

This has been a wonderful thing for me. I have had a lot more fun than you have so far at this. I cannot thank you. I'm so proud of you. And I like looking out there and seeing your faces and your eyes and your self-confidence. And I want you to go out and do a great job with your lives.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:47 a.m. in Eddie Robinson Stadium, after receiving an honorary doctor of laws degree. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. E. Edward Jones of the National Baptist Convention of America, who gave the invocation; Mayor John Williams of Grambling; Bobby J. Jindal, president, University of Louisiana System; and Eddie Robinson, former head football coach, and former NFL Washington Redskins quarterback Doug Williams, current head football coach, Grambling State University. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Memorandum on New Tools To Help Parents Balance Work and Family May 24, 1999

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: New Tools to Help Parents Balance Work and Family

Since I became President, my Administration has worked hard to make sure that parents have the tools they need to meet their obligations at home and at work. I am proud that the very first bill I signed into law was the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Since 1993, the FMLA has allowed millions of Americans to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave—without fear of losing their jobs—to care for a newborn or adopted child, to attend to their own serious health needs, or to care for a seriously ill parent, son, daughter, or spouse. Too many American workers, however, have been unable to take the leave they need because they simply cannot afford to go without a paycheck.

Therefore, I am taking new steps toward enabling workers to take the leave they need.

First, I hereby direct the Secretary of Labor to propose regulations that enable States to develop innovative ways of using the Unemployment Insurance (UI) system to support parents on leave following the birth or adoption of a child. In addition, I direct the Secretary to develop model State legislation that States could use in following these regulations. In this effort, the Department of Labor is to evaluate the effectiveness of using the UI system for these or related purposes. In a 1996 study conducted by the Commission on Family and Medical Leave, lost pay was the most significant barrier to parents taking advantage of unpaid leave after the birth or adoption of a child. This new step will help to give States the ability to eliminate a significant barrier that parents face in taking leave.

Second, I direct the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to propose government-wide regulations to allow Federal employees to use up to 12 weeks of accrued sick leave

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each year to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a “serious health condition,” as that term is defined for the purpose of applying the FMLA. Currently, the amount of sick leave that can be used to care for a family member who is ill is limited to 13 days each year for most Federal employees. By enabling Federal workers to use the sick leave they have earned, we will eliminate a significant barrier to caring for a family member with a serious health condition. The use of paid sick leave under this policy will be subject to the same conditions as the use of unpaid leave for these purposes under the FMLA. In particular, the same notification and certification requirements that govern the use of unpaid leave to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent under the FMLA will apply to Federal employees who use paid sick leave for this purpose. I believe the Federal Government has an important role to play in setting an example for the Nation.

Finally, I direct the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to establish an Inter-agency Family Friendly Workplace Working Group within 90 days to promote, evaluate, and exchange information on Federal family-friendly workplace initiatives. I also direct the head of each executive department and agency to appoint a family-friendly work/life coordinator to serve as a member of this Working Group. Working Group representatives will be responsible for making sure that Federal employees are aware of the full range of options available to them to meet their personal and family responsibilities (such as alternative work schedules, telecommuting, part-time employment, and job sharing). The coordinators also will provide employees with information about child and elder care resources currently available in their communities, and establish and promote parent support groups, elder care support groups, and on-site nursing mothers’ programs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Senate on Ratification of the Amended Mines Protocol of the Convention on Conventional Weapons

May 24, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

I am gratified that the United States Senate has given its advice and consent to the ratification of the Amended Mines Protocol of the Convention on Conventional Weapons.

The Senate and my Administration, working together, reached agreement on a detailed resolution of advice and consent to ratification, including 13 conditions covering issues of significant interest and concern. I will implement these provisions. I will, of course, do so without prejudice to my Constitutional authorities. A condition in a resolution of advice and consent to ratification cannot alter the allocation of authority and responsibility under the Constitution, for both the Congress and the President.

I am grateful to Majority Leader Lott, Minority Leader Daschle, and Senators Helms, Biden, Leahy, and the many others who have assisted in this ratification effort. It is clear that the practical result of our work together on the Protocol will well serve the critical humanitarian interest of protecting civilians from the dangers posed to them by landmines, as well as the imperative requirements of ensuring the safety and effectiveness of U.S. military forces. In this spirit, I express my hope that the Protocol will lead to further sound advances in the development of the international law of armed conflict.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 24, 1999.

Message to the Congress Reporting Certifications Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Amended Mines Protocol of the Convention on Conventional Weapons

May 24, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Amended Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, together with its Technical Annex, adopted by the Senate of the United States on May 20, 1999, I hereby certify that:

In connection with Condition (1)(B), Pursuit Deterrent Munition, the Pursuit Deterrent Munition shall continue to remain available for use by the United States Armed Forces at least until January 1, 2003, unless an effective alternative to the munition becomes available.

In connection with Condition (6), Land Mine Alternatives, in pursuing alternatives to United States anti-personnel mines or mixed anti-tank systems, I will not limit the types of alternatives to be considered on the basis of any criteria other than those specified in the sentence that

follows. In pursuit of alternatives to United States anti-personnel mines, or mixed anti-tank systems, the United States shall seek to identify, adapt, modify, or otherwise develop only those technologies that (i) are intended to provide military effectiveness equivalent to that provided by the relevant anti-personnel mine, or mixed anti-tank system; and (ii) would be affordable.

In connection with Condition (7), Certification with Regard to International Tribunals, with respect to the Amended Mines Protocol, the Convention on Conventional Weapons, or any future protocol or amendment thereto, the United States shall not recognize the jurisdiction of any international tribunal over the United States or any of its citizens.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 24, 1999.

Remarks at the City Year Convention

May 24, 1999

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen of City Year, I can't tell you how glad I am to be back. I want to thank President Swygert for making us all feel at home at Howard. I thank Senator Wofford and his predecessor, Eli Segal, and Mark Gearan, our great Peace Corps Director, for their presence here.

I'd like to thank especially all the companies who have helped you, and one in particular, Timberland, your founding sponsor, especially because they are setting a standard for corporate America by giving their employees time off for volunteer work.

I want to thank Alan and Michael, their wives, their families who have supported them through these long years, for all the wonderful things they have done for you and, through you, for America. And I want to thank Stephen for the jacket, although I still have the sweatshirt, and I still wear it, and it's nowhere near worn out.

And I will have it and that jacket with me for the rest of my life. I thank you so much.

Now, to all of you who are young, 10 years of life for City Year seems like a very long time. For those of you who are not so young, like me, it seems like yesterday, the 8 years ago, when I saw City Year in Boston—like yesterday, vivid in my mind.

So, to me it wasn't so long ago that Alan and Michael were just two young students with this big idea, an idea for making idealism work in practical ways in the lives of ordinary people. A lot of their classmates at the time told them their big idea was just pie in the sky. I've often wondered what pie in the sky looks like; now I see you, and I know. You are the pie in the sky, and you are as real as real can be.

When I was going around the country as a candidate for President in 1991 and 1992, I told the people of our Nation that our politics

in Washington had become too much about the pursuit of power, devoid of principle and divorced from people; that there had to be a way to use the power given to people in public life through the Constitution, to actually connect it back to people, to make it about some larger purpose for America and for the lives of people, and not just about the perpetuation of people in office.

When I saw *City Year*, I knew that I had found that concrete, living, breathing embodiment of what I thought politics ought to be about. In 1991 I called it the New Covenant. It has come in common parlance to be called the so-called Third Way. It simply means that Government can't solve all of our problems, but it can't leave people to sink or swim on their own, either. It means that we have an obligation, all of us, to give every single person the tools to make the most of his or her life. It means that we have an obligation, together, to create opportunity for those who have been forgotten, to take responsibility for the welfare of not only ourselves and our families but of our whole community, and to build that community out of every single American, excluding no one because of their background, their race, their religion, or any other trait that has nothing to do with undermining our common humanity.

And much to the surprise of everyone in America but my mother, I got elected President—[laughter]—and I had a chance to put those ideas into action. One of the most important days of my Presidency was that wonderful, wonderful day when I got to sign the bill creating AmeriCorps. I signed it, Mr. Wofford, with the pen that President Kennedy used to establish the Peace Corps. Soon, Mr. Gearan's Peace Corps will have 10,000 members in a year—that's the most they've had in a generation, and we thank the people who have served in the Peace Corps as well.

This spring, since the time I signed the bill creating AmeriCorps, more than 100,000 young people have answered the call to citizen service in America, including those of you in *City Year*. It is remarkable what has been accomplished, or in your terms, how many millions of starfish you have collected. Because you have proved, beyond any question, that this is a good and decent and wonderful thing, we are now working with the Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps to create opportunities so that, if

we can pass it, we'll have 100,000 young people able to serve in AmeriCorps every single year.

There has never been a more important time to do this. We are enjoying the longest peacetime expansion in our history. It has given us the lowest minority unemployment, the highest homeownership ever recorded. Just yesterday there was a wonderful article in the *New York Times* about the ways in which young African-American men, who have long faced bleak job prospects, are now joining the economic mainstream. But you know, because of the service you have done, there are still millions of Americans in inner cities and rural areas such as Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, our Indian reservations, for whom the prosperity of our time is not yet a reality.

You know there are a lot of people who don't have decent houses to live in. You know there are a lot of children who still don't have access to good health care. You know there are a lot of places that, because they are poor, still have pressing environmental problems. You know, because I have seen you in the last year or so more often than ever before, that there are natural disasters which afflict us all and need help to heal. You know all these things.

And we have, therefore, both a unique obligation and, because of our prosperity and security, a unique opportunity to galvanize people as never before in the cause of citizen service. I cannot thank you enough for what you have done. But there is one particular thing I would ask you to focus on. It relates to all the work you do in the schools with America Reads, the mentoring program, and many other kinds of things that you have done. I believe that community service can have a profound impact in diminishing, even erasing, the sense of alienation and isolation so many of our young people feel.

Last week Hillary and I went to Littleton, Colorado, where we visited with the families of the children and the teacher who were killed, where we talked to the young people still in their wheelchairs from their grievous wounds. There have been too many such instances in our country in the last couple of years, even amidst all of our rising prosperity and our falling crime rate.

And one of the things that struck me so strongly, in following all the accounts of what happened and what could have motivated those two young men to descend into darkness and

take the actions they did, was the repeated description of the sense of alienation they felt, that they and their group were somehow looked down on by others in their school and that, in reaction, they not only felt bitterness against those who were looking down on them, they turned around and looked for someone else to look down on.

This is an endless cycle. Everybody has a beef in life—everybody. [Laughter] Everybody has resentments because of slights or mistreatment, whether imagined or real. A big part of living is finding ways to overcome your own smallness, to get out of your own skin, to let go of all the things not only that you have imagined have happened to you but the things that have really happened to you that should not have.

And I couldn't help thinking how lonely those young men must have become, trapped in their own fears and resentments and hatreds, how distant they must have drifted to get to the point where they could literally dehumanize the other children that they were living with, so they could then justify killing them. That is the exact opposite of what you embody.

I was looking at your colleagues standing behind me. That's a pretty good picture of America, the America we have and the America we're going to be. We're growing more and more and more diverse. That means that we will have more and more and more groups, not fewer. And that can be a very, very good thing. If we respect each other's differences, if we even celebrate each other's differences, life will be a lot more interesting in America than it ever has been before.

But underneath all that respect for diversity there must be a solid anchor of respect for what unites us across the lines that divide us, a belief that we really do share a common humanity, a common journey of life, that none of us is a repository of all wisdom but all of us have something to give as well as something to learn. We have to believe that. And then we have to find a way to both respect individual liberty and the right to privacy and still be connected to one another in specific and concrete ways.

And so I say to you, there are still a lot of our kids who may even become strangers in their own homes as they turn inward and retreat and disengage. But those who join City Year, AmeriCorps, they become part of a team, and they are by definition important, every sin-

gle one of you. So I say to you, this is a message that our kids need to get. Oh, they get it just from the power of your example, if you're out there reading to them or you're out there mentoring them or you're out there working in their schools to rehabilitate them, but you must speak to them.

Most of you at some point in your lives have been bitterly disappointed, have been profoundly despondent. Many of you have done things that you're now ashamed of, that you wish you hadn't done. But you have decided not to give up and not to give in but to reach out and give to others. That is a message every child in this country needs to get.

And as you see, from where these instances of violence have occurred, this is not a problem that solely afflicts the poor. You can have plenty of money in your home and the fanciest computer equipment and the most advanced knowledge of technology and still be poor in spirit. I'm telling you, you can reach the poor in spirit among our young. You can tell them that no matter what has happened, no matter what's bugging them, no matter who is dissing them, no matter what they have a beef about, real or imagined, what you're doing is a better way to live, and they ought to join you and live that way, too.

Each of you is a thousand people strong and maybe stronger. I have thought a great deal, in these last weeks, about how people drift away and how they are lost and how the whole idea of family is to bring people up, not only to be individuals but to be a part of something better and stronger. And when we expand that to our communities and to our country, we do better.

But we are still losing too many of our kids. I can't help wondering how many children have been saved from lives of despair because they found City Year or AmeriCorps. I can't help wondering how many of you have a story of real difficulty, more profound than any of the stories of the young people who have taken guns to their classmates in the last few years.

Why did it not happen? Because somebody reached out and gave you a chance to have a meaningful life that is connected to other people—and in so doing, to find meaning in your own life. Because somebody said to you, "You know, it doesn't matter whether you're tall or short, wide or narrow, black or white or Hispanic, or anything else. You're a person. You're

an American. You've got something to give. We need you. Be on our team." That is a message that needs to get out to every child in this country—every child.

And I want you to know that if we can continue to expand your ranks, to expand the range of your activities, to deepen the commitment of people to letting you do your job, to get Washington to support you and go beyond politics as usual around here and realize this is something that is just good, good, good, I am convinced that you have the power to change America, forever, for the better. And I believe you will.

So I ask you, with all the other things that you're doing, when you leave this great convention of idealism, give a little spark to every kid you see on every street corner, not just the ones that are in your project, just somebody you see standing. Tell them about what you're doing. Tell them about what it's meant to you. Tell them to hold their heads up and put their shoulders back and take a deep breath. Whatever it is, it's not that bad. Tomorrow's better. Don't let—don't let this happen. Don't let it

happen to any child who can be saved. You can keep a lot of them from drifting away. You already are, every day, in ways that you're not even aware of.

I want people to look at you, and think about America, and say, "This is what I want for our children and our grandchildren. This is what I want America to be. This is why I want to serve." And in so doing, you will be enriching yourselves beyond your wildest dreams.

Keep going. I love you. I'll save my jacket. I'll save my sweatshirt. I'll save my memories. You keep going. We need you.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:25 p.m. in the Cramton Auditorium at Howard University. In his remarks, he referred to H. Patrick Swygert, president, Howard University; Harris Wofford, chief executive officer, and Eli Segal, former chief executive officer, Corporation for National Service; and Alan Khazei and Michael Brown, cofounders, and Stephen Spaloss, member, City Year; and Columbine High School gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.

Remarks at the White House Community Empowerment Conference in Edinburg, Texas

May 25, 1999

Thank you. Give her a hand. *[Applause]* Wasn't she great? Well, ladies and gentlemen, I think I should begin by saying that the Vice President and I said simultaneously that we would be happy to write Trini a letter of recommendation for study in nursing or in advanced communication. *[Laughter]*

I'd like to tell you how delighted I am to be here to see all of you. I thank Secretary Cuomo and Secretary Glickman, Administrator Alvarez. We're also delighted to be joined by Congressmen Hinojosa, Congresswoman Jackson Lee, and Reyes; Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald from the State of California; Mayor Kurt Schmoke has come from Baltimore; my Deputy Chief of Staff, Maria Echaveste. One of our nominees who is from this area, Irasema Garza, the nominee for Director of the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor, is here.

I'd also like to say, as always when I come down here to the valley, I'm delighted to see former Congressman Kika de la Garza. We're glad to see you, sir, looking so well. We miss you.

President Nevárez, we're delighted to be at the University of Texas-Pan American, and I have enjoyed my stay here and am impressed by your work here. And I thank you for coming to welcome us.

Mayor Ochoa of Edinburg and County Judge Pulido and the other mayors and judges and officials who are here, let me thank all of you for coming and for being a part of the White House Empowerment Conference, but even more important, for being a part of the community empowerment movement.

Cox Committee Report on Chinese Nuclear Espionage

I have to make a statement just for a couple of minutes that has no bearing on this conference but affects all of you as Americans. Today the House of Representatives Select Committee, led by Congressman Christopher Cox of California and Norm Dicks of Washington, a Republican and a Democrat, is releasing its report on China's efforts to obtain sensitive United States military-related technology. We've been working with the committee to make sure that the public can have the benefit of the maximum amount of information consistent with our national security and law enforcement requirements.

First, let me say that I am particularly appreciative of the careful and bipartisan manner in which the committee did its work. It has made a number of recommendations for actions to strengthen our national security protections. The overwhelming majority of those recommendations we agree with and are in the process of implementing. I'd like to say that Secretary Richardson, the Secretary of Energy, in particular, is moving aggressively to tighten security at our national laboratories.

Like many other countries, China seeks to acquire our sensitive information and technology. We have a solemn obligation to protect such national security information, and we have to do more to do it.

In February of 1998 I signed an order that put into place the most sweeping reorganization ever of counterintelligence in our nuclear weapons labs. Since 1996, we have increased funding for counterintelligence from \$2.6 million to almost \$40 million. We're giving polygraphs to scientists in sensitive areas, having background checks on visitors from sensitive countries. We have strict controls on the transfer of sensitive commercial and military technology to China, stricter than for any other countries except those like Libya, on which we have a total embargo.

At the same time, I strongly believe that our continuing engagement with China has produced benefits for our national security. For example, China's decision to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty substantially reduces its ability to develop new nuclear weapons. We've persuaded China to end nuclear cooperation with Iran and with Pakistan's unsafeguarded nuclear program. China is working with us to help to eliminate

North Korea's nuclear program and reduce its missile threat.

I want to assure you and all the American people that I will work very hard with the Congress to protect our national security, to implement the recommendations and to continue our policy of engagement, because both of them are in the national interest. [Applause] Thank you.

Empowerment Conference

Let me say, when I was listening to Trini describe all the wonderful work that has been done in this empowerment zone, my mind went back to the time not so long ago when I came to Mission with Congressman Hinojosa, and we had this vast crowd on the football stadium, probably 20,000 people. And then we had a wonderful meeting with people who were involved in doing all these projects. And I came back and gave a report to the Vice President about how profoundly impressed I was.

Then I thought back also to 1991 and 1992, when I was going across the country and I saw not only a country mired in recession but particular areas where it had been so long since any significant economic advances had been made. It was obvious to me that the National Government had to do more but that we had to do it in a different way, first of all, because our resources were limited, the deficit was so big, and we had to get rid of it, we had to bring the whole economy back or the poorest areas in our country would never have a chance to come back; but secondly, because we needed to convince people in the areas that had been left behind that they had the talent, the intelligence, the energy, the skill to bring their communities back. And we had to give them the tools and the framework within which they could do it, and we could do our part.

That is basically where our approach came from, not leaving our communities behind, not promising Federal programs with worlds of money that weren't available but taking a third approach: empowering communities to turn themselves around.

I had seen already in my own State and in communities across the country what could be done when people got organized around the right vision with the right ideas and the right kind of teamwork committed to getting results.

The Vice President and I took office absolutely convinced that our communities could rise to this challenge, and you certainly have not

disappointed us. We have done everything we knew to do to have a new compact, to say the Federal Government will do everything we can to help if, community by community, the private sector and the public sector, people from all walks of life, will get together and define what they want for their future. That is what Trini talked about today; that is what we see all across America in these empowerment zones.

Because of his unparalleled combination of creativity and energy, experience and determination, I asked the Vice President to take the lead in turning this vision we had into reality. It was a challenge, as all of you have seen, that he embraced passionately. He's crossed the country to meet with community leaders like you, helped to forge new lines of communication and coordination between Federal and local officials, among neighboring areas in the same region with the same challenges, and as I'm sure a lot of you would admit, even new lines of communications within individual communities that have had enormous benefits for all concerned.

This conference—are part of the national dialog that the Vice President has led. And I just want to say that this was one of the reasons I ran for President—what seems like at once a long time ago and only yesterday. I am profoundly grateful to him for proving that this is an idea whose time had come.

More communities than ever are on the road to recovery, creating new businesses and neighborhoods, now tens of thousands of jobs, training workers, building and rehabilitating housing. The 135 empowerment zones and enterprise communities we have designated are now flowing with the lifeblood of commerce, capital. Federal seed money has leveraged more than \$14 billion in public and private investment in just these 5 years. The return on this investment is more than financial; as we rebuild our communities, we restore the American dream for many who thought it was out of reach.

In addition to creating the empowerment zones and enterprise communities, we've also established a national network of community financial institutions. We have promoted micro-enterprise loans to help young entrepreneurs and sometimes not-so-young entrepreneurs get their first start. We have reformed the Community Reinvestment Act to give more Americans better access to capital, to credit, to basic banking services.

The Community Reinvestment Act has been on the books for more than 20 years now, but I am very proud that over 95 percent of all the money loaned under the Community Reinvestment Act has been loaned during the life of this administration. We believe people should invest in their own communities.

We've also worked hard to make housing more available and mortgages more affordable. We've worked hard to build up other services that are important to economic development, especially in education. And I want to say another word about another one of the Vice President's favorite projects: This week the Federal Communications Commission is going to vote on whether to expand the so-called E-rate. It is a part of our commitment to hook up every school and every library in this country by the year 2000 to the Internet and to make sure that all the schools and all the libraries in the smallest, poorest rural areas and the most densely populated poor urban areas, on every Native American reservation, everywhere, that they will all be able to afford to use this invaluable service.

Now, at every step of the way we have not only tried to speak to you but to listen, to take heed of what you have told us about your own neighborhoods and what you need for us to do. Every time the Vice President leaves town and then comes home, he brings back more success stories of old problems being met with new solutions, examples like those of the Kentucky Highlands, where empowerment zone residents are extending telecommunications cables deep into the countryside, connecting 40 counties to the vast resources of the Internet; or Baltimore—Mayor Schmoke, thank you for your work—where businesses and empowerment board members are teaming up to train specialized workers for careers—not just jobs, careers—in high-tech industries that once they could only have dreamed of.

All across our country, communities are coming together to take responsibility and to create new opportunity. From unemployment to crime, challenges are being met successfully, community by community. It is a model that works. And if you will forgive me, I would just like to say one thing about another problem that we've all had on our minds lately. It is a model that will work when it comes to preventing violence against our children as well.

Of course, there are things we must do in Congress, and I hope the House will follow the lead of the Senate in taking responsible action to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals. Of course, there are things the entertainment community should do, and I hope that they will reexamine the rating systems and try to reduce the amount of gratuitous violence and not advertise it to children, and enforce the ratings that are there. I hope that will be done as well.

But every State and every community must be involved in this effort. States can act to close gun show loopholes, as the voters in Florida did last November with a 72 percent vote of the people, to make sure that our children are safer.

But communities also have to act. Now is the time for leadership on that. I think every one of you know that if every child in every school were as connected to common endeavors as all of you feel connected to the common endeavors of reviving your communities, we would have far less violence, far less failure, far more kids looking forward to tomorrow instead of being caught in some dark vision of their own lives. You can do that as well, and I hope you will.

Let me say to you also that in spite of the progress we come here to celebrate, in spite of the fact that Hispanic- and African-American unemployment nationwide is at its lowest recorded level, that homeownership is at its highest recorded level, that wages for all income groups are rising for the first time in more than 20 years, we all know that there are inner cities and poor rural areas and small and medium-sized towns in between that still have not felt the warm sunlight of our prosperity.

We must, therefore, here recommit ourselves to the proposition that we do not intend to leave anyone behind as we march into the 21st century. I can't think of a better place to underscore this issue than here in the Rio Grande Valley.

I first came here—hard to believe—27 years ago as a young man. I was completely captivated then, and I remain so today, by the spirit and the character of the people, the genuine feelings of friendship and affection that people have for one another; the inordinate love people have for their families and their communities; and the devotion they have to their relatives, older and younger; and the incredible amount of work

people have been able to do here against so many odds, often for such modest returns. For 27 years, I have hoped that there was something that I could do, that we could do, for the people of this valley and for people like you throughout our country in places large and small.

The Vice President will describe in a moment the executive action I am taking to create a new interagency task force under his leadership and in close cooperation with the communities of this region to promote growth and opportunity specifically tailored to the unique character of the Southwest border. I hope it helps you, and I know you'll make the most of it.

We have also asked Congress to fully fund a second round of empowerment zones, and I ask you to help us get that passed. When we were pushing this before in 1993 as a part of our economic program, it might have been permissible for people who were not of our political party to say, "Well, this is just a political issue. This is something the President ran on." I understood that. I understood we had to carry the burden of proving that the tax benefits and the cash investments would work. But we have met that burden—no, you have met that burden. This should no longer be a partisan issue in America. You have proved that every American will be better off if we give more Americans the chance to do what you have done.

So I ask you all to help convince the Members of the Congress of both parties that if you can do it, others can do it, and we ought to have a second round of empowerment zones.

We also have another major proposal before the Congress which we call the new markets initiative, designed to create more incentives to get more capital not only into the enterprise zones and the empowerment zones and the enterprise communities but to any eligible community that is underinvested in America.

This new markets initiative would take a combination of tax credits and loan guarantees for new investments in America's untapped markets that are very like the benefits we give for people to invest in our underdeveloped neighbors, to invest in the Caribbean and other places. I don't propose to revoke them. I'm glad we do that. But I think we ought to give those same investments to get capital into places in the United States that need it. And I hope we can pass the new markets initiative. All of us can benefit from that, including those of you who are already in the empowerment zones. And I ask

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you to help us pass that in this session of Congress as well.

In July I'm going to take a bipartisan group of chief executive officers of companies, Cabinet Secretaries, Members of Congress, on a tour of the places in America where we need to do better. We're going to visit urban areas, small towns, places like the Mississippi Delta and Appalachia, Native American reservations, places all over America where there are people just like the people in the Rio Grande Valley, who deserve a shot at the American dream and have paid their dues to their families, their communities, and their country.

We need to keep doing everything we possibly can until we can look at each other straight in the eye and know we are saying what is true when we say we are going into the new century leaving no one behind.

Let me, in closing, again thank you for everything you have done, to tell you that everything we will do from here on out will build on the

community empowerment strategy because you have proved that it works. Together we can make it work for all communities in the United States.

Now I'd like to introduce the person who has worked by my side and yours for many years now and who has, more than any other single person in the United States, made community empowerment a reality in the lives of ordinary Americans, Vice President Al Gore.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. in the gymnasium of the Health and Physical Education Building II at the University of Texas-Pan American. In his remarks, he referred to Maria Trinidad Gutierrez, member, Rio Grande Empowerment Zone board of directors, who introduced the President; Miguel A. Nevárez, president, University of Texas-Pan American; Mayor Joe Ochoa of Edinburg; Elroy Pulido, Jr., Hidalgo County judge; and Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore, MD.

Statement on Plans To Deploy the Kosovo International Security Force (KFOR)

May 25, 1999

I believe that our air campaign in Kosovo is working and will ultimately succeed in its objective of returning the people of Kosovo to their homes with security and self-government. With that in mind, we are planning with our Allies for success. Today NATO endorsed an updated plan for implementing the peace in Kosovo when its conditions are met.

The force that NATO plans to deploy—KFOR—will deter renewed hostilities and provide the security and confidence the refugees need to return and get on with their lives. To be credible and effective, KFOR will have NATO at the core.

Given the new circumstances, including the enormous humanitarian crisis caused by Mr. Milosevic, KFOR will need to be larger than we originally foresaw. We expect the American

contribution to increase proportionately, but our European Allies will still provide the vast bulk of the force. We also hope that Russia and other non-NATO countries will participate.

The headquarters and leading elements of KFOR are already in the region, where they are helping to relieve the refugee crisis. NATO's military authorities will now work with allied countries to determine what additional forces will be required so that the Alliance is ready when the time comes for the refugees to return. Make no mistake, that time will come, in accordance with the conditions we have repeatedly laid out.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Airstrikes Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

May 25, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On March 26, 1999, I reported that I had directed U.S. forces to commence military air strikes as part of NATO's operations against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in response to the FRY Government's continued campaign of violence and repression against the civilian population of Kosovo. Each day we receive new reports of FRY security forces committing atrocities and forcing civilians from their homes. Currently there are more than 725,000 displaced Kosovars in Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro, and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons within Kosovo.

At their recent Summit in Washington, NATO Heads of State and Government made clear that the Alliance will not allow this campaign of terror to succeed. Until such time as Belgrade meets NATO's conditions, the allies intend to continue—and intensify—air operations against the Yugoslav war machine. As part of intensifying NATO's operations, and in response to a request by SACEUR, I have directed deployment of additional aircraft and forces to support NATO's ongoing efforts, including several thousand additional U.S. Armed Forces personnel to Albania in support of the deep strike task

force located there. I am also directing that additional U.S. forces be deployed to the region to assist in humanitarian operations.

As I mentioned in my April 7 letter, it is not possible to predict how long these operations will last. The duration of the deployments depends upon the course of events in Kosovo, and specifically, on Belgrade's acceptance of the conditions set forth by the United States and its allies.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the continued support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 26.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

May 26, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran

that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 26, 1999.

May 26 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National
Emergency With Respect to Burma
May 26, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to

Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 26, 1999.

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting Certifications Required by the
Ratification Resolution of the Convention on Nuclear Safety
May 26, 1999

Dear _____:

In accordance with Condition (2) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on Nuclear Safety adopted by the United States Senate on March 25, 1999, I hereby certify that the United States will comment in each review meeting held under Article 20 of the Convention (including each meeting of a subgroup) upon aspects of safety significance in any report submitted pursuant to Article 5 of the Convention by any State Party that is receiving U.S. financial or technical assistance relating to the improvement in safety of its nuclear installations.

In accordance with Condition (4) of the resolution, I hereby certify that the Comptroller General of the United States shall be given full and complete access to: (i) all information in the possession of the United States Government specifically relating to the operation of the Convention that is submitted by any other State Party to Article 5 of the Convention, including

any report or document; and (ii) information specifically relating to any review or analysis by any department, agency, or other entity of the United States, or any official thereof, undertaken pursuant to Article 20 of the Convention, of any report or document submitted by any other State Party.

I will implement these provisions consistent with the allocation of authority and responsibility under the Constitution.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations. This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 27.

Radio Address to the People of Kosovo *May 27, 1999*

On behalf of all Americans, Hillary and I send a message of hope and solidarity to the Kosovar people. Over the last few months, you have been forced from your homes. You have seen terrible violence. Many of you are still searching for friends and family members. I met with Kosovar refugees in Germany last month. My wife recently met with another group in Macedonia. Your stories filled us with sorrow, stories of decent people whose lives have been violently uprooted by scenes we thought we would never again see in Europe, stories of innocent people beaten and brutalized for no reason but their ethnicity and faith, people rounded up in the middle of the night, forced to board trains for unknown destinations, separated from their families, stories of people arriving in refugee camps with nothing but a fierce determination to find their loved ones and return to their villages with their culture intact.

But you have not been defeated. You have not given in to despair. And you have not allowed the horror you have seen to harden your hearts or destroy your faith in a better life in the land of your birth. You left Kosovo with one goal: to return in safety. The United States and its NATO Allies are working for the same goal. It will take time. But with your strength and our determination, there is no doubt what the outcome will be. The campaign of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo will end. You will return.

Our military campaign is daily increasing the pressure on the Serbian leadership and on Serbian forces in Kosovo. They know we will persevere until the Serbian forces leave and you are allowed to return home, with NATO there to prevent a return to violence. In the meantime, nations across the world have come to-

gether to bring aid to you and your families. The United States has just finished building a new facility in Albania called Camp Hope, which will house up to 20,000 people. Our Congress has just approved more than \$700 million in humanitarian assistance to make sure we can meet your needs both now and when you go home.

We are grateful to the people of Albania and Macedonia for accepting refugees into their countries and their homes. It is not easy for any nation to absorb huge numbers of people, and it is certainly not easy for two nations still struggling to meet the needs of their people. We recognize your sacrifices, and we are committed to help by easing your burden and helping you build security, prosperity, and democracy at home and in your neighborhood.

A great challenge can draw people together. The 19 NATO nations are not alike, but we hold the same essential values in common. And on the eve of a new century, we refuse to be intimidated by a dictator who is trying to revive the worst memories of the century we are leaving. Thank you for your strength, and remember that no matter what has happened to you, you are not alone. The United States and NATO are with you, and we will stay with you long after you return home.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:30 p.m. on May 26 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 26 but was embargoed for release until 12 a.m. on May 27. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Remarks in Yulee, Florida, on the International War Crimes Tribunal Decision To Indict Slobodan Milosevic *May 27, 1999*

Good afternoon. I welcome the decision of the International War Crimes Tribunal to indict Slobodan Milosevic and other senior Serbian

leaders for crimes against humanity and war crimes. This says to the hundreds of thousands of victims of Belgrade's atrocities in Kosovo that

their voices have been heard. It will help to deter future war crimes by establishing that those who give orders will be held accountable. It will make clear to the Serbian people precisely who is responsible for this conflict and who is prolonging it. It speaks to the world in saying that the cause we are fighting for in Kosovo is just. I call on all nations to support the Tribunal's decision and to cooperate with its efforts to seek justice.

For 6 years, the United States has strongly supported the work of this Tribunal. We've urged it to pursue its investigation of war crimes in the former Yugoslavia as far up the chain of command as the evidence leads, and we've helped to provide that evidence. The Congress recently approved my request for supplemental funding for the Tribunal, which will provide \$9 million for the Tribunal trust fund, \$4 million for technology that will speed up our providing information to the Tribunal, \$10 million to interview Kosovar refugees, and \$5 million for forensic teams to go into Kosovo once conditions allow for the gathering of evidence.

Now, the objectives of NATO's military campaign remain unchanged. The Kosovar refugees must be able to go home with security and self-government; Serb forces must withdraw; and an international security force with NATO at its core must deploy there.

Day and night, NATO air strikes are imposing a heavy price on Mr. Milosevic and his forces in Kosovo. We see the impact they're having in the protests against his policies, the desertions in his army, the difficulties his troops in Kosovo are having in maintaining their grip on the area. Our forces have shown courage and skill. We and our allies have shown determination. Both will persist until we achieve our goals.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. at the White Oaks Plantation. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the International War Crimes Tribunal Decision To Indict Slobodan Milosevic

May 27, 1999

I welcome the decision of the International War Crimes Tribunal to indict Slobodan Milosevic and four other senior Serbian leaders for crimes against humanity and war crimes. It will reassure the victims of Belgrade's atrocities in Kosovo, and it will deter future war crimes by establishing that those who give the orders will be held accountable. It will make clear to the Serbian people who is responsible for this conflict and who is prolonging it. I call on all nations to support the Tribunal's decision and to cooperate with its efforts to seek justice.

For 6 years, the United States has strongly supported the work of the Tribunal and urged it to pursue its investigation of war crimes in the former Yugoslavia as far up the chain of

command as the evidence leads. The Congress recently approved my request for supplemental funding for the Tribunal, which will provide \$9 million for the Tribunal trust fund, \$4 million for technology that will speed up our providing information to the Tribunal, \$10 million to interview Kosovar refugees, and \$5 million for forensic teams to go into Kosovo once conditions there allow the gathering of evidence.

The objectives of NATO's military effort remain unchanged. The Kosovar refugees must be able to go home with security and self-government; Serb forces must leave Kosovo; and an international security force with NATO at its core must deploy. We intend to persist with our efforts until our objectives are achieved.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)
May 27, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is to continue in effect beyond May 30, 1999, and the emergency declared with respect to the situation in Kosovo is to continue in effect beyond June 9, 1999.

On December 27, 1995, I issued Presidential Determination 96-7, directing the Secretary of the Treasury, *inter alia*, to suspend the application of sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and to continue to block property previously blocked until provision is made to address claims or encumbrances, including the claims of the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia. This sanctions relief, in conformity with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1022 of November 22, 1995 (hereinafter the "Resolution"), was an essential factor motivating Serbia and Montenegro's acceptance of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina initialed by the parties in Dayton, Ohio, on November 21, 1995, and signed in Paris, France, on December 14, 1995 (hereinafter the "Peace Agreement"). The sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) were accordingly suspended prospectively, effective January 16, 1996. Sanctions imposed on the Bosnian Serb forces and authorities and on the territory that they control within Bosnia and Herzegovina were subsequently suspended prospectively, effective May 10, 1996, also in conformity with the Peace Agreement and the Resolution.

Sanctions against both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Bosnian Serbs were subsequently terminated by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1074 of October 1, 1996. This termination, however, did not end the requirement of the Resolution that blocked those funds and assets that are subject to claims and encumbrances remain blocked, until unblocked in accordance with applicable law. Until the status of all remaining blocked property is resolved, the Peace Agreement implemented, and the terms of the Resolution met, this situation continues to pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy interests, and the economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond May 30, 1999.

On June 9, 1998, I issued Executive Order 13088, "Blocking Property of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro, and Prohibiting New Investment in the Republic of Serbia in Response to the Situation in Kosovo." Since then, the government of President Milosevic has rejected the international community's efforts to find a peaceful settlement for the crisis in Kosovo and has launched a massive campaign of ethnic cleansing that has displaced a large percentage of the population and been accompanied by an increasing number of atrocities. President Milosevic's brutal assault against the people of Kosovo and his complete disregard for the requirements of the international community pose a threat to regional peace and stability.

President Milosevic's actions continue to pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy interests, and the economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond June 9, 1999.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 27, 1999.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address *May 29, 1999*

Good morning. This holiday weekend, when millions of Americans are taking to beaches and lakes and trails, I want to talk to you about new ways we can work together to protect the natural treasures we all share.

Today I'm speaking to you from the banks of the St. Mary's River in northern Florida, near the Georgia border, in one of the most impressive nature preserves Hillary and I have ever seen. Our visit here reminds us once again what a gift it is to spend time outdoors, to walk among tall trees, to see wild animals and rare birds, to watch the Sun set and the stars come out over a beautiful river. It also makes us appreciate the generations of Americans who fought to preserve the parklands and the beaches we all enjoy today.

For the past 6 years, Vice President Gore and I have worked hard to advance the ethic of environmental stewardship. We've protected more than a million acres in the spectacular red rock canyonlands of Utah, in priceless stands of ancient redwoods in California. We've reduced toxic air pollution from chemical plants by 90 percent and cleaned up more toxic waste sites than were cleaned up in the previous 12 years. We saved Yellowstone Park from the threat of nearby gold mining, and we've taken major steps to protect our water resources, from the precious Florida Everglades to the tap water our children drink.

Today I'm proud to announce three new executive actions to improve the quality of our water and the health of our families. First, I'm directing the National Park Service and other agencies to expand public health protections on the thousands of miles of stunning beaches managed by the Federal Government, including Cape Cod, Cape Hatteras, and California's Point Reyes. And I challenge the States to improve their water quality standards. Second, I'm directing the EPA to develop stronger measures to prevent sewage spills, the major cause of beach closures. Third, I'm directing all Federal agen-

cies to adopt a comprehensive strategy to better safeguard rivers and other bodies of water on Federal lands.

Of course, there are other important environmental and public health challenges we must address. The balanced budget I submitted to Congress earlier this year contains historic investments to improve the quality of life, save more land, and deal with the challenge of climate change by helping communities protect farmlands, parklands, and other green spaces, rewarding consumers who buy cars and houses that reduce greenhouse gas pollution, controlling polluted runoff to lakes and streams, and improving the quality of air we breathe.

Unfortunately, even as we work to raise the level of environmental stewardship for the 21st century, some in Congress are intent on rolling back many of the gains we've already made in this century. With little fanfare, the leadership in the House and the Senate just released spending guidelines that would impose drastic cuts in environmental protection and public health. These cuts could stall toxic waste clean-ups and undermine our efforts to ensure safe drinking water, to improve air quality, and to combat the threat of global warming. They could even force us to shut down some of our national parks.

What's more, we've already seen troubling signs that Congress again will try to gut environmental protections by tacking provisions called riders on to their budget bills. I urge Congress to end these sneak attacks on our environment once and for all.

We often speak of building a country where our children have an opportunity to do even better than we've done. In part, of course, we refer to the economy, the opportunities we create for our children to secure a good education, a good job, and raise a family in a safe neighborhood with good schools, but we also refer to our natural world. We know our children cannot

do better tomorrow if we're willing to squander precious environmental resources today.

More than ever, the American people recognize the inherent value of pristine peaks, unspoiled beaches, clear and safe water. They believe in the value of environmental stewardship. I think all of us believe in the value of that stewardship.

Now is the time, on the edge of a new century, for us to unite as Americans and chart that course of stewardship. We must work to-

gether to leave our land, in the words of Theodore Roosevelt, "an even better land for our descendants than it is for us."

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:34 p.m. on May 28 at the White Oak Plantation in Yulee, FL, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 28 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Clean Water Protection

May 29, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Subject: Clean Water Protection

Fifteen months ago, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, my Administration set forth a vision for a new generation of clean water protection through our Clean Water Action Plan. The Action Plan strengthens protections for our Nation's waters, addresses the remaining sources of water quality impairment, and provides the tools and resources that States, Tribes, and communities need to control pollution on a coordinated basis throughout their watersheds.

The Action Plan recognizes that despite significant progress, the challenge for all of us in protecting our Nation's waters remains unfinished. The health of our people continues to be threatened by exposure to harmful organisms in our waters; consumption of fish from many of our waters presents a threat to the most vulnerable among us; polluted runoff has for too long eluded remedy using conventional approaches. The Action Plan was coupled with a challenge to the Congress to reauthorize and strengthen the Clean Water Act, but the Congress has yet to act on this challenge.

As we begin the beach-going season, when families are reminded again about the importance of clean water to their recreation, their well-being, and the economy, we remain anxious to work with the Congress on strengthening the Clean Water Act. We must not wait for the Congress, however, before using our available

resources and authority to further accelerate the effort to protect America's waters and the health and safety of the American public.

Accordingly, I direct you to take the following additional steps, consistent with the Clean Water Act and the Clean Water Action Plan, to protect public health and clean water.

First, I direct the Park Service and other units of the Department of the Interior to strengthen water-quality protections at all beaches managed by the Department. Improved monitoring should be used wherever necessary to enhance the public's right to know that beaches are safe for their families and to assist the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), States, and Tribes to identify and stop the causes of beach closures.

Second, I direct the EPA to work with the States to expedite the pace at which they will strengthen their beach and recreational water quality standards, so that the public will be able to enjoy the same strong level of protection at all the Nation's beaches no later than 2003. In accordance with the EPA's Beach Action Plan, the EPA should promulgate standards in cases where a State does not amend its water quality standards to include the EPA-recommended criteria in a timely manner.

Third, I direct the EPA to improve protection of public health at our Nation's beaches by developing, within 1 year, a strong national regulation to prevent the over 40,000 annual sanitary sewer overflows from contaminating our Nation's beaches and jeopardizing the health of

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our Nation's families. At a minimum, the program must raise the standard for sewage treatment to adequately protect public health and provide full information to communities about these water quality problems and associated health risks.

Fourth, I direct the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture to enhance management of Federal lands to increase protection of waters on or near Federal lands, and to identify waters on or near Federal lands that require special protection. Specifically, a proposal for a unified Federal policy on watershed management, developed under the Clean Water Action Plan, should be circulated first for consultation with States and Indian Tribes,

and then published in the *Federal Register* for public comment no later than July 15, 1999.

Each of these measures should be implemented through a process that provides appropriate opportunities for participation and comment by States, Tribes, and the affected public.

This memorandum is not intended to create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was embargoed for release until 10:06 a.m.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia May 31, 1999

Thank you very much, Secretary Cohen, for your remarks, your devotion to your country, and your outstanding leadership. Secretary West, thank you for your work on behalf of our Nation's veterans. And to both of you, thank you for your support of the recent actions in Congress to raise the pay of our military personnel and to improve their quality of life, to improve the retirement systems of the veterans and their readiness.

General Ivany, thank you for your remarks, your example, and your leadership. Colonel Brogan, thank you for your prayers. Superintendent Metzler, thank you for doing such a magnificent job of maintaining Arlington National Cemetery, in honor of those who are buried here and as a tribute to all America stands for. I thank the members of the Cabinet, the Joint Chiefs, Congress, the diplomatic corps, the armed services who are here. I welcome the veterans and the families of veterans and members of the armed services, my fellow citizens.

I'd like to begin by asking that we all join in expressing our thanks to the Air Force Band and the Singing Sergeants for doing such a fine job here today. [Applause] They deserve it. Thank you.

Even though the day is bright and warm, I ask you to indulge me, to spend a few extra moments to think about what it means that we

here today mark the final Memorial Day of this century. To be sure, it has been a century that saw too many white stones added to these gentle hills, marking America's sacrifices for freedom for over 100 years, in two World Wars and many other conflicts. Again and again, America has been tested in the 20th century, coming through it all, down to the present day, with even greater blessings of liberty and prosperity, with our enduring optimism and steady faith in our common humanity.

Thanks to our brave men and women in uniform, our Nation has never been more secure. Thanks to them, the cold war is now another chapter in the history books. Thanks to them, nations that fought two World Wars in Europe and in Asia, some of which had battled each other for centuries, now cooperate with each other as never before.

On the eve of a new millennium, we can see clearly how closely the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform in the 20th century are linked to the yearning for freedom that gave birth to our Nation over 200 years ago, a yearning based on the then radical premise that we are all inherently equal, fully able to govern ourselves, and endowed with a God-given right to liberty. That is our history, a history that beckons us especially on this Memorial Day and especially here at Arlington, the most powerful

evidence we now have that our country has accepted consistently the old adage that much is expected from those to whom much is given. From Concord to Corregidor, from Korea to Khe Sanh, from Kuwait to Kosovo, our entire history is written in this ground.

As Secretary Cohen said, only 11 days ago a young man from Ohio, Chief Warrant Officer David Gibbs, was laid to rest here after his helicopter crashed in a training exercise on May 5th in Albania. Chief Warrant Officer Kevin Reichert died in the same crash. We honor these two brave Americans who gave their lives in service to our Nation's highest ideals, joining other, more famous names who did the same. Here lie heroes of war, like John Pershing, George Marshall, Omar Bradley, President Kennedy; the great explorer Robert Peary; brave astronauts who gave their lives to increase our knowledge of the heavens; Medgar Evers, who fought for freedom at Normandy on D-day and then fought for freedom all over again at the University of Mississippi; familiar names, like Joe Louis, Justice Earl Warren, Abner Doubleday, Medal of Honor winner Audie Murphy. All different, all American, all made our presence possible.

We are the oldest constitutional democracy in the world, but we must never forget in the context of human history just how quickly we have come to where we are today. Secretary Cohen quoted another famous American veteran who is buried here, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. He fought in the Civil War and went on to serve on the United States Supreme Court until he was 93 years old. A young man caught him at the age of 90 reading a copy of Plato's "Republic" and asked whatever in the world he was doing, reading that weighty tome. And he said, "I am doing this to improve my mind."

A remarkable man, Justice Holmes; his life shows us how quickly we have come here. When he was a boy, he shook hands with a veteran of the American Revolution. As a young man he fought in the Civil War, where he was visited by President Lincoln. You may know the famous story that the President was wearing his trademark stovepipe hat, and he began, because he was so tall, to attract fire from the Confederate forces, until Holmes shouted, without thinking, these famous words, "Get down, you fool." [Laughter] Lincoln replied, "I'm glad you know how to talk to a civilian." [Laughter]

Justice Holmes lived through World War I and the Depression. He watched the United States assume the mantle of leadership. And he always remembered what he had done as a young man—that war reminds us, and I quote, that "our comfortable routine is no eternal necessity of things." He understood that our freedom had been and always would be bought by men and women ready to protect it, sometimes at great cost and peril.

So we did not become a great nation just because the land was generous to those who settled it, though it was; just because the people who came here worked hard and were clever and resourceful, though surely our forebears were. We became a great nation also because every time our beliefs and ideals have been threatened, Americans have stepped forward to defend them. From our biggest cities to our smallest towns, citizens have done what had to be done to advance the dream that began on the Fourth of July in 1776—always following Justice Holmes' famous admonition that we must be involved in the action and passion of our time, for fear of being judged not to have lived.

So my fellow Americans, if today is a day for history, it is also a day to honor those who lie here and in countless other places all across the world in marked and unmarked graves, to honor them by looking to the future; to rededicate ourselves to another 100 years of our liberty, our prosperity, our optimism, and our common humanity.

Today, there is a new challenge before us in Kosovo. It is a very small province in a small country, but it is a big test of what we believe in: our commitment to leave to our children a world where people are not uprooted and ravaged and slaughtered en masse because of their race, their ethnicity, or their religion; our fundamental interest in building a lasting peace in an undivided and free Europe, a place which saw two World Wars when that dream failed in the 20th century; and our interest in preserving our alliance for freedom and peace with our 18 NATO Allies.

All of us have seen the hundreds of thousands of innocent men and women and children driven from their homes, the thousands singled out for death along the way. We have heard their stories of rape and oppression, of robbery and looting and brutality. And we saw it all before, just a few years ago in Bosnia, for 4 long years,

until NATO acted, combining with the resistance of Bosnians and Croatians, to bring the Dayton peace agreement and to turn the tide of ethnic cleansing there.

How did this all happen? Well, 10 years ago the Berlin Wall fell, ending communism's cruel and arbitrary division of Europe, unleashing the energies of freedom-loving people there, after two World Wars and the cold war, to be united in peace and freedom and prosperity. But that same year in Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic became the last holdout against a Europe free, united, and at peace, when he stripped away the rights of the Kosovars to govern themselves. He then went to war against the Croatians and the Bosnians. And in the wake of that, after 4 years, a quarter of a million people were dead. Two and a half million people were refugees; many of them still have not gone home. There was a stunning record of destruction, told not only in lives but in religious, cultural, historical, and personal buildings and records destroyed in an attempt to erase the existence of a people on their land.

In Kosovo we see some parallels to World War II, for the Government of Serbia, like that of Nazi Germany, rose to power in part by getting people to look down on people of a given race and ethnicity, and to believe they had no place in their country and even no right to live. But even more troubling, we see some parallels to the rumblings all around the world where people continue to fall out with one another and think they simply cannot share common ground and a common future with people who worship God in a different way or have a slightly different heritage.

Think about the contrast of that to the military we celebrate today. Every morning on Memorial Day, I have a breakfast for leaders of the veterans community at the White House. And I stand there with eager anticipation as people who have fought or whose relatives have fought and often died in our wars come through the line. I noticed them today: There were Irish-Americans and Italian-Americans; there were Arab-Americans and Jewish Americans; there were Catholic Americans and Protestant Americans; there were African-Americans; there were Hispanic-Americans; there were Asian-Americans.

Just look around here today at the kinds of people who are wearing the evidence of their service to our country. We are a stronger coun-

try because we respect our differences and we are united by our common humanity.

Now, we cannot expect everybody to follow our lead, and we haven't gotten it entirely right, now. We don't expect everybody to get along all the time. But we can say no to ethnic cleansing. We can say no to mass slaughter of people because of the way they worship God and because of who their parents were. We can say no to that, and we should.

It is important that you know that in Kosovo the world has said no. It's not just the United States or even just our 18 NATO Allies with us. People on every continent—Arabs and Israelis are sending assistance, Protestants and Catholics from Northern Ireland, Greeks and Turks, Africans, Asians, Latin Americans; even those whose own lives have been battered by hurricanes and other natural disasters and who have hardly anything to give are sending help, because their hearts have been broken and their consciences moved by the appalling abuses they have seen.

Our objectives in Kosovo are clear and consistent with both the moral imperative of reversing ethnic cleansing and killing, and our overwhelming national interest in a peaceful, undivided Europe which will ensure we will not have to send large numbers of young Americans to die there in the next century in a war. The objectives are that the Kosovars will go home; the Serb forces will withdraw; an international force, with NATO at its core, will deploy to protect all the people, including the Serb minority, in Kosovo. And afterward, to avoid future Bosnias and future Kosovos, we will learn the lesson of the Marshall plan and what we did for Eastern Europe after the Berlin Wall fell, by working with our European allies to build democracy and prosperity and cooperation in southeastern Europe so that there will be stronger forces pulling people together than those that are driving them apart.

I know that many Americans believe that this is not our fight. But remember why many of the people are laying in these graves out here—because of what happened in Europe and because of what was allowed to go on too long before people intervened. What we are doing today will save lives, including American lives, in the future. And it will give our children a better, safer world to live in.

In this military campaign the United States has borne a large share of the burden, as we

must, because we have a greater capacity to bear that burden. But all Americans should know that we have been strongly supported by our European allies, that when the peacekeeping force goes in there, the overwhelming majority of people will be European, and that when the reconstruction begins, the overwhelming amount of investment will be European. This is something we have done together.

And I ask you, in the days and nights ahead, to remember our brave pilots and crews flying over Serbia, to keep their families in our thoughts. I visited with them recently. I know that they risk their lives every day, and they even avoid firing back sometimes at people who fire at them because they fire from heavily populated areas, and they want to avoid killing innocent civilians.

I ask you to support all possible efforts to relieve the suffering of the people of Kosovo. Even those who escape will be struggling with what happened to them for a long, long time. And this afternoon, I ask all Americans to join with those who have urged us to engage in a moment of remembrance at 3 o'clock eastern daylight time, in honor of those who have given their lives for our country.

I also ask all Americans to honor, along with those who have given their lives for our freedom, the living symbol of American valor, our veterans and their families, the present members

of armed services and their families, wherever and however they serve.

How fitting it is that we are standing against ethnic cleansing with our wonderful, myriad, rainbow, multiethnic military in our increasingly diverse society that involves both the strength of our differences and the even more powerful pull of our shared American values. Our military inspires the world with their respect for one another and their ability to work together. And you pass every test with the same flying colors, red, white, and blue.

Those who lie in this sacred place and in all those other places the world over, many of whom will never even be known, they would be very proud of today's men and women in uniform. And in the bright new century ahead, those who live free with pride in and without fear of their heritage or their faith will be very grateful to today's men and women in uniform.

I thank you all. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:17 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Robert R. Ivany, USA, Commander, and Col. Edward T. Brogan, USA, Chaplain, Military District of Washington; John C. (Jack) Metzler, Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Radio Remarks on the Observance of Memorial Day *May 31, 1999*

Since the Civil War, Memorial Day has been a time for Americans to take a moment from our busy lives to remember the brave men and women who gave their lives in service to our Nation.

This has been a century of great progress for the United States, but we must never forget that it came with a heavy price. At home and abroad, our victories over adversity were made possible by those who were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice, and those who did make that sacrifice.

Today most Americans will enjoy a well-deserved day off from the cares of work and

school; we'll relax at home and cherish the company of loved ones. But as we contemplate the comforts and blessings of our lives and the well-being of our Nation, I ask you to pause just for a moment to remember those who gave their lives to protect the values that give meaning to our lives. I ask you also to think of our men and women in uniform who are risking their lives in the skies over Serbia, so that our children may inhabit a world where people are not murdered and driven from their homes because of their faith or their heritage.

As our Armed Forces and our allies strive to build peace in the Balkans, and in other

places far from America's shores, let us all join in thanking them for all they do every day to defend our freedom.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at 5:31 p.m. on May 30 at the White Oak Plantation

in Yulee, FL, for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 31, but due to technical difficulties the audio version was not made available.

Remarks Announcing a Study on Youth Violence and Media Marketing *June 1, 1999*

Give him another hand. He was great. Bravo! [Applause] Thank you.

When I was listening to Arthur speak, I didn't know whether to offer him a job as a White House speechwriter—[laughter]—or just wait for the opportunity to vote for him someday. Let me say, thank you very much. [Applause] Thank you.

And we thank your mother for bringing you here, and congratulations. And Representative Mary Lou Dickerson, thank you, and Pam Eakes, founder of Mothers Against Violence in America, thank you.

I thank the Attorney General and Chairman Pitofsky for their remarks and their commitment. I thank Mayor Corradini, Mayor Kaine, County Executive Curry, and County Executive Dutch Ruppersberger for the interest that our local government leaders have. I thank Representative Sheila Jackson Lee for her passionate commitment to this issue. And all of you, welcome to the White House.

And most of all, I want to say again how much I appreciate Arthur Sawe for coming here and for sharing a child's perspective. We have other children in this audience today, and we are really here about them and their future.

As Hillary said, the tragedy at Littleton had a profound effect on America. It certainly had a profound effect on us and on our family, particularly after we had the chance to go to Colorado and visit with the families of the children who were killed and many of the young children who are still grievously wounded and the kids at the school with them, who are hurting still, and the teachers.

I do think that what Hillary said is right: We sense a determination, not only in that community but throughout our country, not just to grieve about this but to do something about

it. The national grassroots campaign against violence against children is rooted in our faith that we can do better.

We know we can prevent more youth violence if we work together, across all the lines that divide us. We know we can do it if we're all willing to assume responsibility and stop trying to assign blame. Of course, the responsibility begins at home. It must be reinforced and supported at schools and houses of worship, in the community as a whole. Those of us in public service must also do our part. There is broad and growing consensus for us to do more.

Let me say I am also very grateful that the gun manufacturers came here last month and voiced their support for commonsense restrictions to make it more difficult for guns to get into the hands of children and criminals. I'm encouraged that the Senate acted to close the deadly gun show loophole, to require safety locks to be sold with every handgun, to ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips, and ban violent juveniles from owning guns as adults. I hope the House of Representatives will pass these commonsense measures as soon as they return from the Memorial Day recess. We have a lot to do this year, but this should be put at the top of the agenda and not put on hold.

As you have already heard, members of the entertainment industry must also do their part. They and the rest of us cannot kid ourselves. Our children are being fed a dependable daily dose of violence, and it sells. Now, 30 years of studies have shown that this desensitizes our children to violence and to the consequences of it.

We now know that by the time the typical American child reaches the age of 18, he or she has seen 200,000 dramatized acts of violence

and 40,000 dramatized murders. Kids become attracted to it and more numb to its consequences. As their exposure to violence grows, so, in some deeply troubling cases of particularly vulnerable children, does the taste for it. We should not be surprised that half the video games a typical seventh grader plays are violent.

Anyone who doubts the impact of the cultural assault can look at what now, over 30 years, amounts to somewhere over 300 studies, all of whom show that there is a link between sustained exposure, hour after hour, day after day, week after week, year after year, to violent entertainment and violent behavior.

What the studies say, quite simply, is that the boundary between fantasy and reality violence, which is a clear line for most adults, can become very blurred for vulnerable children. Kids steeped in the culture of violence do become desensitized to it and more capable of committing it themselves.

That is why I have strongly urged people in the entertainment industry to consider the consequences of what they create and how they advertise it. One can value the first amendment right to free speech and at the same time care for and act with restraint. Our administration has worked to give parents more tools to protect their kids, to block violent programming from entering their living room with the V-chip and the rating system. We've made progress on parental screening for Internet and ratings for Internet game sites.

Still, when violent entertainment made for adults is marketed to children, it undermines the rating system designed to protect them. And if you look at some of these ads, it's hard to argue with a straight face that the games were made for adults in the first place, like the one Arthur mentioned.

Advertisements have a particular role here. They have the power to egg children on and lure them in. Every parent knows what response a commercial for sugar cereal or the latest "Star Wars" toy will get from their children. People advertise because it works. They want that product, and one way or the other, they're determined to get it. So we ought to think twice about the impact of ads for so-called first-person shooter video games, like the recent ad for a game that invites players to, and I quote, "Get in touch with your gun-toting, cold-blooded murdering side."

I was given—today Arthur brought me the magazine with the ad that he mentioned, and he was kind enough to mark it for me. There really is a gun here. It says, "More fun than shooting your neighbor's cat." I was given another ad that says, "What kind of psycho drives a school bus into a war zone?" And here's a school bus, heavily armed. This came out right after the incident in Springfield, Oregon.

Here's an ad that turns the argument I just made on its head: "Psychiatrists say it's important to feel something when you kill." And then it goes on to say, "You ought to get this technology because it bumps, and you feel it." It says, "Every sensation, every vibration, every mutilation. Nine programmable weapons buttons. Customizable feedback software. Push the stick that pushes back, and feel your pain." And here's one that's the most unbelievable of all. It says, "Kill your friends guilt-free."

Now, obviously, Arthur has the inner strength and the good upbringing to reject that kind of violent appeal. Most of our children do, but not all of our children do. We cannot be surprised when this kind of thing has an impact on our most vulnerable children. Is it 100 percent to blame? No. It's easier to get guns in this society. Parents on average spend 22 hours a week less with their children than they did 30 years ago because of the demands of work and commuting, the busyness of daily life. But when you put it all together, there are bound to be explosive negative consequences.

That's why today I am asking the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to study the extent to which the video game, music, and movie markets do actually market violence to children, and whether those industries are abiding by their own voluntary systems of regulations.

To any company that sells violent products, I say, children are more than consumers. I understand nobody made anybody buy any of this stuff. But every day, a responsible society declines to do some things for short-term gain that it can do. And that is what we have to think about. These children are our future, our most precious resource. Raising them is any society's most important job. Don't make young people want what your own rating systems say they shouldn't have.

I might say again, as has already been acknowledged, many, many people in the entertainment industry have worked with us on this,

on the ratings system, on the V-chip, on the screening technology for the Internet. I noticed one network executive, a few days ago, actually canceled a program because its violent content was inappropriate, and I applaud that. But I also read with concern the news that some of the new programming coming up for this fall on some networks will be even more violent than last year's. The time has come to show some restraint, even if it has a short-term impact on the bottom line.

I also want to challenge the owners of movie theaters and video stores, distributors, anyone at any point of sale: Enforce the rating systems on the products that you sell. Check the ID's. Draw the line. If underage children are buying violent video games or getting into R-rated movies, the rating system should be enforced to put a stop to it. And if, as many of us suspect, there is still too much gratuitous violence in PG-13-rated movies, the rating systems themselves should be reevaluated.

I want to thank Senators Brownback, Lieberman, Hatch, and Kohl for the bipartisan work they have done on this issue. Again, I want to commend State Representative Mary Lou Dickerson from Washington, who read about young Arthur, helped to create a task force on video game violence; and thanks to her work with Pam and the Mothers Against Violence in America and the Washington Retailers' Association, who are all represented here today, video game retailers in Washington State now voluntarily sign a pledge to parents, committing themselves to check ID's and block sales of violent games to minors. That's something that ought to happen in every State in the United States of America.

Again I say, we can do something about this. It will take a grassroots campaign. It will take everybody doing his or her part. This is a problem we face together, a problem America can solve together. There is no more urgent task for our future.

You were all looking at this young man speaking today, thinking, what a wonderful thing that a person that young could speak so clearly, so confidently, about things that are so right. You look around at the other young people here today who are involved in this effort in some way or another, and you thank God that we have this legacy of children.

A lot of those kids that haven't made it through all these school violence incidents were just as good, just as fine, had just as much to give the world. We've got to quit fooling around with this. We've got a chance. Our hearts are open. Our ears are open. Our heads are thinking.

I know this stuff sells. But that doesn't make it right.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:46 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Arthur Sawe, who introduced the President, and his mother, Caroline; Mayor Deedee Corradini of Salt Lake City, UT, president, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Mayor Timothy Kaine of Richmond, VA; and Maryland county executives Wayne Curry, Prince Georges County, and C.A. (Dutch) Ruppertsberger, Baltimore County. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Letter to the Attorney General and the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission on a Study on Youth Violence and Media Marketing

June 1, 1999

Dear Madam Attorney General: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

New technologies have enabled us to learn, work, and grow in ways that were unimaginable just a few years ago, and modern media has brought culture, entertainment, and education to a wider audience than ever before. With this

great power, there also comes an enormous responsibility to ensure that parents have the tools they need so that the movies children watch, the music they listen to, and the video games they play reflect the values that parents want to pass on to their children.

Too often today children are exposed to images that glamorize violence and desensitize children to it. Numerous studies have shown that this kind of violent programming can promote violent tendencies in children. Media violence increases children's aggression towards others and promotes the development of a sense of callousness towards violence. And such programming can have a particularly negative effect on children who are already vulnerable.

My Administration has worked hard to give parents the information they need to make the right choices for their children. My Administration has brought about a breakthrough agreement by the television industry to create a content-based voluntary ratings system that informs viewers of the appropriateness of the programs they watch. Along with the V-Chip, this rating system will enable parents to choose the programs their children watch, and allow them to better control the images to which their children are exposed.

Today, the motion picture, recording, and video game industries also use content-based ratings to improve the choices parents have. If, however, these industries market violent or other inappropriate materials, rated for adults, to children, then they undermine the effective functioning of the ratings systems. And the in-

dustries make it harder for parents to control the movies, music, and games to which their children are exposed.

Therefore, I am requesting that the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice to conduct a study on the marketing practices of the motion picture, recording, and video game industries with regard to material rated for adults to determine whether and to what extent these industries market such material to children. Among other matters, the study should examine whether such violent material rated for adults is advertised or promoted in media outlets in which minors comprise a substantial percentage of the audience. The study also should examine whether these advertisements are intended to and in fact attract underage audiences.

As a result of this study, we will learn more about how violence is marketed to our children. I thank you for your efforts in this area and your attention to this project.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Attorney General Janet Reno and Federal Trade Commission Chairman Robert Pitofsky.

Statement on the Resignation of Mark D. Gearan as Director of the Peace Corps

June 1, 1999

Today I am announcing that my good friend and trusted adviser Mark Gearan will be leaving his position as the Director of the Peace Corps later this summer. Mark has accepted the exciting challenge of serving as the next president of Hobart and William Smith Colleges, one of our Nation's most distinguished academic institutions. The trustees of the colleges have made a very wise decision in selecting Mark Gearan as their new president. He is gifted, humane, a leader, and deeply committed to the education of young people. I know that he will bring great vision to the colleges as they enter the next century.

I have relied on Mark Gearan's skills, wisdom, and talents for many years. He was a close aide

to me from the time I first sought the Presidency; he served as Vice President Gore's campaign manager in the 1992 election; and he served me in the White House as Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Communications.

One of the best personnel decisions I have made as President was to appoint Mark Gearan as the Director of the Peace Corps. I believe he has been one of the most successful Directors since President Kennedy established the Peace Corps in 1961. He has rejuvenated the Peace Corps and demonstrated a deep commitment to its legacy of service and the women and men who serve as Peace Corps volunteers. He can be proud that the Peace Corps will

soon have more volunteers serving overseas than at any time in a generation.

Mark strengthened the Peace Corps in many ways. He has established the Crisis Corps, a new program within the Peace Corps that enables former volunteers to help people in other countries recover from the effects of natural disasters and humanitarian crises. He established new volunteer programs in South Africa, Jordan, and Bangladesh, and has managed the Peace Corps with great skill and care. This record of

performance has convinced me, and the Congress, that the Peace Corps should field 10,000 volunteers, and I was proud to sign into law an authorization bill that will put us on the path toward achieving this goal by the year 2003.

I thank Mark for his friendship and service. Hillary and I will miss Mark, his wife, Mary, and their two daughters, Madeleine and Kathleen. We wish them the very best as they take this new step in their lives.

Remarks on Presenting the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the United States Air Force Academy Falcons in Colorado Springs, Colorado

June 2, 1999

Thank you very much, General Oelstrom, Coach DeBerry, members of the team, and family and friends. You know, one of the best things about being the President are the things that every President gets to do. I mean, every year I turn on the White House Christmas tree; every year I give a pardon to a Thanksgiving turkey. You know, there are things you do every year. And when the history of our administration is written, I will be credited with instituting a new permanent tradition. Every year I give the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the Air Force Academy. There has been only one lapse in 7 years now. It's been an amazing experience.

I follow football very closely, and I know a lot of people think this is the best Falcon team ever. You won the conference. You had a great record, a top-10 finish. You won the conference. You won your bowl game, beat Army and Navy by a combined 70 points. I hope the press won't report that. *[Laughter]* I still have a few more trips to make to those academies. *[Laughter]*

It was a truly amazing thing. And to me, in some ways, the most impressive statistic of all was that for 2 years in a row you were, next to Ohio State, the second best defensive team in the country. I've actually met the Ohio State football team, and they're slightly larger.

[Laughter] I don't think they could fly jet airplanes—lift them maybe, but not fly them.

So I have really been amazed at the consistency of performance here. And I think it's a real tribute not only to the young men but obviously to the coach and to the spirit and to the idea that excellence can be achieved against considerable odds.

And it's a great honor for me to be here. I congratulate you again. And I thank you for making this a tradition. And I think you probably cannot imagine how many young athletes there are out there all over America who, because you have been able to achieve this level of excellence while pursuing a rigorous academic program, a rigorous training program, being in this institution of higher education for other purposes primarily, there are all kinds of young people who believe they can do the same thing. And that's worth a great deal in a world where it's not so easy to be young anymore. And I thank you for that, too.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. in Doolittle Hall at the U.S. Air Force Academy. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Tad J. Oelstrom, USAF, Superintendent, and Fisher DeBerry, football coach, U.S. Air Force Academy.

Commencement Address at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs June 2, 1999

Thank you very much. General Oelstrom, Mrs. Oelstrom; General and Mrs. Ryan; General and Mrs. Myers; General Lorenz, Mrs. Lorenz; General and Mrs. Wagie; Colonel Wilbourne; Cadet Friedman; Acting Secretary Peters, whom I intend to nominate as Secretary of the Air Force; ladies and gentlemen.

I'd like to also acknowledge, particularly, four graduates of the Air Force Academy that I brought to this ceremony today because they are serving our country ably in the White House: Bob Bell, class of 1969, my Senior Counsel for Defense Policy and Arms Control, who is soon to become the Assistant Secretary General of NATO; Colonel Ed Rice, class of 1978; Lieutenant Colonel Betsy Pimentel, class of 1980; and my White House physician, Lieutenant Colonel Richard Tubb, class of 1981. The Air Force Academy has been good to our administration and to the White House.

To the families and friends of the graduating class, and especially to you, the members of the class of 1999, I extend heartfelt congratulations. It's been a long road from Doolie Summer to graduation. But you have achieved, as General Oelstrom told me, an unparalleled record of academic achievement, athletic success, and excellence in your military endeavors. From here on out, the sky is the limit for you.

I want to offer special congratulations to the graduates from other nations who are part of this class. We wish you well as you return home and hope you will forever cherish your bonds with the Academy and your classmates.

Now, before I go any further, I want to carry out a venerable tradition. By the power vested in me as Commander in Chief, I hereby grant amnesty to cadets who are marching tours or serving restrictions or confinements for minor misconduct.

One of the cadets suggested I also raise everyone's grades. *[Laughter]* But I'm told that even the Commander in Chief can't do that.

Just a moment ago, I participated in another traditional ceremony I've been part of every year but one since I became President; it's now up there almost as routine and sacrosanct as giving the State of the Union Address, lighting the

White House Christmas tree, or pardoning the Thanksgiving turkey. For the sixth time in 7 years, I presented the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the Air Force Academy Falcons.

Many believe it was the best team in the Academy's history, with a 12-1 record, a top-10 ranking, victory in the conference, in the bowl game, over Army and Navy. In the last two seasons, second in the Nation in scoring defense to Ohio State, where the linebackers are the size of C-130's. *[Laughter]* And the team did all this in spite of an incredibly sportsman-like decision never to deploy a "stealth" running back or throw a single laser-guided pass. I appreciate that, and I congratulate you.

Ladies and gentlemen, the class of 1999 represents and today you rededicate yourselves to the same remarkable combination of accomplishment, grit, and self-sacrifice our service men and women have embodied for more than two centuries now. You can be reminded by that just by looking over at Sijan Hall, named for a Medal of Honor winner tortured and killed in Vietnam, to be reminded of the finest example of courage and honor in terrible and terrifying circumstances.

Those qualities are on display today when Air Force men and women serve at home and abroad, from Iraq to Korea, to helping hurricane victims in Central America, and now in the historic effort to reverse the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and restore the people of that shattered land to their homes.

A month ago I went to our airbases at Spangdahlem and Ramstein, Germany, to visit the pilots and support crews who are flying our missions over Kosovo and the young people in uniform bringing aid to the refugees there. I wish every American could have been with me to see the courage, the intensity, the skill it takes for our pilots to fly these aircraft at high speeds through enemy defenses, putting ordinance on target, putting their own lives in greater danger to avoid civilian casualties on the ground, coordinating with aircrews from more than a dozen other countries, then coming home to debrief, rest, and do it all over again.

These young Americans know they're doing the right thing. They're determined to prevail. It is impossible to see them and talk to them and come away with the slightest iota of cynicism about our Nation and our role and responsibilities in the world.

We are joined today here by two of these brave American airmen. I cannot mention their names, under our procedures, for they are still flying missions in Kosovo. But the first is a pilot of a B-2 bomber who graduated from the Academy in 1986 and who has flown his craft from Whiteman Air Force Base on strike missions over heavily defended areas in Serbia. The second graduated from the Academy in 1980 and now flies a C-130, ferrying lifesaving supplies to the refugees fleeing Kosovo. I would like to ask them to stand and ask you to recognize them for their courage and for their service. [Applause] I am very proud of them and very proud of you for following in their tradition.

America became a great nation not just because our land was generous to those who settled it, not just because our forebears who came here were clever and worked hard, but also because whenever our beliefs and ideals have been threatened, Americans have always stepped forward to defend them.

Kosovo is a small province in a small country, but it's a big test of what we believe in and stand for: our commitment to leave to our children a world where people are not uprooted and slaughtered en masse because of their racial or ethnic heritage or their religious faith; our fundamental interest in building a lasting peace in an undivided, free Europe so that young Americans never have to go there again to fight and perish in large numbers; our interest in preserving our Alliance for freedom and peace with our 19 NATO Allies.

There are also differences, however, between this conflict and those we have waged in the past. Kosovo is a communications age conflict, as General Oelstrom and I were just discussing. It is waged at a time when footage of airstrikes is beamed to homes across the world even before our pilots have returned to their bases, a time when every accidental civilian casualty is highlighted, but also when the victims of terrible war crimes can give testimony to the whole world within days of those crimes being committed.

In World War II, Americans knew they were fighting to end a great horror. But what news

we had then about Nazi atrocities came to us delayed and piecemeal from the few refugees and couriers who managed to escape occupied Europe. It was only in victory, when our soldiers liberated the concentration camps, that Americans truly saw the face of the evil we had defeated.

Today, our pilots over Kosovo see the smoke of burning villages beneath them, the tanks and artillery that set them ablaze. When they turn to base, they watch the news; they see the faces of the fleeing refugees marching so many miles over mountains with only the belongings they can carry on their backs, pushing their elderly along in wheelbarrows. They hear the voices of victims telling stories of young men singled out and shot along the road, young women raped, and children torn from their parents. They also hear the voices of those who say all is not lost because the nations of NATO are with us and will not let us down.

Our service men and women can see today what we are fighting against and what we are fighting for. So can the American people and the entire world.

Now, Mr. Milosevic has been indicted by the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal, the first time a sitting leader of a nation has been held responsible by an international body for ordering war crimes and crimes against humanity.

There are still some who assert that our bombing is somehow responsible for the atrocities his forces have committed against the Kosovar people. That reminds me of the old story of the young boy who came running home to his mother with a bloody nose. When his mother asked him what happened, he replied, "It all started when the other kid hit me back." [Laughter]

We know that by the time our airstrikes began, the Serb campaign of executions and expulsions had already started. In fact, Mr. Milosevic has been indicted, in part, for a massacre that took place in January. Tens of thousands of refugees already had been pushed from their homes in carefully pre-planned attacks. Serbian forces were already positioned for the offensive we have seen unfold.

Mr. Milosevic already had unleashed in Kosovo the same paramilitary warlords who spent 4 years ethnically cleansing Bosnia and Croatia, where 2½ million people were driven from their homes and a quarter million were killed before NATO bombing and the resistance

of Bosnians and Croats brought us to the Dayton peace agreement.

Ethnic cleansing in Kosovo was not a response to bombing. It is the 10-year method of Mr. Milosevic's madness. Had we done nothing, the tragedy would have been permanent, accepted, and in effect, condoned by the world community.

Now, Mr. Milosevic had 40,000 troops and nearly 300 tanks in and around Kosovo before he rejected the peace agreement the Kosovars accepted. He could not be prevented, therefore, from driving the Kosovars from their land. But he can be prevented from keeping them out of their land. His 10-year cleansing campaign will end once and for all.

This time the world did not wait, as we did in Bosnia, for 4 more years of fruitless appeals to reason in the face of evil. We have acted quickly to end this horror, and that is exactly what we will do.

Let me be clear about why we have done this and how we intend to meet our goals. As members of the United States Air Force, the members of this class especially are entitled to know.

Our reasons are both moral and strategic. There is a moral imperative because what we're facing in Kosovo is not just ethnic and religious hatred, discrimination and conflict, which are, unfortunately, too abundant in this world. America and NATO's military power cannot be deployed just because people don't like each other or even because they fight each other.

What is going on in Kosovo is something much worse and, thankfully, more rare: an effort by a political leader to systematically destroy or displace an entire people because of their ethnicity and their religious faith; an effort to erase the culture and history and presence of a people from their land. Where we have the ability to do so, we as a nation and our democratic allies must take a stand against this. We do have the ability to do so at NATO's doorstep in Europe.

But there is also a clear strategic imperative. Since I took office, I've worked hard to build for you and your future a Europe that, for the first time in history, is undivided, democratic, and at peace. Because if there is anything we have learned from the bloody 20th century with its two World Wars, it is that peace and stability in Europe is vital to our own security and freedom.

Now, think what the United States has helped to accomplish in the last few years. Many thought the NATO Alliance would wither and die after the cold war. But it is strong and vital, with new partnerships with 25 nations, stretching all the way from the Baltic Sea to central Asia. Three new democracies, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, which spent the last half century struggling for their own freedom in the cold war, are now our NATO Allies defending the freedom of Europeans.

We've helped Russia deal with the difficult challenges it faces on the road to democracy and stability, the road to being a part of and a partner in Europe. We also helped immeasurably to end the war in Bosnia, and now we're keeping the peace there with a coalition that unites every former adversary in all of European history: France and Germany, Germany and Poland, Poland and Russia, Russia and the United States.

We have made clear that NATO membership will remain open to other responsible democracies from central and southeastern Europe. And through our efforts in the Balkans, we have also helped to bridge the gulf between Europe and the Islamic world, the source of so much trouble over the last millennium, and the source of troubling tensions still today.

The killing Mr. Milosevic unleashed in the former Yugoslavia a decade ago is now the last major barrier to a Europe whole, free, and at peace, the last gasp of an aggressive nationalism that has shattered the lives of so many Europeans in this century and drawn so many Americans to fight there in wars. It threatens all the progress made in Europe since the end of the cold war.

Imagine what would have happened had we let the violence in Kosovo escalate without taking a stand. NATO would have been discredited for doing nothing about ethnic conflict and cleansing on its doorstep. The refugees would have ended up a people without any prospect of going home—overwhelming, perhaps even destabilizing the new, fragile democracies of southeastern Europe with their permanent presence and bitter grievances. Tensions with Russia over the Balkans would not have disappeared; they would have increased. And the fighting might very well have spread to other countries.

Letting Mr. Milosevic succeed would have sent a clear message to other unscrupulous leaders: If you have ethnic or religious problems,

just kill the minorities or drive them out. No one will stop you; you won't pay a significant price. In a way, the world will make your job easier by feeding the refugees and finding them permanent homes without pressing for their return.

Slobodan Milosevic would then have become a model of success for 21st century rulers trying to obliterate multiethnic societies, instead of the symbol of the bankrupt policies based on hate that we want to confine to the dustbin of history.

Our strategy for reversing Mr. Milosevic's ethnic cleansing begins with clarity about the goals we are fighting to achieve. The refugees must be able to go home with security and self-government. For that to happen, Serbian forces must leave Kosovo. An international security force with NATO at its core must deploy to protect all the people of Kosovo, including the Serb minority there. Our diplomatic effort supports these goals. They will continue to make clear to Mr. Milosevic exactly what he must do to end the conflict. And our military campaign will continue until it does.

We cannot grow weary of this campaign because Mr. Milosevic didn't capitulate when the first bombs fell. We cannot abandon a just cause because an adversary holds out for more than a few news cycles. I reject that. Our Allies reject that. I know the vast majority of Americans reject that. We must be willing to pay the price of time and effort to reverse the course of ethnic cleansing. The benefits will be far greater and last much longer than the costs.

And day by day, night by night, our air campaign is succeeding. The pilots are doing a magnificent job. Mr. Milosevic is systematically losing his armed forces. NATO airstrikes are destroying ever-increasing numbers of tanks, armored vehicles, and artillery. We have eliminated 80 percent of Serbia's modern fighters, most of its ability to produce ammunition, all its capacity to refine fuel, much of the rest of its military economy.

Mr. Milosevic, in turn, has not eliminated the insurgent Kosovar Liberation Army. Their ranks are growing, and the longer he holds out, the more vulnerable he leaves his forces to the KLA's growing attacks.

Meanwhile, there are growing signs of disaffection in Serbia: soldiers abandoning their posts, civilians protesting, young men avoiding conscription, prominent citizens calling on

Milosevic to accept NATO's conditions. There is a clear choice before the Serbian leader. He can cut his losses now and accept the basic requirements of a just peace, or he can continue to force military failure and economic ruin on his people. In the end, the outcome will be the same.

This week we are deploying an additional 68 F-16's and F-15's to join the mission. We now have planes flying at all hours from every direction, from bases in Italy, Germany, Hungary, Turkey, the United States, and from carriers at sea. If we have the patience and determination to match the courage and skill of our men and women in uniform, we will achieve our goals.

A second reason we have pursued this strategy is that it enables us to pursue our goal in a way that preserves the unity of NATO's 19 democracies. We must maintain the solidarity between the United States, Canada, and Europe that has been vital to our past and is vital to our future security. And I am confident we will.

A third important reason is to meet our goals in a way that strengthens, not weakens, our fundamental interest in a long-term positive relationship with Russia. Russia is now working with us on a solution that meets our requirements. We hope Russian troops will participate in the force that keeps the peace in Kosovo, just as they have done so well in our joint efforts in Bosnia.

A fourth element is to prepare now for the difficult task of returning refugees to Kosovo and implementing the peace there. Yesterday NATO approved the outlines of KFOR, the force that will deploy to Kosovo once the conditions are met. Approximately 50,000 troops will take part in this effort. Our European allies will provide the vast bulk of them, but America will also contribute, and we should.

Today I am announcing my decision to provide about 7,000 of these troops for Kosovo, about 15 percent of the total force. The leading elements and headquarters are already in Albania and Macedonia, ready to deploy to Kosovo within a few hours to oversee the safe return of the refugees. The additional NATO forces required are beginning to move to the region.

Finally, this strategy will enable us to put in place a plan for lasting peace and stability in the Balkans, when Mr. Milosevic is stopped and the ethnic cleansing is reversed. For that to happen, the European Union and the United

States must be farsighted. We must do for southeastern Europe what we did for Western Europe after World War II, for central Europe, for Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and others after the cold war. We must give them a positive path to a prosperous, shared future, a unifying magnet more powerful than the pull of hatred and destruction which threatens to tear them apart.

It is simply not true, as some have alleged, that the Balkan region has always been and always will be torn apart by ethnic and religious strife and violence, that they are somehow genetically predisposed to that. It isn't true. History does not support that conclusion. And today, the efforts of Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia to resolve their minority problems peacefully show that if leaders are responsible and if people have a positive future to work for, then they can live together and resolve their differences.

Europe and the United States can and should support efforts to increase economic growth, trade, and investment, to strengthen democratic governments and institutions, to help the nations of the region join the European Union and NATO. We should also include Serbia in this effort if—but only if—it practices democracy, respects human rights, and has leaders who uphold the basic standards of human conduct.

So I say again, why are we in Kosovo? Because we have a moral responsibility to oppose crimes against humanity and mass ethnic and religious killing and cleansing where we can. Because we have a security responsibility to prevent a wider war in Europe, which we know from our two World Wars would eventually draw America in at far greater cost in lives, time, and treasure.

Why are we pursuing this particular strategy of massive bombing and diplomacy? Because it gives us the best chance of achieving all our objectives in Kosovo: first, the return of Kosovars with security and self-government, withdrawal of Serb forces, and the deployment of the international security force with NATO at its core; second, to maintain Allied unity; third, to continue cooperation with Russia; fourth, to maximize our capacity after the conflict is over to build a progressive, democratic, multiethnic Balkans region that will contribute to our economic growth as a world society and

our security progress, not be a constant drain on our economy and a constant threat to our security.

Why have we refused to close other doors and other options? Because we are determined to prevail. We are in Kosovo for the same reason you are here. Some things are worth fighting for: a future with the great alliance between the United States and Europe standing strong; a future not dominated by massive killing of innocent civilians because of the ethnic or racial heritage they were born with, or the way they worship God; a future in which leaders cannot keep, gain or increase their power by teaching their young people to hate or kill others simply because of their faith or heritage; a future in which young Americans who set out from this academy to serve our country will not have to fight in yet another major European conflict.

That is the future we want you to have. That is the future we want your children to inherit. I thank you for your willingness to contribute to that future. I thank you for your dedication to your country.

Good luck to you all, and Godspeed.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in Falcon Stadium at the United States Air Force Academy. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Tad J. Oelstrom, USAF, Superintendent, United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), and his wife, Sandra; Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Air Force Chief of Staff, and his wife, Jane; Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, Commander in Chief, U.S. Space Command, and his wife, Mary Jo; Brig. Gen. Stephen R. Lorenz, USAF, Commandant of Cadets, USAFA, and his wife, Leslie; Brig. Gen. David A. Wagie, USAF, Dean of the Faculty, USAFA, and his wife, Sue; Col. Henry B. Wilbourne, USAF, Command Chaplain, USAFA; Cadet Chief Master Sergeant Jon R. Friedman, USAF, Cadet Wing Superintendent, USAFA; F. Whitten Peters, Acting Secretary of the Air Force and nominee to be Secretary of the Air Force; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Kosovo International Security Force (KFOR).

Statement on the Crash Landing of American Airlines Flight 1420 at Little Rock National Airport

June 2, 1999

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the terrible crash landing of American Airlines Flight 1420 at Little Rock National Airport late last night. We join the American people in extending our deepest sympathies to the families of those who died or were injured.

Our Government is doing everything possible to aid the victims and help determine the cause

of this tragedy. Family assistance counselors and other personnel from the National Transportation Safety Board are already on the ground in Little Rock, and FAA inspectors are assisting the NTSB. I have asked my staff to update me on our efforts throughout the day. I ask all Americans to remember in their prayers the passengers and their families.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting

June 3, 1999

Good afternoon. I have just completed a very good meeting with the Cabinet. We discussed many issues; three in particular I would like to discuss with you.

Situation in the Balkans

First, with regard to Kosovo: As you know, we have been working closely with President Ahtisaari and Mr. Chernomyrdin to try to achieve an agreement that would allow the refugees to go home with security, safety, and self-government. Movement by the Serbian leadership to accept these conditions established by NATO and the international community is, of course, welcome, but based on our past experience, we must also be cautious.

First, we must have clarity that the Serbian leadership has fully accepted these conditions and intends to fully implement them. Until then and until Serb forces begin a verifiable withdrawal from Kosovo, we will continue to pursue diplomacy, but we will also continue the military effort that has brought us to this point.

In a few moments, I will meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff to speak about the progress of our campaign and our planning for the force that would enter Kosovo when NATO's conditions are met. NATO and our military have been working hard to ensure that we can sustain our campaign and deploy KFOR quickly and effectively when that is necessary. We have worked to ensure that we can do this while maintaining our overall military posture around the world.

They have my complete confidence and support as we move forward.

Legislative Agenda

The second thing we discussed today was the budget and the importance of maintaining fiscal discipline, which has helped our Nation reach historic levels of prosperity, honored our values of opportunity, responsibility, and community, and enabled us to begin to meet the challenges of America in the 21st century.

Last fall my Cabinet and I worked very hard to put together a budget that reduces the publicly held debt to its lowest point since before World War I, safeguards the solvency of Social Security and Medicare and makes improvements in both programs, offers targeted tax cuts for long-term retirement savings, stays within the budget caps, and makes substantial new investments in the benefit of the American people, from education to the environment to new technology.

Unfortunately, the Republican majority in Congress is moving ahead with a budget plan that, in the end, may do none of these things. It fails to extend the solvency of Social Security and Medicare. It fails to make new, crucial investments. It requires deep cuts in areas of great national need, from law enforcement to education to the environment. These cuts would be so damaging that Congress, itself, to date has been unwilling and unable to move some

of the most basic and normally noncontroversial spending bills out of their committees.

The majority budget plan is simply not realistic. It is a blueprint for chaos, and we can do better. I urge Congress when it returns to work with me in a bipartisan way for a budget that is both fiscally responsible and honors our values and prepares for our future.

Federal Energy Policy

I also discussed with the Cabinet new actions to deal with what, in my State of the Union Address, I said was our most fateful environmental challenge, global warming. Almost every month, we see disturbing new evidence of climate change. Scientists now believe that last year, 1998, was very likely the warmest year in a millennium. Whole species of frogs are disappearing from forests in Costa Rica because the air there is getting hotter and drier. In the Arctic, the permafrost has started to warm and the sea ice is shrinking. These are alarming signs for what it means to biodiversity and the potential of a rising water level around the globe.

Yet some still insist that the vast majority of scientists are simply wrong, and that we should do nothing. Others call for a raft of new regulations and new taxes. I believe there is a third way here, a better way, to invest in technologies that reduce greenhouse gases while also spurring economic growth. Many of those technologies are on hand right now.

As the single largest consumer of energy in our country, the Federal Government should be leading the way. That is why today I am directing all Federal departments and agencies to take steps to markedly improve the energy efficiency of our buildings. With new technologies and contracts with private companies, the Federal Government will cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent. That is the equivalent of taking 1.7 million cars off the road. By taking these steps, we will also save the taxpayers over

\$750 million a year when they are fully implemented.

I'm also pleased to announce that the Defense Department will award, by the end of this month, the largest energy-saving contract in the history of the Federal Government. Under this contract, the Government pays no up-front costs, the contractor wins a share of the energy savings; greenhouse pollution is reduced; and taxpayers will save over \$200 million.

I want to express my thanks to Secretary Cohen and Secretary Richardson for turning the idea of these win-win energy contracts into a reality. And I want to urge Congress, again, to pass the new research investments and the new tax incentives I have proposed in my balanced budget, so that America's consumers and businesses can reap the benefits of energy-saving technologies that exist today, and the new, better technologies that are soon to be developed.

So, in closing, let me say we have some encouraging news on Kosovo, but we should be cautious, and we should see real results.

We have presented a good budget to the Congress; the one they have come back with won't work. We've got to work together to give the American people one that will. The problem of climate change and global warming is real, but we don't have to have an economic breakdown to deal with it; what we need is a vigorous embrace of effective technologies, first by the Federal Government and then by all the American people.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland and Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia. The Executive order on Government energy management is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Resignation of Alice Rivlin as Vice Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System

June 3, 1999

I am sorry to hear that Alice Rivlin is stepping down as Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve.

During my administration, she has served with distinction and integrity both as Vice Chair of

the Federal Reserve and as Director of the Office of Management and Budget. For many years, Alice has been a steady and strong voice for fiscal discipline, and she deserves much credit for helping usher in a new era of budget surpluses.

Alice has a deep and abiding commitment to the city of Washington, DC. Her work and

advice have played a critical role in helping turn around the finances of our Capital City and putting the District in a better position to reshape its future. I am glad that she will continue her work as Chair of the DC Financial Assistance Authority. I thank Alice for her dedication and hard work and wish her well in the future.

Statement on the Decision To Extend Normal Trade Relations Status With China

June 3, 1999

I have decided to renew Normal Trade Relations (NTR) status with China, so that we will continue to extend to China the same trade treatment we provide to virtually every other country on Earth. Maintaining NTR with China, as every U.S. President has done since 1980, will promote America's economic and security interests, and I urge Congress to support this decision.

NTR with China is good for Americans. Our exports to China have quadrupled over the past decade. Exports to China and Hong Kong support some 400,000 American jobs. Revoking NTR would derail ongoing negotiations to increase our access to China's market and to promote economic reforms there.

Trade also remains a force for social change in China, spreading the tools, contacts, and ideas that promote freedom. A decade ago at Tiananmen, when Chinese citizens courageously demonstrated for democracy, they were met by violence from a regime fearful of change. We continue to speak and work strongly for human rights in China. A continued policy of principled, purposeful engagement reinforces these efforts to move China toward greater openness and broader freedom. This is the path to lasting stability and prosperity for China, to a future that will benefit the Chinese people—and the American people.

We pursue engagement with our eyes wide open, without illusions. We continue to speak frankly about our differences and to firmly protect our national interests. A policy of disengagement and confrontation would only strengthen those in China who oppose greater openness and freedom.

Therefore, I am committed to bringing China into global structures, to promote China's adherence to global norms on human rights, weapons of mass destruction, crime and drugs, immigration, the environment, and on trade. I am determined to pursue an agreement for China to join the World Trade Organization on viable commercial terms. This is not a favor to China but a means of opening and reforming China's markets and holding China to the rules of the global trading system—developments that will benefit America. Accordingly, I am prepared to work closely with Congress to secure permanent NTR status for China in the context of a commercially strong WTO agreement.

NOTE: The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105–206, section 5003, changed the term “most-favored-nation” status to “normal trade relations” status.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Normal Trade Relations Status for China

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “Act”), with respect to the continuation of a waiver of application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act to the People’s Republic of China. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for the People’s Republic of China will substantially promote the objectives of section 402

of the Act, and my reasons for such determination.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105–206, section 5003, changed the term “most-favored-nation” status to “normal trade relations” status.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Normal Trade Relations Status for Belarus

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “Act”), with respect to the continuation of a waiver of the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period, and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for the Republic of Belarus will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act. I will submit separate reports with respect to Vietnam and the People’s Republic of China.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105–206, section 5003, changed the term “most-favored-nation” status to “normal trade relations” status.

June 3 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Normal Trade Relations Status for Vietnam

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (the "Act"), as amended, with respect to the continuation of a waiver of the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act to Vietnam. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for Vietnam will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act, and my reasons for such determination.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105-206, section 5003, changed the term "most-favored-nation" status to "normal trade relations" status.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period February 1, 1999, to March 31, 1999. The previous submission covered events during December 1998 and January 1999.

The United States remains actively engaged in efforts to promote a negotiated settlement to the Cyprus dispute, under U.N. auspices and on the basis of a bizonal, bicomunal, federal solution. Secretary Albright underscored the U.S. commitment to finding a comprehensive solution to Cypriot Foreign Minister Kassoulides during their February 17 meeting in Washington.

Our efforts also continued in the region. Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas J. Miller traveled to Turkey, Cyprus, and Greece during March 8-13, and Ambassador Brill continued discussions with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leadership on next steps. Ambassador Miller also discussed prospects for progress with counterparts in European Union capitals and in Moscow.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Interview With Charles Gibson and Diane Sawyer and a Discussion With Students on ABC's "Good Morning America"

June 4, 1999

Situation in the Balkans

Mr. Gibson. We are here to talk about a subject which really is on everybody's mind and has been the topic of conversation ever since the Littleton shootings at Columbine High. But I can't ignore the fact, obviously, that there were events yesterday involving perhaps peace in Yugoslavia and Serbia with the Serbs. Does your gut tell you we have peace?

The President. Well, I'm encouraged. I think that, first of all, President Ahtisaari of Finland and Mr. Chernomyrdin did a very good job. They got our positions very close together and then presented it to Mr. Milosevic, and they have accepted it.

But over the last 6½ years, I've had a number of agreements with Mr. Milosevic, and the only one that has been kept is the Dayton agreement where we had forces on the ground. So I will feel much better about this when we have evidence that there is a real withdrawal of Serb forces and when we're moving in.

Mr. Gibson. But the word is that they've accepted the terms that we sent in, so why keep bombing them in the interim? When a bully cries "uncle," you let him up, let him go home. You don't keep hitting on him.

The President. Well, you have been reporting about the nature of the continuing campaign. I think it's important that we continue the military action against the military targets until we have some evidence that there are more than words here. For 6½ years, we've had various agreements, but until we had the agreement ending the war in Bosnia at Dayton, the others weren't kept. And so I think that—and we've had the same problem in Kosovo. We want to know that the military forces are withdrawing, and we want to have the timetable for our people going in.

Mr. Gibson. So what is the evidence that would bring about a pause in the bombing? Is it the beginning of the withdrawal of the troops, once you see X number out?

The President. We want to see—we want to have a militarily verifiable withdrawal of the troops and an agreement about the introduction of the international force. That should come—

or could come quite soon. The paper that Mr. Ahtisaari gave to the Serbs provided for military-to-military contacts. Those contacts are to occur very soon, in the next several hours, probably early tomorrow, their time. And then we could proceed pretty quickly.

So, believe me, I'm anxious to end the bombing, but I want to know that our objectives have been achieved.

War Crimes

Mr. Gibson. A couple of very quick questions. Were war crimes—the war crimes against Mr. Milosevic discussed at all in the talks?

The President. I don't believe they were.

Mr. Gibson. His staying in office, were they discussed—was that discussed?

The President. That's not part of the terms that NATO set out in the beginning.

Mr. Gibson. So that question is simply left—

The President. That question is left open. Now, he is subject to the jurisdiction of the International War Crimes Tribunal, which means that if he comes within the jurisdiction of any country that is cooperating with the United Nations, they would have an obligation to turn him over. But that was not a part of the terms necessary to secure return of the Kosovars and, therefore, we have to proceed with the conditions we set out—

Mr. Gibson. And very quickly, will the troops, the peacekeeping forces, once they go in, be under unified command?

The President. Yes. They have to be. We have to have an organized, unified way of dealing with this, because their lives will be at stake, too.

Gun Control Legislation

Mr. Gibson. All right. Let me turn to the situation of kids and guns. The House, in the next few weeks, is going to start debating a bill that includes some gun control measures that were passed by the Senate. And political points will be scored by both sides in that debate.

But you and I know, don't we, really, that it's not going to make a damn bit of difference—only on the margins—in the way kids get guns.

The President. Well, first of all, I don't necessarily agree with that. I think the Brady bill has made a real difference; having the background checks matters. We know that 250,000 people, from the time I signed the Brady bill in '94 until last year, were unable to get handguns. We know just since the insta-check went in last year, another 36,000 people have been denied the right to get handguns. So closing the gun show loophole matters. Doing a background check for some other things I recommended, a background check for explosives as well—very important in the Littleton case—these things will matter.

Now, does more need to be done? I think so. I think that more does need to be done. The Speaker of the House agreed that we ought to make it unlawful for people under 21 to have handguns, and I was encouraged by that. And that's, of course, something I'm supporting.

Mr. Gibson. But even with the checks, what you can't get in the front door, so many people go around and get in the back door. Forty percent of the gun sales in this country are unregulated; nobody checks them. There are a group of kids that you're going to meet in the next half hour who are going to tell you, "If I want to get a gun, I can go get one, and nobody's going to know about it, and I'll have it within a week."

The President. That's true, but the more we move to make such transactions and possession unlawful and the more we move against people who perpetrate them, the more success we will have.

You know, it's funny, even the NRA says, "Well, we ought to prosecute crimes." Well, we ought to make the right things crimes, and we ought to make it unlawful for children to possess these weapons. We ought to make it unlawful for people to sell them to them or to transfer to them, and we ought to close the loopholes in the law. And as we do that, we will make a difference.

Also, keep in mind that the Littleton example is not the only example that we have to be mindful of. There are 13 children a day who are shot in America, who lose their lives, in ones and twos on the streets.

Mr. Gibson. There's a Littleton every day.

The President. So we have to make—anything we can do to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids, we ought to do.

Mr. Gibson. But when you went to Littleton, a friend of yours who supports you on gun control said to me in the last 48 hours, "The President"—because, as he said, Littleton has seared the national conscience—"the President had a chance to roar on gun control, and he meowed." And that was a friend of yours. There are very basic measures that could be taken that people agree on. We register every automobile in America—

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. Gibson. —we don't register guns. That's a step that would make a difference.

The President. Look, let's join the real world here. You want to have an honest conversation? Let's have an honest conversation. I am the first President who ever took on the NRA. I got my party in Congress to stand with me on the Brady bill, which has made a difference, on the assault weapons ban. We are now in the process of closing loopholes in the assault weapons ban.

What happened to them when they did that? In 1994 we lost between 12 and 20 members of the House of Representatives because they were targeted by the NRA for standing up for the lives of our children.

Now, wait a minute—you talk about roaring and meowing—then I came forward with this legislation. Did this roar through the Senate? No. We passed a bill closing the gun show loophole by 51–50 because of the Vice President of the United States. Did the House of Representatives make a priority out of what was passed in the Senate and pass it right through? No. They went home before taking action. Why? To give the NRA time to lobby them, to water down what was passed.

Now, I have made it perfectly clear that I want to get what was passed in the Senate passed in the House. Then we will come back and try to pass some more things, because Littleton did sear the conscience of the Nation. The question is not whether we have seared the conscience of the Nation; the question is whether, on gun issues, whether the people who now constitute the House and the Senate will pass what is sensible.

And I intend to do that. But for you to say that I shouldn't take what I can get because—and instead I should ask for things that I am

absolutely positive will be defeated in the Congress, is quite wrong. And to ignore the fact—and whoever you talked about that you don't want to out here—to ignore the fact that my administration and my party took on this issue when no one else would and paid a huge price for it and lost control of the House of Representatives in all probability because of it, and to pretend that this is an easy thing now because Littleton happened, is wrong. We are working very hard to pass sensible measures that will make a difference, that will save children's lives.

You say they won't save all lives. You say there are stronger measures that could be taken. You are absolutely right. You have no evidence that they could pass in this Congress.

Now, I will do my best to advocate more, but I am doing it—and I've made it clear—I want to do this in sequence. I want to pass what we've passed in the Senate in the House. Then I want us to come back with a second set of recommendations. I intend to keep working on this. I think this is going to take years. We have—the Congress is out of touch with the American people.

Mr. Gibson. But let me come back to you on that. The polls—I believe—really, the polls have shown that this country would accept registration of firearms. And yet we don't do that, and we're not fighting about regulation of guns.

The President. That's because—

Mr. Gibson. You regulate every other consumer product in America.

The President. But you want to have a candid conversation. The reason is, this Congress came to power after the 1994 elections because in critical races the people who voted for more modest things, like the Brady bill, which the polls showed the voters support, got beat. They got beat, Charlie.

Mr. Gibson. But hasn't the NRA won the debate at that point? Once we say—

The President. No.

Mr. Gibson. —it's politically impossible—

The President. No.

Mr. Gibson. —we can't do it—

The President. I didn't say it was—

Mr. Gibson. —we won't propose it, hasn't the NRA—

The President. No.

Mr. Gibson. —basically framed the debate at that point?

The President. No. I didn't say it was politically impossible. You say I should be recom-

mending more; I ask you to look at the vote in the Senate, which historically has been more willing to deal with this than the House, and look at what we passed. We passed closing the gun show loophole which, I don't care what you say or my friend says or these kids say, is a big deal. We passed it by one vote—one vote.

And you're saying, "Well, why didn't you recommend something more sweeping?" And I told you that I intend to recommend further measures, but I'd like to pass what we have passed through the Senate, because it makes a difference. The things that we passed in the Senate will make a difference.

Should we do more? Should people ought to have to register guns like they register their cars? Do I think that? Of course, I do. Of course, I do. Now—but I tell you, the American people may have one opinion, but they elected the Congress and the Congress doesn't have that opinion.

I'm going to do my best to move the Congress, and the people can move them, but we can only—how foolish would it be for me to be debating this issue when these things are before the Congress? They can save children's lives, and I should blow by them because they're not enough? I don't think so.

Mr. Gibson. I want to take you to the other room. There are some young kids in there who want to ask you about other things, about the glamorization of violence in the media, those kinds of things—about parental responsibility. We'll get to all of that. Come on in the other room, we'll do that.

The President. Good.

Mr. Gibson. Let's go to Diane in the Roosevelt Room.

Discussion With Students

[Following a commercial break, Mr. Gibson and Ms. Sawyer introduced the first student, whose sister was wounded in gunfire in Evanston, IL, and he asked how effective gun control legislation would be in preventing such accidents.]

The President. Well, I think, first of all, we can't say that any one law will make a difference. But I think if you look at the school shootings—and I think all of you know this, but we ought to say this to America—this is not just about school shootings, although they're very important, but 13 children are killed every

day by guns on the streets, in the neighborhoods, and various circumstances.

So I think there are basically three problems. You have more kids that are kind of at risk of violence. You have a culture that desensitizes and glorifies violence and desensitizes people to it. And it's way too easy to get guns.

And so what I think we have to do is to work on all three things. And we've got to pass as much legislation as we can that makes it—keeps guns out of the wrong hands, and basically makes it harder for kids and harder for criminals to get guns. And this legislation will do that. It will help us close some of the loopholes; it will help us strengthen the background checks. It will also do something that was very important at Littleton and will become increasingly important with the Internet giving so much information to kids: it will put a lot of our background requirements for guns into explosives, too, which I think are very important. After the Littleton thing, I think we can all see that.

But I can't guarantee that. There are over 200 million guns in American society now, in a country of about 260-plus million people. But we can make it a lot harder, and we can dramatically reduce the chances that such things will occur.

[Ms. Sawyer introduced a video which demonstrated how easily a gun could be carried into schools. The discussion continued, and the First Lady responded to several questions.]

The President. If I could just say one thing, to go back to put the two questions together, there are some schools, some high schools, which have hotlines which young people can call if other students bring guns to school, and they know two things if they call. They know, number one, that the children will not be outed, their identities won't be disclosed if they call, and, number two, that some authority will check on the presence of the gun in the school that day.

So I think that's really important. If it's a problem in schools throughout the country, it's a specific thing that some schools have used with great success.

Ms. Sawyer. Mr. President, if I could ask you, members of gun organizations say that the ability is there to do something about kids—6,000 kids in the last 2 years in schools found to have guns, but, in fact, only 13 were pros-

ecuted for it. Do you think there should be more prosecutions, and do you agree?

The President. I don't know. You know, I don't think—all those kids, the reason they know that and the only reason they know that is that since I've been President, we instituted a zero tolerance for guns in schools, so the kids were sent home if they had the guns.

Now, it's up to the local prosecutors to decide whether to prosecute them. But you should know that the general argument that prosecutions are down is simply not true. And Federal prosecutions are up by 30 percent, of serious crimes; and overall gun prosecutions, State and Federal, are up. And gun-related crimes are down.

This is a special problem—problems of violence against children by guns is a special problem that, in my view, you can make the prosecution argument. We ought to make it harder to get guns. We ought to deal with the culture, and we ought to deal with the schools and the communities and help the parents and the kids do more.

[A student asked the President why it was not mandatory to have metal detectors and police in every school.]

The President. Well, I think—let me say, generally we have not had a Federal law that requires schools to do metal detectors, but what we do is we provide funds every year to help schools buy the security equipment. And I believe—when I saw that young man there take the 12 guns out of his clothing, I thought maybe we should do more in that regard.

A lot of schools are, for obvious reasons, reluctant to have metal detectors. But I think that the schools that have them have not had these instances, basically because you can't get in—at least inside the school.

[The discussion continued. A student from Heritage High School in Conyers, GA, told of an encounter in school in which Thomas J. Solomon, Jr., showed the student a gun. The student said he reported it to school authorities, who took some interim action but did not pursue the issue, and some weeks later Mr. Solomon allegedly shot six other students.]

The President. What do you think they should have done?

Student. I think they should have done a lot more than they did. I think at least if they

didn't, they should have called his parents and maybe had them maybe even look for it. I was going to ask you what more could be done than what's already done about a suspected gun at school.

The President. These are questions that have also been asked in Colorado because of what was in the website, the kids' website and other places. And I think it's important that people like you, as I said, have a way to make these reports, and then, you know, they're going to be systematically followed up on, either by the school or the law enforcement.

I also think it's important that when a young person like that is obviously in trouble, you not only try to get the gun away, but you try to figure out what the real problem is and what kind of help the kids need. And then it's provided in some sort of systematic way. A lot of these kids, I am convinced, could be turned away from this before it's too late if they could have been identified early enough.

And so I think we need a combination of, you know, go after the source of the—go after the guns and all that, and trying to deal with the kids. And I think—again I would say, I've been amazed in how many of these cases—I don't know what the facts are in Pearl or in Paducah. I do know in Springfield, Oregon, because I went out there to talk to the people there, that there are a lot of people who were really concerned about that young man before this happened.

So I think—we're going to have a mental health conference with Mrs. Gore and the Vice President, Hillary and I are, in a few days, and we're going to talk about what more can be done when the kids know that somebody is in trouble, to go really help them before this happens. Just like you knew. There should have been someplace else you could go where you would know not only would they try to get the gun, but there would be somebody all over that kid, in a positive way, trying to figure out what the deal was and how to help him move away from it.

[The discussion continued. A student noted that some youth were more sensitive to violence than others.]

The President. But let's go back to what Missy said. I'm amazed that any of you said you were concerned about the video games, because most of the young people I've talked to, there's a

lot of support for tougher gun control and for better security and for more support services, but a lot of young people I've talked to say—they say I'm an old fogey when I talk about the movies and the video games.

But here's the point I want to make. I want to make the point Missy did. Most of the kids are fine and will be fine under any culture. It's true, they show them in Japan and Europe, and they don't have the killings. But what do we know about America? We know that in America, number one, we know more and do more of it in the aggregate. The average 18-year-old has seen 40,000 murders, and 200,000 violent instances over the media, number one—more of it. Number two, in our country our folks work harder. They travel more. They spend less time at home—on average, 22 hours a week—than they did 30 years ago. That's 2 years by the time you turn 18. Number three, it's easier to get guns.

So if you have vulnerable kids, where the line between reality and fantasy blurs, they are more likely to be influenced by this. And that's something I'd ask the rest of you to be sensitive to, because way over 90 percent of the kids are going to be fine, but it doesn't take many to change people's lives forever in a bad way.

[The discussion continued.]

The President. I'd like to ask a question. How many of you talked to your parents about this within 3 days of the Littleton shooting? I think that's very important, because one of the things that we don't know—you asked Hillary a hard question about the parents of the children involved; obviously, I don't know them; I've wondered so much—but I think it's important that we understand that a lot of children are strangers in their own homes, and that—including kids that will never commit crimes. And somehow, I think we've really got to do something to rekindle, to give both the kids and the parents the courage to start talking to each other again, because I think it would minimize the chances of those things occurring.

[A student from Littleton, CO, said that a friend told her Dylan Klebold's parents were concerned about him and planned to talk to him when he got home from school on the day of the Columbine High School shooting. She also noted that other children played violent video games and listened to violent music but did not become

violent. She suggested that affection and acceptance had to be part of the solution.]

The President. I agree. Can I ask you one question? I'd like to ask all of you a question about this. And again, all I know about this is what people like you have told me. That is, you know, Hillary and I, we watched the television, we talked to the families of the children that were killed when we went out there, and some of the young people who are still hurt. But I'd like for all of you to help us with this.

All the reports say that one of the things that drove these two young guys over the edge was that they felt that they were totally disrespected in the school, that they felt that there were groups that looked down on them and badmouthed them and tried to humiliate them, and that as a consequence, they not only wanted to get back at the people they thought had dissed them, but they were looking for somebody to look down on. And that's one of the things that made the African-American young man a target.

How many of these kids do you think are violent because they think their contemporaries, kids, treat them in a contemptible way?

[The Littleton student responded that she did not believe the Columbine gunmen were after any specific person but shot people in the lunch-room randomly. Ms. Sawyer suggested that politicians should refuse to take money from entertainment companies that put out violent movies or video games.]

The President. Well, would it have an impact? I don't think so, because then that would increase the relative influence of other people's contributions. I don't know. I think—let me just say this, our administration has taken on not only the gun issue, we have taken on the entertainment issue ever since '93. And I would like to point out something. Your network and others have adopted a TV rating system, supported the V-chip, which is coming in all the new televisions. The Internet people have helped us with screening technologies for parents, with closing loopholes in the rating systems for the games. I mean, I think there has been some progress here.

I think the real problem we've got in the media is that this violence sells, and I think that the rating system for the movies and for television is a little porous there. Again, I think

it's more the exposure of young people, before the lines between fantasy and reality are fully clarified. That's the one thing that I would say to the young man in the back that defended the "Doom" game.

Look, I like to go to action movies. I love movies. But what happens is, if you look at the aggregate amount of violence—and it's not any one movie. It's the aggregate amount that young people see and, in video games, participate in—by the time they're grown, in their young years, when they're most vulnerable, they are desensitized to the consequences of violence. There are over 300 studies which show this. This is not a matter of debate.

And I think the question is, what can we do to reduce the volume of violence to which our youngest people are exposed? And that's why we're doing what we can do on this, on the entertainment. But I will say this, the entertainment industry, at least in the beginning, has been more responsive to a lot of these things than the gun industry. Now the gun manufacturers are coming along, but I think the entertainment industry is going to have to do a lot more, a lot more.

Mr. Gibson. But just a quick question. Sony makes the "Doom" game—I don't mean to pick out that one game—but Sony is a huge contributor to the Democratic Party. So you have access to the president of Sony. If you picked up the phone and were talking to him, what would you say to him?

The President. I would ask him to change the game. And I think that we need to take steps to make sure that younger people don't get it. I think people get this stuff too young.

What you say, by the way, is right. Again I will say, most of the people that—you can show them things; they can play games or whatever; and they're not going to be affected. But what you have to be sensitive to is if you fill a society with this and you have more kids that are more vulnerable anyway because they have less supervision at home than in other societies and they have easier access to guns, then you have created a combustible mix which will lead you to more instances of young violence. That's the deal.

That's why—that's the argument I make to the entertainment industry all the time; that's why they should do more. And that's why the gun people should do more. And that's why parents and communities should do more. It's

why you should do more to try to help identify children like this.

[The discussion continued. The next question directed to the President was from a student who asked about smart guns.]

The President. First of all, I think it's very important. I think that one of the things we've been trying to do and that the gun manufacturers—and I want to say something positive about the people that are trying to help. The gun manufacturers, most of them, have agreed to work with us and now support legislation to require child trigger locks, which will be somewhat helpful. Now, older children can figure out how to undo them, but still they'll have a lot of accidental deaths, and they're important.

Pretty soon, you will have technology available which you can put into the guns that will raise the costs some in the beginning, like all technology does—but like all technology, the costs will come down quickly—which will mean that only people who have the right fingerprints can fire the gun. And that will be a huge thing.

Then, we'll have to do a lot of gun buy-back programs and other things in communities that will increase safety, and it's important.

[A student who was cocaptain of her school's rifle team stated that the first thing she learned was safety.]

The President. It's one thing that I would like to see, actually, the NRA do. When I was Governor of my State, I worked with them, and they did a lot of very good work on hunter education programs just like you're talking about, and nobody should have a gun that hasn't been trained to use it. You can't get a driver's license unless you can drive a car, and I completely agree with you about that.

[A student asked if the President could explain what purpose automatic and semiautomatic guns served.]

The President. No, but I tried to ban them all in 1994, and we were able to ban 19 kinds of assault weapons. But the people who were against what I was trying to do were able to keep some loopholes in the law, one of which we're closing now, to have these big magazines in the guns, you know, the big clips. And a lot of the imported weapons are still legal. So I spent the last 5 years trying to get rid of all them. I think they should all be rendered

illegal. They also grandfathered in those that were in existence before '94, but I think all of them ought to be taken off the markets. That's what I think. And I'm going to try to keep making progress with Congress to do that.

[A student stated that it sounded like the President thought it would be good if gun prices went down after smart technology was developed.]

The President. No, it's a good thing they'll go up.

[She then said it was important to raise the price of weapons as high as possible, to keep them out of children's hands.]

The President. I agree with you. I didn't mean to—I was just pointing out that when we try to get these things through Congress as requirements, that's one of the things that will always be said. But I think it ought to be—I think this identification thing Jonathan mentioned can make a big difference.

[The discussion continued. A student who had accidentally wounded his best friend asked if the President believed that background checks could really keep guns out of the wrong hands.]

The President. Yes, but it can't prevent all of them. That is, it—we have actual numbers on it. We know how many people we've prevented from getting handguns, because they had criminal records, since we've put it in. But there are so many guns that it doesn't prevent everybody from getting it.

And one of the real problems is, when children are in places where they have easy access to guns, then you can have what happened—you're a brave guy to be here. Where's your friend? Which one's your friend? You want to say something about this?

[A student asked how someone who told authorities about another student with a gun could avoid becoming a victim.]

The President. See, I went to T.C. Williams High School, right across the river here, where I don't think they have medical—excuse me—metal detectors.

Mr. Gibson. It's early. *[Laughter]*

The President. It's early. But they have this hotline, they have the student hotline. And if a student there knows that somebody has a gun who shouldn't, they know two things if they

call, and both things are important. One is, they know they won't be identified; and two is, they know there will be some responsible person to actually follow up on it. So I think that is something that other schools should consider doing.

[A student asked the President if he thought there was a difference between owning a hunting rifle or owning a handgun or assault rifle.]

The President. Well, first of all, a lot of avid sports people would tell you that they do some of that with handguns, too. But generally, yes, I think there's a big difference between assault weapons and other weapons. Some people claim they use them for sporting purposes, but no one needs them. And there is a difference between handguns and other weapons, because handguns are used more, they're easier to conceal, and they're more likely to be used for illegal purposes and less likely to be used for

legal purposes. Therefore, I think it is legitimate to have higher standards on owning them and greater requirements on background checks and greater requirements on whether they should be registered or not. That's what I believe.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 7:05 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House, moving later to the Roosevelt Room for the discussion with students. In his remarks, the President referred to President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland; Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Columbine High School gunmen Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris; and Columbine shooting victim Isaiah Shoels. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady and the student participants.

Remarks at a Breakfast for Representative Nick J. Rahall II June 4, 1999

Thank you. First of all, I want to say to Congressman Rahall and his family, and Congressman Wise and Mr. O'Neill—Congressman Patrick Kennedy was, a few moments ago, was here with us downstairs. I am very honored to be here and glad to have a chance to come here for Nick Rahall.

You know, he was talking all about the burdens of being 50. I thought it was burdensome, too, until I carefully considered the alternative. [Laughter] And I have enjoyed my advancing years ever since.

I want to say, too, a special word of thanks to the people who are here from West Virginia, a State that has been uncommonly good and generous to me and to Vice President Gore in two elections and in the times in between, a State that has struggled with a lot of economic problems from coal to steel that we have been working hard to address and will continue to do so. And I want to thank all of you for being here for Nick.

We both ran for Congress when we were 27. The only difference is I got beat, and he got elected. [Laughter] I've often wondered what would have happened in my life if I had

been elected to Congress when I was 27. [Laughter] The one thing I did miss was the chance to serve with Tip O'Neill, a man I admire very much, and I'm very glad that Tom is here today.

There are many things that I appreciate about Nick Rahall. I appreciate the work he's done in transportation. I appreciate the fact that he and Bob both have stood by me in pursuing an economic strategy that has really brought our country back and given us the biggest surplus in history and given us a chance not only to pay down our debt but to save Social Security and Medicare for the baby boom generation in a way that does not require any tax increases whatever and can, in fact, enable us to strengthen our economy. And I'm very grateful for that.

I'm very grateful that he has supported the efforts that I have tried to make to promote peace around the world. And like Nick and Bob, I hope that the announcement of the last few hours, the last day, in Kosovo portends a genuine agreement that will be honestly implemented and that will lead to real reversal of the ethnic cleansing there, that the refugees will

be able to go home in security and self-government, that the international force will be able to go in, that the Serb forces will be withdrawn.

I ask you to be both thankful and cautious. I have dealt with the Serbian leader now for over 6 years. There have been many agreements, and the only one that was kept was the one, in Bosnia, where we had a force on the ground and a specific agreement. It has a lot in common with this, and we're hopeful, but we need to see real action here.

I also want to thank Nick for his work for peace in the Middle East and for sensitive and fair treatment for Arab-Americans and in American foreign policy, for the legitimate interests of all the people of the Middle East. He has done a very, very good job, and I'm very proud of him for that.

I think it's interesting—because I come from a State that is demographically very much like West Virginia—in the 1980 census, Arkansas and West Virginia had the highest percentage of people living in their State who were born there of any two States in America and, I believe, the highest percentage of people who identified themselves as Baptists. *[Laughter]*

And we were an awful lot alike. We gave—when President Carter ran for President in 1976, next to his home State of Georgia, Arkansas and West Virginia gave him the second and third-highest percentages of the vote. And West Virginia has been in the top five States for me, in both elections.

They're hardworking people that have overcome great difficulties. They're not, as compared with many other States, particularly diverse. And I think it's a real tribute to Nick Rahall that he has spent a lot of time, and that his constituents have supported him in spending time, trying to make us sensitive to people who come from different racial and ethnic and religious backgrounds. Because the United States, of all the nations in the world, is perhaps the most blessed, going in to the 21st century, because we live in a global economy and a global society, and because we are so diverse.

But if you look around the world today, whether it's in the Middle East or in the Balkans, in Kosovo, and before that in Bosnia, it is truly amazing that as we contemplate the miracles of the 21st century—the spread of technology, the breathtaking advances in chemistry and in biology, the decoding of the human gene, and the dramatic potential for increasing both

the length and quality of life—that we are bedeviled today by the oldest—the oldest—demon of human society: people's vulnerability to fear those who are different from them, who aren't part of their tribe, their crowd. And fear can turn quickly to hatred; hatred can turn quickly to dehumanization; dehumanization can turn quickly to justifying killing people who are different from us.

And we have an obligation to lead the world away from that. That's what we've been trying to do in Kosovo. But I would also say we have an obligation, if we want to do good things around the world, to be as good as we can be here at home.

This morning Hillary and I appeared on "Good Morning America" with about 40 young people, to talk about violence against children in our society, what can be done in the aftermath of the terrible events at Littleton. I will say this: I have never in my public life seen as much openness by so many people across party and other lines to try do something that really will make a difference to give our children a safer future. So in the time I have left as President, I assure you, I will be devoting an enormous amount of effort to that worthy cause.

Again, the last point I would like to make is this: There is a great deal still to be done in this country that we should do before—before—the new millennium and before I leave office in 2001. A great deal that I have done and would like to do would be totally impossible without Members of Congress who share our values and our vision and our ideas for the future. And that's another reason I'm proud to be here.

The final thing I want you to know is this—maybe most of you know this. Last year, in 1998, we knew we had a chance to make an historic election. And it had been since 1822—since 1822—that the party of the President in office—that his party had picked up seats in the House of Representatives in the second term of the Presidency. Since the Civil War, even counting first terms, it's only happened twice before, under Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt. We were being outspent last time by \$100 million.

Nick Rahall stepped forward and gave a substantial contribution from his campaign account to other members and other candidates who were out there running, that had a pivotal impact on what is a truly historical election that

we had in 1998, because we not only had good candidates and we not only were running on saving Social Security and the Patients' Bill of Rights and building modern schools and keeping our economy going, we had to have some way of getting that message out. It's unprecedented for Members on our side to do that, and he did it. And I will never forget that as long as I live.

So for all those reasons, I'm honored to be here with him and with the next Governor of West Virginia.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. at the National Democratic Club. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas P. O'Neill III, son of former House Speaker Tip O'Neill; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Representative Robert E. Wise, Jr., candidate for Governor of West Virginia.

Remarks on Presenting the President's Award for Furthering Employment of People With Disabilities

June 4, 1999

Situation in the Balkans

The President. Thank you very much, Jill. Secretary Herman; Chairman Coelho; Mr. Dart; to Janice Lachance, head of our Office of Personnel Management. Ladies and gentlemen, I have looked forward to this day, and I am delighted to see you all here. I'll have more to say about the others who are up here with me in a moment.

This is my only opportunity to appear before the press today, so I hope you will also indulge me if I say a few words about the recent developments in Kosovo. For 72 days now, we have been engaged with our Allies in a difficult but just and necessary military campaign, with three simple goals: the return of over 800,000 innocent Kosovar refugees to their homes, with safety and self-government; the withdrawal of Serb forces; and the deployment of an international security force, with NATO at its core, to protect all the people of that shattered land.

Yesterday the Serbian authorities indicated they would accept those conditions. Russian Special Envoy Chernomyrdin and Finnish President Ahtisaari played instrumental and courageous roles in making this possible. I am grateful to them, and so should all Americans be.

Tomorrow military officials from NATO and Serbia will meet to work out the details of the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo. This is the next necessary step for implementation of our conditions. I'm pleased that it will take

place, and I hope the talks will proceed professionally and expeditiously.

As I said yesterday, our diplomatic and military efforts will continue until we see Serb forces begin to withdraw in a full-scale manner. Our experience in the Balkans teaches us that true peace can only come when progress in discussions is followed by progress on the ground.

At the same time, there is an enormous opportunity to be seized here, a chance to shift our focus from defeating something evil to building something good; a chance to work with our Allies to bring a stable and prosperous and democratic southeastern Europe, in which people are never again singled out for destruction simply because of their religious faith or their ethnic origin. This is a goal that has been worth fighting for over the last weeks, a goal which must be uppermost in our minds as we make sure our conditions are met, a goal we must work for with steadfast determination in the months and in the years to come.

And I believe that the overwhelming majority of Americans share this goal. We do not want our children to grow up in a world which is dominated by people who believe they can kill innocent civilians because of the way they worship God or the way they were born.

Disability Employment Awards

Fifty years ago Harry Truman, the very first President to present the awards that we present today, set a goal for our Nation. I'd like to

repeat it: to give every American with a disability the chance to play their full part in strengthening our Nation and sharing the greatest satisfaction of American life, to be independent and self-supporting.

Today we gather to honor three Americans whose efforts to bring more and more people with disabilities into the world of work have moved us closer to that great and just goal. Since the founding of our Nation, work has been at the heart of the American dream. Because millions of Americans have had the opportunity to work and to build better lives for themselves and their families, our Nation is enjoying historic strength and prosperity. Through work, we reinforce the values that hold us together as a society, the values of responsibility, perseverance, striving for the future.

And in so many ways, we define ourselves as Americans not only by our families and our hometowns but by our work. Often, the first question Americans ask each other is not who are your parents or where do you live but what do you do. Today, still, there are too many Americans with disabilities who've never had the chance to answer that question. Even as we celebrate more than 18 million new jobs and a nationwide unemployment rate of 4.2 percent, the lowest in a generation, as the Secretary has said, 75 percent of Americans with disabilities remain unemployed. And of that number, 72 percent, almost three-quarters, say they want to go to work.

This is not just a missed opportunity for Americans with disabilities. It's a missed opportunity for America. This is an era now of labor shortages, where companies go begging for employees they need to stay competitive in the global economy. And we simply cannot afford to ignore the potential of millions of potential workers simply because they have a disability.

One of the things I have spent a great deal of time on in the last year, particularly, is trying to work with my economic advisers on issues that only peripherally involve the disability community but that you are a central part of resolving. And it is this: How can we continue to grow this economy and lift the standards of living of our people until we embrace everybody who has not participated in the recovery; keep the recovery going, which is already the longest peacetime recovery in history, and not have an explosion of inflation?

There are—if you think about it, there are only, I would argue to you, three possible answers to that. You either have to get more workers who are unemployed, generally, in the society, into the work force so that they not only are helping themselves but helping the rest of us by becoming consumers and taxpayers and growing the economy; you have to go to those discrete areas where whole areas have been left out of our economic growth; or you have to find more customers for America's goods and services around the world.

Therefore, I have continued to push the idea of the expansion of trade on fair and just terms. I have promoted the empowerment zones that the Vice President has so ably led our efforts in for the last 6½ years, and this new markets initiative, to reach into the rural areas, the urban communities, the Native American reservations where there has been almost no economic growth. We have cut the welfare rolls almost in half, trying to move able-bodied people from welfare to work.

The last big chunk of people in this country who could keep the economy going for all of us, with low inflation, are the Americans with disabilities who want to work, who can work, and who are not in the work force. Every American citizen should have a selfish interest in the pursuit of this goal in the most aggressive possible way.

As everybody here knows—and Secretary Herman already mentioned it—one of the very largest obstacles to employment for Americans with disabilities is the fear that they'll lose their health insurance once they take a job—that which is provided by the Federal Government. Not so very long ago, I went in February to New Hampshire and had a roundtable about this, where people were explicitly discussing this in graphic terms, giving through the press to the American people dollars-and-cents reports on what the consequences of this would be.

Under current law, many people with disabilities simply can't work and keep Medicare or Medicaid. For many Americans, medical bills literally cost thousands of dollars beyond what is typically covered by an employer's private insurance. For many Americans, their medical bills would be greater than their entire salary.

Therefore, we keep a lot of people out of the work force. But we don't save the Federal Government any money, because they're spending the money anyway, on the health care. So

we deny opportunities to millions; we prevent the American economy from reaching its full potential; we don't save the Federal Treasury one red cent, because the health care money is being spent anyway.

Today, as a country, it is time to say that no American should have to choose between going to work and paying the medical bills. Last summer, and in the State of the Union, I asked Congress to free our fellow Americans from this unfair burden. The "Work Incentive Improvement Act," sponsored by Senators Jeffords and Kennedy, Senators Roth and Moynihan, and a wide group of sponsors in both Houses, from both parties, will do just that. There are, at last count, over 70 Members of the Senate who have signed on to the bill.

There has been a lot of commentary lately about how hard it is to get legislation through the Congress, with the partisan divide. Well, there are a lot of issues on which Republicans and Democrats have honest disagreements. Thank goodness, this is not one of them. Because it is not one of them, because we already have over 70 people who say they will vote for this if they can just get a chance to vote for it on the floor of the Senate, I am confident that we can work together to pass the work incentives bill by July the 26th of this year, the ninth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

We can celebrate that great, historic, bipartisan landmark by opening the doors of opportunity for millions of people even wider, enabling more Americans with disabilities to join the proud ranks of working citizens.

There is more, I would argue, that we should do. In my balanced budget presented to the Congress, I proposed a \$1,000 tax credit to help people with disabilities afford special transportation technology, which you've already heard about, or personal assistance needed to make the transition to work. And we must double our efforts to make assistive technology, such as voice recognition software, mobile telephones, braille translators, more widely available. So I ask Congress to move forward with both of these proposals in my budget.

And today I am taking immediate action to give more Americans with disabilities the opportunity to become part of the largest work force in America. On Monday the First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore and I will be hosting a White House Conference on Mental

Health, an area that has been a special concern, as I'm sure many of you know, to Mrs. Gore for many years. One of our goals is to help more Americans understand that mental illness is not a character flaw. It is a disability. That is why today I am using my executive authority as President to strip away outdated barriers that keep people with psychiatric disabilities from serving America in our Federal Government, directing all Federal agencies to provide applicants with mental illnesses the same opportunities as other applicants with disabilities to work for the United States of America.

As you know, and as we see here today, not only the Government but individual citizens can take action and make an enormous difference. The three citizens we honor today are proof of the difference one person can make, and I am proud to present these awards to each of them.

First, to Joyce Bender. Fifteen years ago, as Joyce lay in a hospital trauma unit recovering from a near-fatal cerebral hemorrhage, she made a vow to give something back to the patients who were not so lucky. Through Bender Consulting Services, she's used her own expertise as a professional headhunter to place people with disabilities in high-wage, high-tech jobs.

She knows the demand for high-skill workers will only continue to grow, and she is determined to make sure people with disabilities will be ready to meet it. She's founded a new program to train even more people with disabilities in the high-tech skills that are the ticket to the world of the 21st century.

It's an honor to present this award to Joyce Bender. Joyce.

[The President presented the award and congratulated Ms. Bender, the recipient for 1999.]

The President. Next, to James Click, Jr. Over more than 30 years as a car dealer in California and Arizona, Jim Click has become an undisputed leader in his field. But he's also unrivaled in his commitment to extending opportunity to people with disabilities.

A few years ago, he discovered he could encourage more businesses to follow his lead by making it easier for them to find workers with the right skills. So he founded LINKAGES, which brings Tucson businesses and rehabilitation programs together to match qualified workers with disabilities to jobs in the private sector.

In a little over a year, more than 170 people have found work through LINKAGES. It's an honor to present this award to Jim Click and hope others will follow his lead in every community in the country.

[*The President presented the award and congratulated Mr. Click, co-recipient for 1998.*]

The President. Finally, to Laura Hershey. Laura has said, and I quote, "Disability is not a tragedy. It is powerful."

By speaking her mind and using her gifts as a writer to point out the shortcomings and the possibilities of our society, Laura has found the power to make the world a better place for people with disabilities. As head of a variety of disability organizations and as a private citizen, she has fought to reform our Social Security, housing, and transportation systems to better serve Americans living with disabilities.

Economic freedom and self-sufficiency for Americans with disabilities is her goal. I am confident she will not rest until she achieves it. And I am proud to present this third and final award to Laura Hershey.

[*The President presented the award and congratulated Ms. Hershey, co-recipient for 1998.*]

The President. So there you have them: a high-tech headhunter from Pittsburgh, a car dealer from Tucson, an activist from Denver. Now, if you didn't see them you might think,

just by those descriptions, that these people have little in common. But they are bound together by their remarkable passion for empowering Americans with disabilities and helping all Americans to live closer to the ideal of equal opportunity for all. Each is, therefore, a true patriot.

President Truman once said, "We love our country because it offers us the chance to lead useful lives and to do what we can for those around us."

I thank each of you for reminding us that, really, those two things are two sides of the same coin. We cannot truly lead useful lives unless we also do what we can for those around us. This is a good day for America.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:05 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jill Rickgauer, participant in the LINKAGES program, which links employers with disabled job seekers; Tony Coelho, Chairman, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities; Justin Dart, Jr., chairman and founder, Justice For All; President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland; and Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia. The Executive order on Federal employees with psychiatric disabilities is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on South Africa's National Elections

June 4, 1999

It is my great pleasure to congratulate President Nelson Mandela and the people of South Africa for Wednesday's successful national elections.

It has been my honor and privilege to work with my great and courageous friend President Mandela during the past 5 years as he and his fellow citizens have worked to heal the wounds of the past and build a new, inclusive, democratic, and free South Africa. The elections Wednesday represent an important step on that continuing journey. Their peaceful and fair conduct and the tremendous voter turnout are a testament to South Africa's extraordinary trans-

formation. I congratulate all the parties and candidates who participated.

And on behalf of all Americans, I congratulate the people of South Africa for their determination and hard work to build a better future. By doing so, South Africa has reminded us of the preciousness of democracy and the resilience of the human spirit. South Africa's example shows the way forward for other troubled areas of the world, from Kosovo to the Middle East to Kashmir—inclusive, democratic government that represents the will of the people can be a bulwark against conflict and a foundation for reconciliation, cooperation, and lasting peace.

June 4 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

We will continue to work in partnership with South Africa to build a world of justice and tolerance, opportunity and prosperity, democracy and security.

Statement on the National Economy *June 4, 1999*

Today, we have more good news about continuing prosperity in our economy. The unemployment rate fell to 4.2 percent, marking the 23d month in a row that the rate has been below 5 percent and the lowest rate in 29 years. Combined with the continued strong overall economic growth, low long-term inflation, and continued rising wages, we are widening the circle of opportunity for more Americans. African-

American unemployment fell to the lowest level on record. Nearly 19 million jobs have been created since 1993, and nearly one million jobs have been created in the first 5 months of this year, showing the continued strong pace of job creation. We need to continue our commitment to our proven economic strategy of fiscal discipline, opening markets abroad, and targeted investments in our people.

Statement on the Death of Zachary Fisher *June 4, 1999*

Hillary and I are saddened to hear of the death of Zachary Fisher. The brave men and women of the United States military have lost a true friend, and America has lost a true patriot.

Over the years, thousands of military families were touched by Mr. Fisher's generosity: he provided scholarships for college; built "Fisher Houses" near military and VA hospitals so that families could be close to sick or injured loved ones; and established New York's *Intrepid* Mu-

seum so that future generations could be inspired by America's military history.

Through these good works, Mr. Fisher helped all Americans repay the tremendous debt we owe to the men and women who every day risk their lives to defend our Nation and advance the cause of freedom around the world. I was proud to present him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom last fall. Mr. Fisher's memory will continue to inspire all Americans.

Hillary and I send our thoughts and prayers to his family and friends.

The President's Radio Address *June 5, 1999*

The President. Good morning. I'm here today with Tipper Gore, my adviser for mental health policy. On Monday, together with Vice President Gore and the First Lady, we will convene the first White House Conference on Mental Health. Today Tipper and I want to talk about what we must do as a nation to fight the stigma that prevents so many Americans with mental illness from making the most of their lives.

For more than 6 years now, our administration has worked hard to widen the circle of opportunity for every American. That means making sure people living with mental illness have the same chance to live up to their God-given potential as all other Americans.

But the hard truth is, in too many of our communities and in too many of our hearts, mental illness is misunderstood and feared. Too

many people with mental illness are denied the opportunity to fully participate in American life. Bias against people with mental illness is not unique in our time or our Nation. But as a nation founded on the idea of equality, we must use our time to change it.

Tipper Gore is leading our efforts, and I'd like to ask her to say a few words.

Tipper Gore. Thank you, Mr. President.

Every day, in every community in America, millions of Americans and their families face the problem of mental illness. In fact, more than one in five Americans experiences some form of mental illness every year, from depression to schizophrenia; one in four Americans has a family member with a mental illness; and virtually every American has a friend, a neighbor, or a colleague with a mental illness.

We know that mental illness is not something that happens to other people. It touches us all. Why then is mental illness met with so much misunderstanding and fear? We have come so far in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, but our attitudes have lagged far behind.

I have talked to many people about the impact these outdated attitudes have on their lives. Some tell me that the shame and stigma they experience are harder to bear than the illness itself. Many live in fear that they will lose their jobs, their home, or their health benefits if their condition becomes known. And so too many people with mental illness don't seek treatment that can change their lives, and the vicious cycle of silence, ignorance, and stigma continues. If we are ever going to put an end to this vicious cycle, we have to take responsibility and dispel the myths about mental illness once and for all.

One of the most widely believed and most damaging myths is that mental illness is a personal failure, not a physical disease. A recent study shows that the majority of Americans don't believe that mental illness can be accurately diagnosed or treated. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Increasingly, we are learning that many mental disorders are biological in nature and can be medically treated—in some cases, more effectively than illnesses like heart disease. New drugs and better community health services are making it possible for even those with the most severe disorders to live healthier, more productive lives.

A closely related and equally troubling myth is that young people don't suffer from real depression; they're just naturally moody, we think. Again, this is simply untrue. We recently learned that even very young children experience serious clinical depression, and it should be taken seriously.

Consider this: The majority of children who commit suicide are profoundly depressed, and the majority of parents whose children took their own lives say they didn't recognize that depression until it was too late. And senior citizens, too, often accept the notion that depression is a natural part of aging and don't reach out for help.

These myths don't just harm people with mental disorders; they hurt all of us. That is why we must all do our part to break the silence about mental illness.

The President. We must start by talking honestly about the problem, and this Monday we'll take an important step in the right direction. Tipper's own decision to discuss her struggle with depression is a testament to her courage and commitment to change attitudes and build understanding about mental illness.

I'm pleased to announce that later this year, together with the Surgeon General, Tipper will unveil a major new campaign to combat stigma and dispel myths about mental illness. With new public service announcements and strong partners in the private sector, we'll reach millions of Americans with a simple message: Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all.

Together, we will replace stigma with acceptance, ignorance with understanding, fear with new hope for the future. Together, we will build a stronger nation for the new century, leaving no one behind.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:50 p.m. on June 4 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 4 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Forces to Albania, Macedonia, and Kosovo

June 5, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Since my previous reports to the Congress under section 8115 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-262), the continuing humanitarian crisis created by Belgrade's repression of its own citizens has resulted in thousands of additional refugees fleeing into neighboring countries. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there are now 443,000 Kosovar refugees in Albania, 246,000 in Macedonia, and another 68,000 in Montenegro. In addition, there could be as many as 700,000 displaced persons still remaining within Kosovo. In both Albania and Macedonia, the number of refugees continues to over-tax the limited resources of the host countries. Efforts by military personnel, in support of civilian assistance efforts, have been critical to establishing refugee camps and necessary infrastructure.

In light of the continuing crisis, I have directed that additional U.S. forces be deployed to Albania to assist in refugee relief operations, including to improve airfield ramp and off-load capabilities, upgrade key roads and bridges to facilitate movement of refugees to safe areas and transportation of relief supplies, and to assist in the provision of additional shelter for refugees.

In parallel with the military support for refugee relief, we are continuing to increase the pressure on Milosevic to accept NATO's conditions, while simultaneously preparing for success. Belgrade's recent acceptance of the document delivered by Finnish President Ahtisaari and Russian Special Envoy Chernomyrdin is an encouraging development, though we are taking a very cautious approach until the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's (FRY's) intentions are clear.

In line with this strategy, I have increased the number of U.S. military personnel assigned to support Task Force HAWK, our deep strike task force in Albania. I have authorized the deployment of a significant contingent of military personnel to Kosovo as part of an international security presence (KFOR), including some forces that may be pre-positioned in Macedonia

prior to entry into Kosovo, as well as the deployment of other military personnel to the region, including Macedonia, as a national support element for U.S. forces in KFOR. However, forces will not enter Kosovo unless it is clear that Belgrade has adopted NATO's conditions and is withdrawing its forces.

In regard to the elements of section 8115(a)(1)-(8), I am providing the following information:

1. & 2. *National Security Interests.* I hereby certify that the deployment of additional forces to Albania, Macedonia, and Kosovo as described above is necessary in the national security interests of the United States. The deployments will provide additional relief for the refugees and help to return them to their homes with security and self-government. In doing so, the deployments serve our national security interests by promoting peace and stability in this volatile region, by strengthening NATO, and by demonstrating to other would-be aggressors in and around Europe that the United States and the Alliance will not stand by idly while they commit war crimes or seek to spread instability.

3. *Numbers.* The number of U.S. personnel to be deployed cannot be definitively provided at this time since planning for the deployments is ongoing. For relief operations, it is anticipated that the number of additional personnel should be approximately 4,000, bringing the total number of U.S. personnel associated with relief operations in Albania to approximately 5,000. This is in addition to the total of approximately 5,500 personnel that will be associated with the deep strike task force now deployed to Albania. In addition, if it is clear that Belgrade has adopted NATO's conditions and is withdrawing its forces, I anticipate that approximately 7,000 personnel will be deployed as part of KFOR and approximately 1,500 personnel will be deployed as part of the national support element in the region, including Macedonia, to facilitate the flow of support to KFOR.

I will ensure that the Congress is informed in a timely manner concerning any significant changes to the deployments described in this report when such information is available.

4. *Mission/Objectives.* Our overall objective is to return the refugees to their homes with safety and security, to provide necessary refugee relief in the interim, and to promote peace and stability in the region. The specific missions of the forces involved are:

- Joint Task Force SHINING HOPE: To facilitate military operations by assisting the UNHCR in providing emergency relief to refugees in Albania.
- Task Force HAWK: To provide a deep strike force capability in support of NATO air operations and to be ready for use against FRY forces at a time and manner of our choosing.
- Operation JOINT GUARDIAN (KFOR): To deploy a military presence in a permissive environment to deter renewed hostilities, and, if necessary, enforce a cease-fire and the demilitarization of Kosovo, and to establish a secure environment for the stabilization of the humanitarian situation and the establishment and operation of an international provisional administration.

5. *Schedule.* At this point, it is not possible to determine how long NATO operations in the region will need to continue, nor how long U.S. forces will be needed to assist in refugee relief operations, and therefore how long these deployments will need to be maintained.

6. *Exit Strategy.* The duration of the requirement for U.S. military presence will depend on the course of events, and in particular, on Belgrade's actions.

- For Joint Task Force SHINING HOPE, military support to refugee relief may need to continue for some time, even if a settlement allows for refugees to begin to return. Ultimately, responsibilities for refugee relief will be transferred to the UNHCR, other humanitarian organizations, and host countries.
- Some elements of Task Force HAWK may deploy as initial elements of KFOR. In this case, the exit strategy for Task Force HAWK will become the same as that for KFOR. The remaining elements will continue deployment in support of NATO operations until no longer required.
- For Operation JOINT GUARDIAN, after the withdrawal of all Serb forces from Kosovo and an initial stabilization period,

KFOR will be progressively reduced as the security situation permits and local police forces are established. At a time to be determined, KFOR will transfer responsibilities to the international provisional administration and local institutions and ultimately transition to a different set of security arrangements.

7. *Costs.* The costs of operations in the Kosovo region will initially be paid from the FY 99 Defense appropriations in the supplemental appropriations bill recently enacted. As we further refine the detailed plans for KFOR, and as attendant costs become better known, I will consult with Congress as to how any additional costs should be covered.

8. *Effect on Morale, Retention and Readiness.* These deployments affect morale, retention and readiness in a positive way because they demonstrate U.S. commitment of necessary resources to maximize operational effectiveness toward achievement of the important U.S. objectives in Kosovo. Given the importance of these deployments, we anticipate that U.S. forces would maintain the highest morale and effectiveness while fulfilling the range of military objectives encompassed by these deployments, including refugee relief operations and the anticipated contribution to the international security force in Kosovo. Indeed, it has been our experience that personnel serving in these important and demanding positions experience higher retention rates than in other, less challenging assignments. The Department of Defense has underway extensive and effective programs to do what is necessary to manage personnel and other resources so as to reduce problems such as extended family separation and other burdens military service. As with any operational deployment, the effects on readiness are mixed. In this case, however, it is expected that many of the U.S. forces will be conducting operations as they were trained to perform, which will provide an unparalleled opportunity to apply their skills in an active environment. The Administration is committed to ensuring that America's armed forces maintain the high levels of readiness necessary to safeguard America's national security.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This

letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 7.

Remarks at the White House Conference on Mental Health

June 7, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. I want to, first of all, thank all of you for coming, the Members of Congress of both parties, members of our administration, but the larger community represented here in this room and at all of our sites.

This has been a truly remarkable experience, I think, for all of us—stimulating, moving, humbling. I think it's because it is so real, and it has been too long since we have come together over something that's this real, that touches so many of us.

This is a moment of great hope for people who are living with mental illness and, therefore, a moment of great promise for our Nation. We know a lot about it; we know a lot more than most of us know we know, as we found out today. And we wanted to have this conference to talk about how far we've come and also to look forward into the future.

We all know we wouldn't be here today without the commitment of Tipper Gore. I asked her to be my national adviser for mental illness because she knows more and cares more about this issue than anyone else I personally know. She has dedicated herself to making this a priority of national policy and private life. And I think we are all very, very much in her debt.

I would also like to say one more word about Tipper and about the Vice President, about the way they have dealt with this issue as a family and the gifts they have given to America, going back to before the time when we all became a team in the election of 1992, when they began their annual family conferences. All people in public life talk about family values. No couple in public life has ever done remotely as much to try to figure out what it would mean to turn those family values into real, concrete improvements in the lives of ordinary families as Al and Tipper Gore have over a long period of time.

I sort of feel like an anticlimax at this convention—not for the reasons the political reporters think—[laughter]—but because the real story here is in the people who have already talked, in their stories of courage and struggle, of endurance and hope. Americans with mental illness should have the same opportunity all Americans have to live to the fullest of their God-given ability. They are, perhaps, just the latest in our enduring challenge as a people to continue the work of our Founders, to widen the circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of freedom, to strengthen the bonds of our community.

But what a challenge it has been. Clearly, people with mental illnesses have always had to struggle to be treated fairly and to get the treatment they need—and they still do. We have made a lot of progress by appealing to the better angels of our nature, by drawing on our deep belief in equality, but also by hearing these stories.

So again, I want to thank Mike and John and Jennifer and Robin and Dr. Burton. I thank Dr. Hyman, Dr. Koplewicz. I thank Lynn Rivers.

I think all of us can remember some moment in our lives where, because of something that happened in our families or something someone we knew wrote or said, we began to look at this issue in a different way. I, myself, feel particularly indebted to the courage of my friend the great author William Styron for writing the book he wrote about his own depression. But I think that it is not enough to be moved. We have to have hope, and then we have to have some sense about where we're going.

It was no accident that all of you were clapping loudly when Dr. Hyman showed us pictures of the brain. I remember when Hillary and I first met and began going together 28 years ago, and she was working at the Yale Child Study Center and the hospital, and we began

to talk about all of this. Like a lot of young students at the time, I had been very influenced by Thomas Kuhn's book, "The Structure of Scientific Revolution." And I began to wonder whether we would ever develop a completely unified theory of mind and body, if we would ever learn that at root there are no artificial dividing lines between our afflictions. The human genome project, as you've heard explained today, offers us the best chance we have ever had to have our science match our aspirations in learning to deal with this and all other issues.

So this has been for me not simply emotionally rewarding but intellectually reaffirming. And I hope it has been for all of you. We've been at this for quite a long while. A hundred and fifty years ago we had to learn to treat people with mental illness as basic human beings. Thirty years ago we had to learn that people with mental illness had to be treated as individuals, not just a faceless mob.

I'll never forget when journalists secretly filmed the nightmare world inside some of our Nation's mental hospitals. Americans were heartbroken and horrified by what they saw, and we began to develop a system of community care for people. Today, we have to make sure that we actually provide the care all of our people need, so they can live full lives and fully participate in our common life.

We've worked hard to break down some of the barriers for people living with mental illness. On Friday, as many of you know, I directed all Federal agencies to ensure that their hiring practices give people with mental disabilities the same employment opportunities as people with physical disabilities. On Saturday Tipper and I did the radio address together and announced that Tipper will unveil our new campaign to fight stigma and dispel myths about mental illness.

But all of you who have had this in your lives, or in your families' lives, know that attitudes are fine, but treatment matters most. Unfortunately, too many people with mental illness are not getting that treatment because too many of our health plans and businesses do not provide equal coverage of parity for mental and physical illness or because of the inadequacy of Government funding and policy supports.

I have heard heartbreaking stories from people who are trying hard to take care of their families, and one day mental illness strikes. And

when they try to get help, they learn the health plans they've been counting on, the plans that would cover treatment for high blood pressure or heart disease, strictly limit mental health care and don't cover it at all. Why? Because of ignorance about the nature of mental illness, the cost of treating it, and as Dr. Burton told us, the cost of not treating it.

A recent study showed the majority of Americans don't believe mental illness can accurately be diagnosed or effectively treated. If we don't get much else out of this historic conference than changing the attitudes of the majority, it will have been well done, just on that score.

Insurance plans claim providing parity for mental health will send costs and premiums skyrocketing. Businesses believe employees will over-use mental health services, making it impossible for employers to offer health insurance. Now, there may be arguments to be made at the margins on both sides of these issues, but I believe that providing parity is something we can do at reasonable cost, benefit millions of Americans, and over the long run, have a healthier country and lower health care costs.

As we've heard again today, mental illness can be accurately diagnosed, successfully treated, just as physical illness. New drugs, better community health services are helping even people with the most severe mental illnesses lead healthier, more productive lives. Our ability to treat depression and bipolar disorder is greater even than our ability to treat some kinds of heart disease.

But left untreated, mental illness can spiral out of control, and so can the cost of mental health care. A recent World Bank study showed that mental illness is a leading cause of disability and economic burden that goes along with it. Here in the United States, untreated mental illness costs tens of billions of dollars every year. The loss in human potential is staggering.

So far, 24 States and a large number of businesses have begun to provide parity for their citizens and their employees. Reports show that parity is not notably increasing health care costs. For instance, Ohio provides full parity for all its State employees and has not seen costs rise. As we heard, Bank One's employee mental health treatment program has helped it reduce direct treatment costs for depression by 60 percent.

As a nation founded on the ideal of equality, it is high time that our health plans treat all

Americans equally. Government can and must lead the way to meet this challenge.

In 1996 I called on Congress to make parity for mental health a priority. I was proud to sign into law the Mental Health Parity Act, which prohibited health plans for setting lower annual and lifetime limits for mental health care than for other medical services.

Again I want to say, since we have so many Congressmen here, Tipper Gore was very instrumental in that. But I was also deeply moved by the broad and deep bipartisan support by Members of Congress in both Houses who had personal experiences that they shared with other Members which helped to change America.

The law was a good first step. And I'm pleased to announce, with Secretary Herman here, that the Labor Department will now launch a nationwide effort to educate Americans about their rights under the existing law, because a lot of people don't even know it passed.

But when insurers can get around the law by limiting the number of doctor's visits for mental condition, when families face higher copayments for mental health care than for physical ailments, when people living with mental illness are forced to wait until their sickness incapacitates them to get the treatment they need, we know we have to do more.

So where do we go from here? First, I am using my authority as President to ensure that our Nation's largest private insurer, the Federal Employee Health Benefit Plan, provides full parity for mental health.

Today Janice Lachance, the Director of OPM, will inform nearly 300 health plans across America that to participate in our program, they must provide equal coverage for mental and physical illnesses. With this single step, 9 million Americans will have health insurance that provides the same copayments for mental health conditions as for any other health condition, the same access to specialists, the same coverage for medication, the same coverage for outpatient care.

Thirty-six years ago President Kennedy said we had to return mental health to the mainstream of American medicine. Thirty-six years ago he said it, and we're still waiting. Today, we have to take more steps to return Americans to the mainstream of American life. I ask Congress now to do its part by holding hearings on mental health parity.

The second thing we have to do is to reach out to the people who are most in need. Today I've asked HCFA, the Health Care Finance Administration, to do more to encourage States to better coordinate mental health services, from medication to programs targeted at people with the most serious mental disorders, for the millions of people with mental illness who rely on Medicaid.

Third, we must do more to help people with mental illness reenter the work force. I asked Congress to pass the "Work Incentives Improvement Act," which will allow people with disabilities to purchase health insurance at a reasonable cost when they go back to work. No American should ever have to choose between keeping health care and supporting their family.

Fourth, with an ever-increasing number of people with mental disabilities in managed care plans, it is more important than ever for Congress to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights.

Fifth, this year we requested the largest increase in history, some \$70 million to help more communities provide more mental health services. And I asked Congress to fully fund this proposal. The absence of services and adequate funding and institutional support for sometimes even the most severe mental health problems is a source of profound worry to those of you who actually know what is going on out there.

I know that I was incredibly moved by the cover story in the New York Times Sunday magazine a couple of weeks ago, and I know a lot of you were. And I read that story very carefully. I talked to Hillary about it; I talked to Al and Tipper about it; and I asked myself then—I am still asking myself—what more can we do to deal with some of the unbelievable tragedies that were plainly avoidable, clearly documented in that important article? This is a good beginning, and I hope that Congress will fund it.

And finally, it is profoundly significant what we have heard about children. We have to do more to reach out to troubled young people. One out of ten children suffers from some form of mental illness, from mild depression to serious mental disease. But fewer than 20 percent receive proper treatment.

One of the most sobering statistics that I have heard in all of this is that a majority of the young people who commit suicide—now the third leading cause of death in teenagers, especially gay teenagers—are profoundly depressed.

Yet the majority of parents whose children took their own lives say they did not recognize their children's depression until it was too late.

The tragedy at Columbine High School, as Hillary said, was for all of us a wakeup call. We simply can't afford to wait until tragedy strikes to reach out to troubled young people. Today I'm pleased to announce a new national school safety training program for teachers, schools, and communities to help us identify troubled children and provide them better school mental health services.

This new program is the result of a remarkable partnership by the National Education Association, EchoStar, and members of the Learning First Alliance, joined by the Departments of Education, Justice, and Health and Human Services. This fall the Vice President and Tipper will kick off the first training session, which will be transmitted via satellite to more than 1,000 communities around our Nation.

We're all very grateful to EchoStar, a satellite company based in Littleton, Colorado, and its partner, Future View, for helping make this possible by donating satellite dishes to 1,000 school districts, and 40 hours of free time. I want to ask businesses and broadcasters all around our country to follow EchoStar's lead and donate their time, expertise, and equipment to help ensure that every school district in America can participate in this important training program.

Now I want to introduce two of the people who are showing this kind of leadership: the president of the NEA, Bob Chase; and Bill Vanderpoel, the vice president of EchoStar. I'd like to ask them to come up and talk a little bit about what they're going to do. Let's give them a big hand. [Applause]

[At this point, Robert F. Chase, president, National Education Association, and William Vanderpoel, vice president for business develop-

ment, EchoStar Communications Corp., made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you both very much. Now, I'd like to ask Tipper to come up one more time so we can all tell her how grateful we are, and let me say this. You probably saw a little bit by the way she positioned Al on time and she positioned Hillary on time—I think I'm going to start calling her "Sarge" behind her back. [Laughter] She has driven us all. We've been on time; we've been at the place we were supposed to be; we say what we were supposed to say; we finished on time. So she not only has great sensitivity; she has phenomenal organizing ability, and we're very grateful for her. Thank you. [Applause]

Now, I'd like to ask Hillary and the Vice President to come over, too. [Applause] Thank you all very much. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2 p.m. in the Blackburn Auditorium at Howard University. In his remarks, he referred to the following conference participants: Mike Wallace, co-editor of the CBS news program "60 Minutes" and a clinical depression sufferer; schizophrenia sufferer John Wong; anorexia nervosa sufferer Jennifer Gates; Robin Kitchell, whose son suffers from bipolar disorder, attention deficit disorder, and learning disabilities; Dr. Wayne Burton, M.D., first vice president/corporate medical director, Bank One Corp.; Dr. Steven E. Hyman, M.D., Director, National Institute of Mental Health; and Dr. Harold S. Koplewicz, M.D., founder and director, New York University Child Study Center. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Tipper Gore, Vice President Al Gore, Dr. Burton, the First Lady, Dr. Hyman, and Dr. Koplewicz. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner for Terence McAuliffe

June 7, 1999

Thank you very much. I want to thank Ron and Beth for having us here; and Chairman Andrew, Mayor Archer, the other officials of

the Democratic Party who are here. I want to thank all those who have spoken before; but I have to say a word about the two women.

Ann Richards is my former colleague and my longtime friend who tells me jokes that make me laugh, but which she knows good and well I can never repeat. [Laughter] So tonight she referred to me as “her lovely husband, Bill.” And then Hillary said my being a member of the Senate spouses club was a good reason to run. [Laughter] No offense, Senator Daschle, but until you change the numbers up there, if I were given the choice, I’d rather be in the spouses club. [Laughter] I’m looking forward to it.

However, I’ve also made it clear that I’m available for any and all other services. I would be happy to run the New York City casework operation—there will never be a difficult reelection if they let me do that; it’ll be over. [Laughter]

Let me say, I want you to all ask yourselves something. What is it that you like about Terry McAuliffe? I like the fact that he lies to me about his golf handicap, and I can’t get mad at him. I like the fact that for a rich guy, his politics go a little left and his golf ball goes a little right. I like the fact that he did wrestle an alligator, and if you offered to give the Democratic Party enough money, he’d lay down on the bottom of that swimming pool for 3 to 4 minutes, until you finally came across. [Laughter]

I like the fact that he is always seeing the bright side of things. After we were totally wiped out in ’94—I mean, it was awful; there was nothing good about the ’94 election—I called McAuliffe. He said, “Hey, look at it this way. It’s a great opportunity for next time; we could have lost 60 seats!” [Laughter] And he went back to work. It never occurred to him to do anything else.

I like the fact that the more successful he’s become, financially and otherwise, the more intense his devotion to our party and to people who are less fortunate than he is has become. I like the fact that he loves his family; he wants it to get bigger; he is unabashedly proud of them all, from his parents to his wife and children to his brother and others. I like the fact that he is proud of what he has done as a citizen to help make our party successful.

Terry and I have never been of the school that believed that we ought to act embarrassed because we ask people in the system we have to contribute so that we could get our message across. Because of what he has done and be-

cause of what we have done, all of you together, there are 18 million more jobs in this country; 12.5 million people have taken advantage of the family leave law; millions and millions of more people are in their own homes. We have a 25 year low in the crime rate, half as many people on welfare. I think it’s worth an investment in America; so does he. We’re proud of you. And I like that about Terry McAuliffe.

I like the fact that Terry gets up every day, like we all should—anybody who can be in this room tonight—and know that whatever the problems are out there, whatever difficulties he’s had—and he and Dorothy, even though they live totally charmed, their life has not been totally free of bumps in the road—he gets up every day and thinks, “I am a lucky man; I am alive; I’ve got a wonderful family; I’m making more money than I ever dreamed, and I get to go out and help people I believe in make this a better country and a better world.”

And if we all had more of his energy, his positive attitude, his belief in himself and in the fundamental goodness of people, that you bring it out and unleash that energy, this would even be a greater country, and we would have even fewer problems than we have, and we’d be making even more progress than we are.

I love this guy. I want you to understand, I had all these funny jokes, and I threw them away before I got in here because I want to tell you this. I want you to remember this. We’ve been through a lot of things together. We’ve walked over coals; we’ve had coals dumped on our heads; we’ve dodged a lot of bullets; we’ve taken a few. And every day, he just gets up and thanks God he’s alive, looks on the bright side of things, doesn’t quit believing in what he believes in, and always believes there’s somebody else to help, somebody else to bring in, someone else to involve.

And again, I say to you, I think that’s why we’re all here. We like him. There are even some people here who don’t share his politics, or mine, who are here because they like him. And so when you go home tonight and you get up tomorrow, just think—you can have a little of his energy, a little more of his positive outlook, a little more of his basic faith that we can bring out the goodness in people, we can even do more for the party and the country we love.

Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. McAuliffe. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, general cochair, Democratic National

Committee; former Gov. Ann Richards of Texas; and Mr. McAuliffe's wife, Dorothy. The President also referred to Mrs. Dozoretz's husband, Ronald, who cohosted the dinner with his wife.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for President Arpad Goncz of Hungary *June 8, 1999*

President and Mrs. Goncz; ladies and gentlemen: In the early 1850's, the great Hungarian patriot Lajos Kossuth came to this country and to this house to seek support for restoring liberty to his nation. He said then, "To find the sunlight of freedom, we must come to America." Kossuth would be proud today that his statement no longer holds, that the sunlight of freedom shines in Hungary and all across the world.

In the past year, I have had the privilege to welcome to the White House extraordinary leaders who risked their lives in the struggle for liberty, were imprisoned for their beliefs and activism, and now have emerged in freedom's sunlight as the Presidents of their nations: Kim Dae-jung of South Korea, Václav Havel of the Czech Republic, Nelson Mandela of South Africa. Today, with freedom at last shining brightly in Hungary, I have the great honor and pleasure to welcome President Arpad Goncz, our friend, our partner, our ally.

Let me begin with a few words about our common enterprise in Kosovo. For 77 days we have been working to achieve a simple set of objectives there: the return of refugees with safety and self-government; the withdrawal of all Serbian forces; the deployment of an international security force with NATO at its core. Last Thursday Serb authorities accepted a peace plan that embodies those conditions. Today in Bonn we took another important step forward. The G-8 countries now have agreed to language of a United Nations Security Council resolution that will help us to realize these basic goals, peace with security for the people of Kosovo and stability for the region as a whole.

The key now, as it has been from the beginning of this process, is implementation. A verifiable withdrawal of Serb forces will allow us to suspend the bombing and go forward with

the plan. NATO is determined to bring the Kosovars home, to do so as an alliance acting together, and in a way that ultimately can strengthen the relationship between Russia and the West.

Our great writer E.L. Doctorow once said, "The devastating history of 20th century Europe, which you and I might study in a book or look at as tourists, is housed in the being of Arpad Goncz." In World War II he fought in resistance and was wounded by Nazi fire. In 1956 he rose with fellow citizens against Stalinist oppression. And after Soviet tanks crushed the uprising, he was sentenced to life in prison.

Released after 6 years, he became a translator, bringing Western ideals to Hungary, and through his own plays and stories challenged Hungarians to think about the nature of tyranny and the meaning of freedom. After NATO's resolve and the courage of central Europeans helped to bring down the Iron Curtain, the Hungarian people chose this great man to lead them.

Now, Hungary is one of the fastest growing economies in Europe, with America its largest foreign investor. Hungary has acted to protect the rights of its own minority groups and worked for the rights of ethnic Hungarians in other nations. Hungary has stood with the United States as a NATO Ally against ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and for a more positive future for all the peoples of central and Eastern Europe. Hungary is leading the way toward what people dreamed of throughout the long cold war.

I am very proud of the alliance between our countries, the friendship between our people. I am grateful for the contributions of Hungarian-Americans to the fabric of our present greatness and good fortune. And I am very honored to welcome here the President of Hungary.

June 8 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

President Goncz, welcome back to America and to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where President Goncz was accorded a formal welcome with full

military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Maria Zsuzsanna Gonter, wife of President Goncz. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Goncz.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Arpad Goncz of Hungary and an Exchange With Reporters

June 8, 1999

The President. Let me just say briefly, again, how grateful I am to have this opportunity to welcome President Goncz to the United States and to reaffirm our strong friendship with Hungary and what a good time it is for this visit to be occurring, as we are doing our best to bring an end to the conflict in Kosovo, to reverse the ethnic cleansing, and to build a new future for all of southeastern Europe.

I know all the Americans here know that there are hundreds of thousands of ethnic Hungarians living in Vojvodina, in northwestern Serbia. This is a very, very important issue for Hungary, and we are determined to bring it to a successful conclusion, to reverse the ethnic cleansing, and to see the refugees go home. And the President and his country's support of this endeavor has been absolutely critical.

Resolution of the Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, on Kosovo, do you expect the U.N. Security Council to pass this resolution; and, if it does, do you expect that Milosevic will comply in good faith?

The President. Well, the answer to the first question is, yes, I expect the U.N. Security Council will adopt it.

Q. No veto?

The President. I don't expect so. The Russians are supporting it. We got the agreement in Bonn this morning, early our time, and I had a talk already with President Yeltsin about it.

In terms of compliance, that's what we're interested in. We want to see compliance. And when there is evidence that full withdrawal has begun, we will suspend the bombing and then monitor that for compliance. But keep in mind, our military people in the military-to-military contacts between NATO and the Serbs will work

out the logistics of Serb withdrawal and the international security force coming in, so as not to create a vacuum. And I think all that will be worked out in a satisfactory manner. But our interest is in—our opinions won't matter; what will matter is what actually happens.

Q. Mr. President, will the Russian troops, peacekeepers, be under NATO control, command?

The President. I don't expect that to happen, but I do expect that there will be an acceptable level of coordination, the way we worked it out in Bosnia. I hope there will be something like what we did in Bosnia, because it worked there. We had the command and control intact so that our soldiers and our mission could be protected. The Russians were involved, as it happens, in Bosnia, as you know, in the American sector, where we worked together with them very closely. And I have been very pleased with that cooperation. I think it's quite important for the Russians to be involved in this.

Reconstruction of the Balkans

Q. Once the peace will be implemented, what commitment does the U.S. have to reconstructing the region? How will the new Marshall plan look like, and what role Hungary can play in that?

The President. Well, it's interesting, that's what the President said to me this morning, that the most important thing is that we rebuild the region now. As you know, at the NATO meeting here in Washington a few weeks ago, we had a meeting in which all of us committed to be a part of the reconstruction of southeastern Europe. The details will have to be worked out. I expect the EU will be in the

lead. The United States will certainly support that.

But what I would like to see is all the countries in the region participating, and I'd like not only the analogy of the Marshall plan but also the work that was done between the West and Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic after the Berlin Wall fell. That is, we should be supporting democracy and human rights, as well as economic development.

Obviously, I hope that Serbia will be a part of that. But in order to be a part of that, I think Serbia will have to observe the same standards and have the same sort of government and the same devotion to the human rights of its people and to others that all the other countries in the region have.

But the plan is yet to be worked out. We don't have the details of that yet, but there's plenty of time for that.

Resolution of the Situation in the Balkans

Q. Ten years ago Slobodan Milosevic took away the autonomy of the other provinces in Serbia. Will that be addressed in the final peace plan?

The President. First things first, here. First things first.

Q. What do you suspect Mr. Milosevic is up to, sir, in delaying implementation of the agreement?

The President. Well, I think the main issues, at least for the last 72 hours, were involved with the nature of the U.N. resolution. That was resolved today. So now we'll just have to see what happens with the military-to-military contacts. The most important thing now is that we get something that is, A, verifiable and, B, that will work—which means we have to know that they're withdrawing; we have to have a schedule for the introduction of the international force.

Keep in mind the big picture here. The big picture is to reverse the ethnic cleansing, to bring the Kosovars home, to have them safe and be able to govern themselves, and to have an international security force with NATO at

the core. So we have to watch for the big picture. And that's why even yet, and notwithstanding this very good development, we have to sound some note of caution here. We have to work on it.

Movie Ratings/Youth Violence

Q. On the movie ratings, sir, did you seek greater enforcement because Hollywood was lukewarm to the idea of signing on to the national campaign against violence in film?

The President. No. No, I think there should be greater enforcement of the existing laws, that Congress should pass the commonsense gun legislation that I've recommended, and there should be a national grassroots campaign against youth violence.

I'll make you a prediction: I believe that there will be a significant number of people in the entertainment community who will participate in it, because a lot of them have said something to me about it. And I think that the public ambivalence you see is more their uncertainty about, well, are we agreeing to censorship; are we getting into trouble here? But I think if they just go back to the beginning—which is, we've got a lot of children in trouble in this country; they're subject to too much violence through media and cultural contacts; and it's too easy for them to get guns. And if we all work at it that way, so that nobody is pointing a finger at anybody else, I think we'll have good participation from the entertainment community, and I'll be surprised if we don't.

Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy

Q. Do you think you'd really be happy as a Senate husband?

Q. Is there any doubt she'll run, sir?

The President. I'll be happy if she's doing what she wants.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Representatives of the National Association of Theatre Owners and an Exchange With Reporters
June 8, 1999

The President. Good afternoon. Please be seated.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you won't be confused when I tell you that I have just met with the representatives of NATO, and we talked about the movies. [Laughter] I am, of course, referring to a somewhat different NATO than we usually discuss around here, the National Association of Theatre Owners.

We had a very good discussion, and I want to thank NATO President Bill Kartoizian and his colleagues who are here with him for the efforts they are making to make sure that we work together to prevent youth violence, and the ways the theater industry, in particular, can help in that cause.

It has been less than 2 months since the tragedy at Columbine High School seared itself into our national consciousness. Ever since that day, our country has been moving steadily away from a culture of youth violence toward creating the kind of future we want for our children. People from all walks of life are coming together in a national grassroots campaign to prevent youth violence, to give our children the childhoods they deserve.

We all know that parents are the first and most important influences on their children, but we know, too, that the demands on them are increasing, and as more and more parents work outside the home, they have less and less time with their children. On average, families now have a life in which parents spend about 22 hours a week less at home than parents did a generation ago. Over the 18 years of a child's childhood, that amounts to more than 2 years' time.

Since my first days as President, we have worked hard to help parents better balance the demands of home and work. One of the ways we've tried to do that is to give parents better tools to make immediate but informed judgments about the shows their children watch, the music they hear, the video games they play. We've worked hard to give parents new tools like the V-chip, which by the end of next month will be in half the new television sets sold in America and will help parents to block violent

programming from their living rooms. We've also made progress on parental screening for the Internet and ratings for Internet game sites.

But we must do more. We must ensure that children are not the targets of violence in marketing. That's why last week I asked the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to study the extent to which the video game, movie, and music industries market violence to children and whether those industries are abiding by their own voluntary systems of regulation.

For rating systems to work, they must also be enforced, not simply by watchful parents but by retailers at the point of sales and theater owners at the multiplex. The great thing about the multiplex is that there's a movie for every member of the family. But not every movie is for every member of the family. When you drop them off, you shouldn't have to worry about your G-rated kids getting into violent or suggestive R-rated movies. Too often children do get past the ticket counter, unescorted and underage.

I'm pleased to announce today the theater owners are clearly drawing the line. The Nation's largest group of theater owners has asked—has agreed to ask young people for ID's at R-rated movies. From now on, parents will know that the R rating means what it is supposed to mean: restricted, no one under 17 without a parent or guardian, and no exceptions.

Last month, when I challenged the theater owners to step up to this responsibility, I could only have hoped that they would respond so quickly. So again, let me applaud Bill Kartoizian, his organization, and all their members for doing their part. I know we have parents here representing the PTA, and I want to thank them for coming, and I know they join me in applauding this action.

Let me also say that I hope that, as the recess ends, the Congress will do its part. Next week the House will take up important legislation already passed by the Senate to help prevent youth violence by commonsense measures to keep guns out of the hands of children. They closed the deadly gun show loophole, required

that safety locks be sold with every handgun, banned the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips, and banned violent juveniles from owning guns as adults. I strongly urge the House not to riddle this legislation with loopholes, or to delay, but to pass the law and pass it quickly.

Let me also say, I hope others will follow the lead of the theater owners. In our growing national campaign to prevent youth violence, none can stand aside; none should stand in the way. In the weeks and months ahead, we will continue to move forward as one nation, striving to build that better future we all want for our children.

Now, I'd like to ask Bill Kartoian to tell us more about the steps the theater owners have agreed to take. Let's give him a big hand.

Mr. Kartoian.

[At this point, William F. Kartoian, president, National Association of Theatre Owners, made brief remarks.]

Resolution of the Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, are you optimistic on Kosovo?

The President. Well, I'm hopeful. You know, we're going to have—we've got to have the military meeting and work out the details. But the G-8 statement is good.

Q. And how quickly could the peacekeepers go in, do you think?

The President. Well, they're working out the details—I hope shortly, we will know.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Statement on the Resignation of Janet L. Yellen as Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers

June 8, 1999

I am sorry to learn that Dr. Janet Yellen intends to resign as Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers. Her extraordinary intellect and keen grasp of domestic and international economics have contributed enormously to the formation of my administration's policies in critical areas ranging from Social Security, health care,

and the budget to trade and international financial architecture. Janet has been a consistent advocate for sound economic policy, and she has been an important contributor to the extraordinary economic progress we have made in recent years. I wish her and George the very best as they return to private life.

Remarks at the State Dinner Honoring President Arpad Goncz of Hungary

June 8, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the White House. And a special welcome to President and Mrs. Goncz, members of the Hungarian delegation.

Exactly 150 years ago, in 1849, a young Congressman from Illinois, serving his first and only term in the U.S. House of Representatives, offered a resolution supporting the Hungarian people's struggle for independence and democracy. At that time, the leader of the Hungarian freedom movement, of course, was Lajos Kossuth. The Congressman was Abraham Lin-

coln. The bonds between our citizens, based not only on the large number of distinguished Hungarian-Americans in our country but also on our shared aspirations for freedom and democracy, have very deep roots.

I would like to say a special word of thanks to Congressman Tom and Annette Lantos, and others who have helped them, because they are responsible for the fact that a bust of Kossuth now stands in the rotunda of our Capitol. Ralph Waldo Emerson called him "the angel of freedom." He was only the second non-American—

Lafayette being the first—to address both Houses of Congress. Crowds greeted him wherever he went. He was a true American hero.

Mr. President, like Kossuth, you taught yourself English while you were in prison, at a time when you had just escaped a death sentence and faced a life term because you stood for liberty. Later, you translated the works of many great writers: Edith Wharton, Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Arthur Miller, James Baldwin, John Updike, Alice Walker. And at least two I think are here tonight, William Styron and Susan Sontag. These translations offered Hungarians a window on the West and earned you many admirers at home. This work is just one part, but it is a vital part, of your contribution to ending the division of Europe.

I even noted in preparing for this that you translated into Hungarian President Bush's 1988 campaign biography, "Looking Forward." [Laughter] Now by the time Al Gore and I published our book, "Putting People First," in 1992, you were already President of Hungary and unfortunately too busy to translate this profoundly important work. [Laughter] At least, I choose to believe that is the reason you did not choose to translate it. [Laughter]

In this decade, your own works have been translated and published in English, your plays performed in the United States. They are a brave set of explorations of political conflict and war, freedom and betrayal, the struggle for daily survival and dignity in the face of adversity. Americans have absorbed these works as we have watched you lead your nation, deepening freedom there and promoting human rights and ethnic tolerance around the world and especially

in your own region. The only Hungarian head of state to make an official visit to Romania in this century, you told the joint session of Parliament there that ethnic minorities enrich their nations and form a valuable connective link in strengthening relations between nations.

Your vision of people living together and nations living together, resolving differences peacefully, drawing strength from their diversity, treating all people with equal dignity, this will form the basis of a better future for Europe and the world. It is at the heart of what we have been trying to do in our efforts to reverse ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and to build a southeastern Europe in which all people can live together in dignity and freedom.

Now, Mr. President, normally when I propose a toast to a visiting head of state, I say something like "cheers." I have been advised by the State Department that the Hungarian word for "cheers" is, and I want to quote from the memo I got—[laughter]—"practically impossible to pronounce correctly." [Laughter] I have accepted their considered judgment. [Laughter] So, instead, I would like to salute you and Mrs. Goncz with the words that greeted Kossuth on streamers all across New York City on the day he arrived in America: *Isten Hozta*. Welcome.

I ask all of you to join me in a toast to President and Mrs. Goncz and to the people of Hungary. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Maria Zsuzsanna Gonter, wife of President Goncz. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Goncz.

Opening Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion on Increasing Trust Between Communities and Law Enforcement Officers

June 9, 1999

Thank you very much. Madam Attorney General, Secretary Slater, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, Congressman Greg Meeks, Mayor Williams, and other distinguished panelists in the gathering: Let me say I will try to be brief because I want to get to the roundtable discus-

sion, but there are one or two things that I want to say.

First, I thank all of you for coming here. This is a truly extraordinary group of Americans, people who don't always see eye to eye on

issues, sitting down for a real heart-to-heart conversation about something that is profoundly important to all of us. And I thank you for that.

Second, before we get into this whole issue about the safety and security of our communities, I'd like to say a few words about another important law enforcement issue that is breaking today in Washington, involving our efforts to keep guns out of the wrong hands. Just before the Memorial Day recess, the United States Senate passed a bill designed to close the dangerous gun show loophole, to require that safety locks be sold with every handgun, to ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips, and to ban violent juveniles from owning handguns as adults. Now the House of Representatives will take up such legislation.

According to reports in the morning paper, the House leadership has decided to bypass the Judiciary Committee and just report out a bill that dramatically waters down the provisions in the Senate. It is a bill plainly ghost-written by the NRA. I think it is wrong to let the NRA call the shots on this issue. They've been calling the shots on this issue for decades now, and we have failed to do what is manifestly in the interest of our children and our community.

Now, I don't know what else to say about this. But if the American people care about it, if we can still remember Littleton—it hasn't even been 2 months—then we ought to speak up and be heard. This is a classic, horrible example of how Washington is out of touch with the rest of America, and it is time that the rest of America corrected it.

Now, why are we here? For several years now, crime has been going down in nearly every category, in virtually every community in America. In the areas where it is highest, or was highest several years ago, there is no question that one of the reasons, and perhaps the principal reason, that crime has dropped so much is that communities all across our country have put more dedicated community police officers on the street, working the neighborhoods, knowing families, knowing children, going the extra mile to help prevent crime in the first place.

Now, that has worked very well on the whole. But we also know that we have a major problem, which in some places has gotten worse as our communities have grown increasingly diverse. While public confidence in the police has been growing steadily overall, people of color continue to have less confidence and less trust

and believe that they are targeted for actions by the police not because of their illegal conduct but because of the color of their skin.

We have to restore the trust between community and police in every community in America. It is the only way that community policing can really work to make our streets safe. The vast majority of police officers do great honor to the badges they wear with pride. But we must continue to hold accountable those who abuse their power by using excessive or even deadly force. These cases may be relatively rare, but one case can sear our hearts forever.

We also must stop the morally indefensible, deeply corrosive practice of racial profiling. Last year I met with a group of black journalists, and I asked how many of them had been stopped by the police, in their minds for no reason other than the color of their skin, and every single journalist in the room raised his hand—every one.

People of color have the same reaction wherever you go. Members of Congress can tell this story. Students, professors, even off-duty police officers, can tell this story. No person of color is immune from such humiliating experiences. A racial profiling is, in fact, the opposite of good police work, where actions are based on hard facts, not stereotypes. It is wrong; it is destructive; and it must stop.

As a necessary step to combat it, we, too, need hard facts. Today I am directing my Cabinet agencies to begin gathering detailed information on their law enforcement activities. The Justice Department will then analyze this data to assess whether and where law enforcement engage in racial profiling and what concrete steps we need to take at the national level to eliminate it anywhere it exists. We are committed to doing this, and we hope that all of you will support us in this endeavor.

Of course, we must also recognize that only a fraction of our law enforcement officers work under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. So today I ask all State and local police forces and their agencies to make the same commitment to collecting the same data. And I ask Congress to provide them with the resources they need to take this vital step, as the bill sponsored by Representative Conyers would do.

We all have an obligation to move beyond anecdotes to find out exactly who is being stopped and why. We all have an obligation

to do whatever is necessary to ensure equal protection under the law.

Some say police misconduct is an inevitable byproduct of the crackdown on crime. I don't believe that's so. As a society, we don't have to choose between keeping safe and treating people right, between enforcing the law and upholding civil rights. We can do both. Everybody in this room knows it, and you know we have to do both.

We have seen this happen in city after city: in Boston, where the community is involved at every level of problem solving, where crime has fallen and trust in the police and minority communities has grown; we see it in communities in Chicago and San Diego and Houston. We can see it in every community in America.

We have our models. We need to work on them. We need to find out what is going on. We need to talk freely. We need to listen carefully. One of the things I have learned, much to my surprise, since I moved to Washington is that there are probably more words spoken and fewer heard here than any place I have ever lived. [Laughter]

So let us listen to each other, as well as speak our piece. Let us emerge from this conference with a concrete plan of action for keeping up the work. We can do it. We must start today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:08 p.m. in the Cotillion Ballroom at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC.

Memorandum on Fairness in Law Enforcement

June 9, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: Fairness in Law Enforcement:
Collection of Data

We must work together to build the trust of all Americans in law enforcement. We have great confidence in our Federal law enforcement officers and know that they strive to uphold the best principles of law enforcement in our democratic society. We cannot tolerate, however, officers who cross the line and abuse their position by mistreating law-abiding individuals or who bring their own racial bias to the job. No person should be subject to excessive force, and no person should be targeted by law enforcement because of the color of his or her skin.

Stopping or searching individuals on the basis of race is not effective law enforcement policy, and is not consistent with our democratic ideals, especially our commitment to equal protection under the law for all persons. It is neither legitimate nor defensible as a strategy for public protection. It is simply wrong.

To begin addressing the problem of racial profiling, Federal agencies should collect more

data at all levels of law enforcement to better define the scope of the problem. The systematic collection of statistics and information regarding Federal law enforcement activities can increase the fairness of our law enforcement practices. Tracking the race, ethnicity, and gender of those who are stopped or searched by law enforcement will help to determine where problems exist, and guide the development of solutions.

I therefore direct you to design and implement a system to collect and report statistics relating to race, ethnicity, and gender for law enforcement activities in your department. Specifically, you shall:

- (1) develop a proposal within 120 days, in consultation with the Attorney General, for a system of data collection and an implementation plan for a field test of that system, including the law enforcement agency components, sites, data sets, training, and other methods and procedures to be included in the field testing. You shall implement field tests within 60 days of finalizing their proposals;
- (2) to the extent practicable, collect data that is sufficiently detailed to permit an analysis of actions relevant to the activities of the included law enforcement agencies by

race, ethnicity, or gender. Such actions may include traffic stops, pedestrian stops, a more extensive inspection or interview than that customarily conducted with entrants to the United States, requests for consent to search, or warrantless searches. Data acquired pursuant to this memorandum may not contain any information that may reveal the identity of any individual; and

- (3) provide to the Attorney General a summary of the information collected during the first year of your field test, including civilian complaints received alleging bias based on the race, ethnicity, or gender of the complainant in law enforcement activities; your process for investigating and resolving such complaints; and the outcomes of any such investigations. The At-

torney General shall report to me, in consultation with relevant agency heads, on the results of the field tests with: (i) an evaluation of the first year of the field test; (ii) an implementation plan to expand the data collection and reporting system to other components and locations within the agency and to make such system permanent; and (iii) recommendations to improve the fair administration of law enforcement activities.

In addition, within 120 days of the date of this directive, you shall provide a report to me on your training programs, policies, and practices regarding the use of race, ethnicity, and gender in your law enforcement activities, along with recommendations for improving those programs, policies, and practices.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the Dale and Betty Bumpers Vaccine Research Center in Bethesda, Maryland

June 9, 1999

Thank you very much, Senator Harkin, for your friendship, your leadership, and for your successful efforts to get this facility named for Dale and Betty Bumpers. You know, ever since the Republicans won a majority in the House and the Senate in 1994, it's been impossible to get anything named for a Democrat. *[Laughter]* We named more buildings than ever before in the history of the country, at a breathtaking rate, and I just wanted to come here to make sure this was actually going to happen today. *[Laughter]* And I really thank you, Tom Harkin, for your persistence.

Thank you, Dr. Varmus, Dr. Satcher. Secretary Shalala, thank you for your remarks and what you said. I want to thank all the leaders of the NIH who are here, and others involved in all the various endeavors, especially Sandy Thurman, who leads our efforts on AIDS. I want to say a special word of appreciation to the families of Dale and Betty Bumpers who are here, including two of their three children.

I want to express the regrets of the First Lady and the Vice President for not being able to be here today. And in particular, because

of our long friendship and common interest, I know that Hillary wanted to come.

Forty-four years ago Edward R. Murrow described the day Dr. Salk announced his discovery of a polio vaccine with these words: "The Sun was warm, the Earth coming alive. There was hope and promise in the air. The occasion called for banners in the breeze and trumpets in the distance."

Indeed, that discovery did herald the dawn of a golden age of development of vaccines and prevention of disease. In the 50 years since, we have benefited from the discovery of vaccines against some 20 infectious diseases. Tens of millions of lives have been saved; tens of millions of children have been spared the agony and crippling pain of polio, mumps, rubella, measles, most recently, meningitis.

Twenty years ago we eradicated smallpox, the disease that for thousands of years struck down men, women, and children all around the world and destroyed entire civilizations. We have eliminated polio from our own hemisphere and, as you've already heard, we'll eliminate it from the Earth early in the new millennium.

The triumph of vaccines over infectious disease is one of the great achievements of a remarkable 20th century. And at century's end, the men and women who labor in labs to unlock the mysteries of human biology and disease, especially those here at the National Institutes of Health, have made this one of America's great citadels of hope, not only for our people but for people throughout the world.

I think it is important to note, though, that we are here today because the triumph of immunization over disease is also the triumph not just of scientists but of countless citizens across America, public health specialists, advocates, volunteers, leaders in Government, who work together to support new research and to bring lifesaving vaccines to all people. It is the triumph of the couple we honor today, my friends of many, many years, Dale and Betty Bumpers.

More than 25 years ago, Betty Bumpers was the first person to open my eyes to the fact that though many vaccines had been discovered, approved, and marketed, too few children in our State then and across America were being immunized. As the First Lady of our State, she visited every community and every school, talking to parents and teachers about the necessity of immunizing their children. In fact, Betty became so identified with the immunization cause that people used to joke that every time she walked into a school, the kids would start to cry. *[Laughter]* They knew that when she came in, somebody was going to have to get a shot.

Her work inspired President Carter to launch a nationwide campaign to immunize all children by the time they entered school. Today, I am still amazed by her tirelessness in traveling across the country with Rosalynn Carter to ensure that every child is immunized by the age of 2. I'd also like to say something that many of you know: She is here today, just 2 days after back surgery, which is an ultimate testament to her grit and determination.

She's made sort of a second career, Betty has, out of deflating egos, especially her husband's and mine. *[Laughter]* And I told her today, she just hit me one more time. I got a huge applause in the State of the Union Address a couple of years ago, railing against these HMO's and hospitals that kicked people out after drive-by surgery. And she's exhibit A for drive-by surgery. *[Laughter]* I mean, here she is; she looks great. I'm going to have to at least modify my position on that issue, I guess.

When Betty was working at the grassroots, Dale was working in Government. Over four terms and 24 years, representing our home State in the United States Senate, he became the resident expert and the greatest champion for immunization in that body. Through dark times, when it looked as if Congress and the White House might fail to do their part to make vaccines more widely available, his passionate and persuasive arguments would stir consciences and, on occasion, change votes.

After the measles epidemic of the late eighties and early nineties, Dale Bumpers rallied his colleagues. He took to the Senate floor to lament 27,000 cases of measles, cases he called, and I quote, "totally shameful and avoidable." He challenged his colleagues to rise to their responsibility to protect our children. Our children have been lucky to have his heart and his voice at their service.

For a long, long time, Hillary and I have been inspired by Dale and Betty's personal crusade. In 1993 I took office committed to renewing America and preparing our country for a new century. A key to the strategy we embraced was investing in our people, investing in technology, and dramatically increasing our efforts in research and development in areas that were pivotal opportunities for the future of Americans' quality of life. We made funding basic science research that could lead to new vaccines one of our top priorities. We launched a new initiative to improve immunization services, to make existing vaccines safer and more affordable, and to boost immunization rates across America.

And I was profoundly proud when, two summers ago, Hillary and I were able to invite Dale and Betty to the White House, where we announced that finally America had reached its highest immunization rate ever and more than 90 percent of all 2-year-olds in our country have received their most critical doses of recommended vaccines, thanks in no small measure to the years and years and years of effort that they have spearheaded.

Therefore, it is entirely fitting that today we dedicate this state-of-the-art facility to them, two great Americans, two wonderful human beings.

Today we also lay a new cornerstone in our ongoing efforts against HIV and AIDS. With biotechnology accelerating the development of new vaccines and making existing ones even

safer, it is a hopeful moment for vaccine research in America, including the challenge of finding a vaccine against AIDS.

Today, one out of every 100 people in the world is living with HIV and AIDS. With the recent news that AIDS has surpassed tuberculosis and malaria to become the leading infectious killer in the world, claiming 2½ million lives in 1998 alone and growing, I might add, at truly breathtaking rates in Africa and India, we cannot afford to waste a second in our fight against it.

Over the past 6 years, we have worked hard to conquer this disease. We have established the Office of National AIDS Policy to lead an effort full-time, expanded our investment in AIDS research to a record \$1.8 billion, accelerated the approval of new drugs. Two years ago, as Secretary Shalala said, I challenged America to come together to develop a vaccine for AIDS within 10 years. Our balanced budget will target \$200 million toward this goal. And until an AIDS vaccine is tested and approved, it will remain the primary mission of the Dale and Betty Bumpers Vaccine Research Center.

I am confident that this is a place where miracles will happen, miracles born of hard work, ceaseless effort, visionary dreams. I look forward to the day when I can come back here, to a grand facility with, in Murrow's words, "banners blowing in the breeze and trumpets in the distance," heralding another great vaccine achievement for mankind, the end of AIDS.

When that day comes, it will be due in large part to the people who will be here at the Bumpers Center and to the two truly wonderful people for whom the center is named.

Thank you, for your work and for letting me be a part of today's ceremony. And God bless you, Dale and Betty.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. at the National Institute of Health. In his remarks, he referred to National Institutes of Health Director Harold E. Varmus; Surgeon General David M. Satcher; and Director of National AIDS Policy Sandra Thurman.

Statement on the Military Technical Agreement on Kosovo *June 9, 1999*

The agreement reached today by NATO and Serbian military officials is another important step toward achieving our objectives in Kosovo. It lays out the details to meet the essential conditions for peace: the rapid, orderly withdrawal of all Serb forces from Kosovo and the deployment of an international security force, with NATO at its core, which means a unified NATO chain of command, so that Kosovars can return home safely. We and our Allies will watch carefully to see whether the Serb forces are peace-

fully leaving Kosovo in accordance with the agreed timetable. We have made clear to the leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army that we expect them not to hinder the Serb withdrawal.

NOTE: The statement referred to the Military Technical Agreement Between the International Security Force (KFOR) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia.

Remarks on the Military Technical Agreement on Kosovo and an Exchange With Reporters *June 10, 1999*

The President. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I have just spoken with NATO Secretary

General Solana, who, as you know, has determined that the Serb forces have begun their

withdrawal from Kosovo, an essential step toward meeting NATO's conditions and restoring peace.

Accordingly, NATO has suspended its air campaign against Serbia. An International Security Force, including American troops, is preparing to enter Kosovo. I will address the Nation this evening, but I would like to make a few points now.

We and our Allies launched our campaign in the face of Serbia's brutal, systematic effort to remove Kosovars, ethnic Albanians, from their land, dead or alive. From the beginning, we had three clear objectives: the withdrawal of Serb forces, the deployment of an international security force with NATO at the core, the return of the Kosovars to their home to live in security and self-government. Serbia now has accepted these conditions, and the process of implementing them is underway.

The Kosovars have been victims of terrible atrocities. Their only hope was that the world would not turn away in the face of ethnic cleansing and killing, that the world would take a stand. We did, for 78 days. Because we did, the Kosovars will go home.

Our policy was designed to achieve our objectives in Kosovo and to do so in a way that advanced other important interests:

First, to prevent the violence from spreading to other nations in southeastern Europe and undermining the progress they have made toward deeper democracy, greater ethnic and religious tolerance, and broader prosperity. They felt the greatest strain, but they never wavered. And I thank them for that.

Second, to achieve our aims as an alliance, 19 democratic nations, with 780 million people, working together in the first sustained military operation in NATO's history, the Alliance did stay together. It is now stronger and more united than ever. And I thank my fellow leaders in the Alliance for their fidelity and their fortitude.

Third, to act in a manner that would strengthen, not weaken, our vital relations with a democratic Russia. Russia played an important role in achieving this peace, and we hope that, as in Bosnia, it will join us in securing the peace.

There are so many people to thank: first, Secretary General Solana and General Clark, who were steadfast and effective, our NATO Allies—I have spoken already with Prime Minister Blair and have calls out to many others. I hope to

speak at least to President Chirac, Chancellor Schroeder, Prime Minister D'Alema, Prime Minister Chretien, Mr. Kok, Mr. Aznar, and many others. They were all—all 19 held together so well.

I want to thank President Ahtisaari and Mr. Chernomyrdin for their diplomatic mission, which played a critical role in this. I want to thank President Yeltsin for his strong instructions to his team to resolve these matters so that we can go forward.

I want to thank our allies in Congress in both Houses and both parties for believing in America's mission in Kosovo. I want to thank our team very much, those who are not here: the Vice President, who played a large role in putting together the Chernomyrdin-Ahtisaari team; Secretary Albright, whose passionate commitment to this cause is well-known; and Deputy Secretary Talbott, who was pivotal in the diplomatic efforts. I want to thank Secretary Cohen and General Shelton, who persevered with great confidence and calmness amidst criticisms and the early rough going to achieve the victory that they have achieved.

And I want to say a special word of thanks to Mr. Berger, who has barely slept for the last 3 months and who has done a superb job. He and Mr. Podesta and Mr. Steinberg, our entire national security team has done a very, very good job.

And finally, let me say I am enormously proud of our men and women in uniform, and those of our Allies, who have performed with tremendous skill and courage, striking at Serbia's military machine and aiding the refugees. I am profoundly grateful for what they have done. I am very grateful that the loss of life was limited to the tragedies in the two training incidents and that we only lost two planes in the combat operation.

And I am grateful to the American citizens, who felt enormous compassion for the suffering of the people in Kosovo and understood the importance of standing up to the war crimes involved in ethnic cleansing and killing, and the kind of ethnic and religious bigotry and violence we have seen against innocent civilians.

Now we are waiting for the United Nations to pass a resolution that the G-8 nations have embraced. We expect the Security Council to adopt it shortly.

We must be mindful that even though we now have a chance to replace violence with

peace, ethnic and religious hatred with a democratic future, a bloody century in Europe with a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace, there is still quite a lot to be done:

First, we have to make sure that the Serbs keep their commitments. That means the forces must rapidly and peacefully leave Kosovo under the agreed timetable, 11 days from yesterday. NATO's air campaign is suspended. It is not formally terminated, and Secretary General Solana retains the authority to resume strikes if Serbia violates its commitments.

Second, we face challenges and risks in bringing home the refugees and restoring stability. With determination and cooperation, an International Security Force of roughly 50,000 troops, including 7,000 Americans, can give the people of Kosovo the confidence to return, to lay down their arms, to heal their wounds, to live in peace. But there are operational difficulties with this, as well, which you will see over the next few days as we come to grips with them.

Finally, we face the broader challenge of preventing future crises by promoting democracy and prosperity in this region which has been so troubled. With our Allies and partners, we must intensify these efforts. In the past 4 months, we have seen some of the worst inhumanity in our lifetime, but we've also seen the bravery of our troops, the resolve of our democracy, the decency of our people, and the courage and determination of the people of Kosovo. We now have a moment of hope, thanks to all those qualities. And we have to finish the job and build the peace.

Thank you.

KFOR Timetable

Q. Mr. President, sir, is there anything you can tell the American people as to how long the NATO peacekeepers will have to be in Kosovo, including the American forces?

The President. I don't think we should put a timetable on it. We will define our objectives and proceed to implement them.

Serbian Leadership

Q. Can you see the NATO peacekeeping force leaving Kosovo with Mr. Milosevic still in power?

The President. Well, I would put it in a different way. What I would like to see is all the nations of southeastern Europe built up. I'd like to see them coming closer together, and then

I'd like to see them becoming more integrated with the economic and security structure of Europe, so that we will see them growing and prospering the way Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic did after the fall of communism, for example. And I don't see how Serbia can participate in that unless they have a leadership that is committed to a multiethnic, multireligious democracy and to genuine democracy and human rights.

Success of Airstrikes

Q. Do you feel vindicated against the criticism that the air war would not work, sir?

The President. Well, I think—again, I would say, I think that our people in uniform performed superbly, and they performed risking their lives. We regret the fact that there were any civilian casualties, but our pilots risked their lives to minimize those casualties. And there were far fewer here, for example, than there were in the Gulf war—far, far fewer.

And I think it's a tribute to Secretary Cohen and to General Shelton and the others who believed that, given these facts—given these facts—and given the capacity of our forces, that this strategy could work. We never took other options off the table; we had planned and thought about them. But I think that our people in uniform, starting with our Secretary of Defense, are the ones that have been vindicated by this. And I'm grateful for what they have achieved.

But in terms of America, the United States should feel vindicated when the people go home and when they're safe and when we can say that we, as a nation, have played a role in reversing ethnic cleansing. Because if we do that, after what we have done in Bosnia and the work we have been doing in Africa to set up a crisis response team to try to prevent a Rwanda from ever occurring again, then we will be able to see the world go into the 21st century with a more humane future, not able to stop all conflict, not able to stop all ethnic conflict, but at last able to prevent this sort of thing.

Q. Why do you think he gave in now, Mr. President?

Q. Apart from the air campaign, was it also the indictment as a war criminal; was he getting pressure from his own people, from his military?

The President. They paid quite a high price for this; they were hurt very badly.

Reconstruction of the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, sir, it's going to cost a lot of money to reconstruct Kosovo, and also the neighboring countries are going to need a lot of aid. How much is the United States willing to put up, and will this be a European endeavor with help from the United States?

The President. Well, as I said, I would expect that most of the money would come from Europe because most of the costs of this campaign, the air campaign, have been borne by the United States. I don't quarrel with that. We had the capacity, and we did what we should have done.

But I don't want us to get into a haggling situation, either. We should do this because it's the right thing to do. And it will be—let me say this, it will be far less expensive—far, far less expensive—for us to make a decent contribution to the long-term development of these people than it will be to wait around for something like this to happen again and run the risks, all the risks we had to deal with this time that it might spread and all of that.

So I hope that we will be forthright. I hope the international institutions will do their part.

And I think we need to focus on this because this is the last big challenge.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to NATO Secretary General Javier Solana; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jacques Chirac of France; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands; President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland; former Prime Minister and Special Envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Military Technical Agreement Between the International Security Force (KFOR) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia.

Remarks to the 1998 World Series Champion New York Yankees

June 10, 1999

I'm up—and we're not rained out yet. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you how delighted I am to see Joe and George and the entire team here. As you might imagine, this has been a very happy day at the White House because of the peace agreement in Kosovo. And it's a happy day in New York. One of our friends, who has a business in the Bronx, came through today and said that a lot of his customers are Albanians who have relatives and friends who will be able to go home now.

And I think, if you look at the composition of the Yankee team behind us, and you look at the composition of the city and State they represent, the United States should be proud that at this moment in our history we were able to stand against the proposition that any people should be killed or uprooted or abused

because of their race, their ethnic heritage, or their religious faith. It's a good day for America.

I also want to thank David Cone for coming up here and making this presentation. I understand that he got his first hit in several years last night—[laughter]—and I feel like that some days around here. [Laughter] So, congratulations. It's never too late to start making hits.

I also was glad to hear the spirit of the team, that we're not going to come down here in second place; but for all of us who are genuine baseball fans, it's nice to see that the Yankees are at least getting a little competition this year—[laughter]—but still winning and doing very well, thank you.

You know, last year was a season—for those of us who've loved baseball all our lives—that clearly, irrevocably restored baseball as America's pastime. And once again, the Bronx Bombers—heavy emphasis on Bronx, for Congressman

Rangel and others—[*laughter*—proved themselves to be America’s greatest team.

You know, this was a team that reminded a lot of people of the Yankees that made the Yankees America’s team—of Ruth and Gehrig, of Mantle and Maris, of DiMaggio, who threw out the first pitch at Yankee Stadium in the last season. And for lifetime baseball fans, I can’t help saying a word, since he’s passed away, that I’m awful glad that he was able to see one last championship season for the Yankees.

You know, Yogi Berra said a lot of interesting things. I’ve tried to commit a lot of them to memory, and they always get a laugh, and I won’t bother you with any of them today, except he said one thing that I think is worth repeating, because I think it is the motto of this team and it reflects the spirit that I hope we have when we come to work here every day. He said, “You give 100 percent in the first half of the game, and if that isn’t enough, in the second half, you give what’s left.” [*Laughter*]

Well, last year, that’s what the Yankees did all year long: more victories in a year than any other team in Major League history, 125. I understand that even George Steinbrenner was impressed. [*Laughter*] Although I think he still wants to know what happened to the other 50 games. [*Laughter*] Joe Torre inspired America with his leadership, his character, and his comeback. But I can tell you, after having been President now for 6½ years, the leader can’t win without good players.

I was glad to see Donna Shalala acknowledge Mr. Steinbrenner, and now I know where she got her grit. We all remember the clutch hits

of Paul O’Neill and Derek Jeter. You remember David’s 20 wins; Bernie Williams’ battle—title, captured in the very last day of the season; Tino Martinez’s game-winning grand slam home run in the first game of the World Series; and of course, World Series MVP Scott Brosius’ two homers, six RBI’s, and steady defense in the four-game series. [*Laughter*]

Now, I don’t know how long America will have to wait for another baseball season where two guys hit over 60 home runs, but the New York Yankees defied every conventional wisdom about what a professional baseball team could achieve in a highly competitive league, with more and more teams and more and more talented players.

But again, I say to all of you, all Americans—Yankee fans, and even the couple of guys in the press who waved their hands when I said it was a good thing there was a little more competition this season—everybody who’s loved baseball from childhood will never forget that Yankee team and what it did to clearly, clearly make baseball our national pastime and remind us that New York Yankees are America’s team.

Thank you, and God bless you. Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 5:45 p.m. in the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joe Torre, manager, and George M. Steinbrenner III, owner, New York Yankees, and 1998 team members David Cone, Paul O’Neill, Derek Jeter, Bernie Williams, Tino Martinez, and Scott Brosius. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Address to the Nation on the Military Technical Agreement on Kosovo *June 10, 1999*

My fellow Americans, tonight for the first time in 79 days, the skies over Yugoslavia are silent. The Serb army and police are withdrawing from Kosovo. The one million men, women, and children driven from their land are preparing to return home. The demands of an outraged and united international community have been met.

I can report to the American people that we have achieved a victory for a safer world, for

our democratic values, and for a stronger America. Our pilots have returned to base. The airstrikes have been suspended. Aggression against an innocent people has been contained and is being turned back.

When I ordered our Armed Forces into combat, we had three clear goals: to enable the Kosovar people, the victims of some of the most vicious atrocities in Europe since the Second World War, to return to their homes with safety

and self-government; to require Serbian forces responsible for those atrocities to leave Kosovo; and to deploy an international security force, with NATO at its core, to protect all the people of that troubled land, Serbs and Albanians, alike. Those goals will be achieved. A necessary conflict has been brought to a just and honorable conclusion.

The result will be security and dignity for the people of Kosovo, achieved by an alliance that stood together in purpose and resolve, assisted by the diplomatic efforts of Russia. This victory brings a new hope that when a people are singled out for destruction because of their heritage and religious faith and we can do something about it, the world will not look the other way.

I want to express my profound gratitude to the men and women of our Armed Forces and those of our Allies. Day after day, night after night, they flew, risking their lives to attack their targets and to avoid civilian casualties when they were fired upon from populated areas. I ask every American to join me in saying to them, thank you, you've made us very proud.

I'm also grateful to the American people for standing against the awful ethnic cleansing, for sending generous assistance to the refugees, and for opening your hearts and your homes to the innocent victims who came here.

I want to speak with you for a few moments tonight about why we fought, what we achieved, and what we have to do now to advance the peace and, together with the people of the Balkans, forge a future of freedom, progress, and harmony.

We should remember that the violence we responded to in Kosovo was the culmination of a 10-year campaign by Slobodan Milosevic, the leader of Serbia, to exploit ethnic and religious differences in order to impose his will on the lands of the former Yugoslavia. That's what he tried to do in Croatia and in Bosnia, and now in Kosovo. The world saw the terrifying consequences: 500 villages burned; men of all ages separated from their loved ones to be shot and buried in mass graves; women raped; children made to watch their parents die; a whole people forced to abandon, in hours, communities their families had spent generations building. For these atrocities, Mr. Milosevic and his top aides have been indicted by the International War Crimes Tribunal for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

I will never forget the Kosovar refugees I recently met. Some of them could barely talk about what they had been through. All they had left was hope that the world would not turn its back.

When our diplomatic efforts to avert this horror were rebuffed and the violence mounted, we and our Allies chose to act. Mr. Milosevic continued to do terrible things to the people of Kosovo, but we were determined to turn him back. Our firmness finally has brought an end to a vicious campaign of ethnic cleansing, and we acted early enough to reverse it, to enable the Kosovars to go home.

When they do, they will be safe. They will be able to reopen their schools, speak their language, practice their religion, choose their leaders, and shape their destiny. There'll be no more days of foraging for food in the cold of mountains and forests, no more nights of hiding in cellars, wondering if the next day will bring death or deliverance. They will know that Mr. Milosevic's army and paramilitary forces will be gone, his 10-year campaign of repression finished.

NATO has achieved this success as a united alliance, ably led by Secretary General Solana and General Clark. Nineteen democracies came together and stayed together through the stiffest military challenge in NATO's 50-year history.

We also preserved our critically important partnership with Russia, thanks to President Yeltsin, who opposed our military effort but supported diplomacy to end the conflict on terms that met our conditions. I'm grateful to Russian Envoy Chernomyrdin and Finnish President Ahtisaari for their work, and to Vice President Gore for the key role he played in putting their partnership together. Now, I hope Russian troops will join us in the force that will keep the peace in Kosovo, just as they have in Bosnia.

Finally, we have averted the wider war this conflict might well have sparked. The countries of southeastern Europe backed the NATO campaign, helped the refugees, and showed the world there is more compassion than cruelty in this troubled region. This victory makes it all the more likely that they will choose a future of democracy, fair treatment of minorities, and peace.

Now we're entering a new phase, building that peace, and there are formidable challenges. First, we must be sure the Serbian authorities meet their commitments. We are prepared to

resume our military campaign should they fail to do so. Next, we must get the Kosovar refugees home safely. Minefields will have to be cleared; homes destroyed by Serb forces will have to be rebuilt; homeless people in need of food and medicine will have to get them. The fate of the missing will have to be determined. The Kosovar Liberation Army will have to demilitarize, as it has agreed to do. And we in the peacekeeping force will have to ensure that Kosovo is a safe place to live for all its citizens, ethnic Serbs as well as ethnic Albanians.

For these things to happen, security must be established. To that end, some 50,000 troops from almost 30 countries will deploy to Kosovo. Our European Allies will provide the vast majority of them; America will contribute about 7,000. We are grateful that during NATO's air campaign we did not lose a single serviceman in combat. But this next phase also will be dangerous. Bitter memories will still be fresh, and there may well be casualties. So we have made sure that the force going into Kosovo will have NATO command and control and rules of engagement set by NATO. It will have the means and the mandate to protect itself while doing its job.

In the meantime, the United Nations will organize a civilian administration while preparing the Kosovars to govern and police themselves. As local institutions take hold, NATO will be able to turn over increasing responsibility to them and draw down its forces.

A third challenge will be to put in place a plan for lasting peace and stability in Kosovo and through all the Balkans. For that to happen, the European Union and the United States must plan for tomorrow, not just today. We must help to give the democracies of southeastern Europe a path to a prosperous, shared future, a unifying magnet more powerful than the pull of hatred and destruction that has threatened to tear them apart. Our European partners must provide most of the resources for this effort, but it is in America's interest to do our part, as well.

A final challenge will be to encourage Serbia to join its neighbors in this historic journey to a peaceful, democratic, united Europe.

I want to say a few words to the Serbian people tonight. I know that you, too, have suffered in Mr. Milosevic's wars. You should know that your leaders could have kept Kosovo as a part of your country without driving a single

Kosovar family from its home, without killing a single adult or child, without inviting a single NATO bomb to fall on your country. You endured 79 days of bombing not to keep Kosovo a province of Serbia but simply because Mr. Milosevic was determined to eliminate Kosovar Albanians from Kosovo, dead or alive.

As long as he remains in power, as long as your nation is ruled by an indicted war criminal, we will provide no support for the reconstruction of Serbia. But we are ready to provide humanitarian aid now and to help to build a better future for Serbia, too, when its Government represents tolerance and freedom, not repression and terror.

My fellow Americans, all these challenges are substantial, but they are far preferable to the challenges of war and continued instability in Europe. We have sent a message of determination and hope to all the world. Think of all the millions of innocent people who died in this bloody century because democracies reacted too late to evil and aggression. Because of our resolve, the 20th century is ending not with helpless indignation but with a hopeful affirmation of human dignity and human rights for the 21st century.

In a world too divided by fear among people of different racial, ethnic, and religious groups, we have given confidence to the friends of freedom and pause to those who would exploit human difference for inhuman purposes.

America still faces great challenges in this world, but we look forward to meeting them. So, tonight I ask you to be proud of your country and very proud of the men and women who serve it in uniform. For in Kosovo, we did the right thing; we did it the right way; and we will finish the job.

Good night, and may God bless our wonderful United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); NATO Secretary General Javier Solana; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland; and former Prime Minister and Special Envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. The President also

referred to the Military Technical Agreement Between the International Security Force (KFOR) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner June 10, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Charlie, wait a minute. Before Chairman Rangel sits down—you know, Dick Gephardt got up there and said, “You know, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is as powerful as the President.” [Laughter] Bob Johnson said, “That’s a scary thought.” [Laughter] And I said, “No, no, he’s more powerful than the President.” [Laughter]

You should know that among all the things we have to be grateful for tonight and to celebrate, tomorrow is Charlie Rangel’s birthday. So I think we should sing “Happy Birthday” to him.

[At this point, the participants sang “Happy Birthday.”]

Representative Charles Rangel. My only response is, save Social Security now! [Laughter]

The President. That’s just like we rehearsed it. [Laughter]

Let me say to Congressman Rangel and, in his absence, Chairman Clyburn, Eleanor Holmes Norton, all the members of the caucus who are still here, and those who have come and gone, to the members of the Cabinet that are here—I saw Secretary Slater and Secretary Riley, there may be others here—and my former Cabinet member Jesse Brown, former Secretary of Veterans Affairs back there, I’m glad to see you. My wonderful friend from Chicago and fellow Arkansan John Stroger and all the others who did so much to make this night a possibility. I thank the chairman of the DNC, Joe Andrew, for being here; and Lottie Shackelford, others from the DNC who are here.

I want to say—I have so many friends here, but there’s one young couple here that I’m particularly pleased about being here because they’re new Washingtonians, the newly acquired new quarterback for the Washington Redskins, Rodney Peete, and his wonderful wife, Holly Robinson Peete. You all stand up there and say hello. [Applause] They are a big addition

to this community and wonderful people, and I’m glad to have them.

I want to say a few things rather briefly tonight. First of all, Congressman Rangel, my wife said to tell you hello, and once again, thank you for your friendship. [Laughter] Secondly, I want you to know when we had the New York Yankees at the White House today to celebrate their championship last year, I called them the Bronx Bombers, and I emphasized “Bronx,” and I said I was doing it at your behest. [Laughter]

Finally, let me say I was looking at Dick Gephardt standing up here, and I have known him for many years, and I thought he was a good man and an able man when I first met him. But I have watched him grow in his responsibility, in the depth of his understanding and his spirit. He should be the Speaker of the House. He should be the Speaker of the House.

The last thing I want to say by way of introduction is, I’m delighted to see Lionel Hampton again. We had—John Conyers and I had a 90th birthday party for him at the White House last year, almost a year ago, and they actually let me play with the band. And I hadn’t played in months, and it was really one of the nicest nights I’ve had in the White House, and I’m very grateful for that. And I’m grateful for him. If I look half as good at 60 as he does at 90—[laughter]—if I can hear to play my horn as well as he can hear to play his vibe, I will be a happy fellow.

I apologize for being late here tonight. I think all of you know why. I addressed the people of the United States tonight about the end of the conflict in Kosovo. I want to say a couple of things about that and what it has to do with all of the things that have already been mentioned and all the issues we don’t have time to mention tonight.

The unimaginable horrors that were inflicted on those people, which led to an unprecedented

indictment of a head of state, Mr. Milosevic, for war crimes and crimes against humanity, came to them solely because of their ethnicity and their religious faith. And it is indeed ironic that here we are on the edge of a new century and a new millennium, with the world growing closer together, with technology literally exploding opportunities for all of us, with America becoming more and more diverse by the day, that the world is most bedeviled by the oldest problem of human society: people are scared of people who don't look like them and who worship God in a different way than they do and who basically come from a different tribe.

We have learned, in ways good and bad, that our differences make us stronger; they make life more interesting; they make life more fun. But if that curious balance that exists inside all of us gets out of whack and our fears overcome our hopes, we can go quickly from fearing people to hating them, to dehumanizing them, to justifying all manner of repression and abuse of them.

What the conflict in Kosovo was about at bottom is whether or not, after all we have learned from what happened in World War II to the Jewish people and others in Nazi repression and all we have seen since, would or would not provoke the world, especially after the agonizing experience we had in Bosnia and the awful experience we had in Rwanda, when everyone was caught flat-footed, with no mechanism to deal with it—whether we would say, “Okay, from now on we don't expect everybody to get along. We don't think we can abolish all war. But if innocent civilians are going to be slaughtered and uprooted and have their lives destroyed and their families wrecked only because of their racial or ethnic background or their religious faith—if we can stop it, we intend to stop it.”

The United States did not go there for any territorial gain or economic gain. We went there because we want there to be peace and harmony, first in Europe and, wherever possible, in the rest of the world. We went there with an Army that looks like America, an Air Force that looks like America. We landed a Marine expeditionary unit in Greece today, going into Kosovo to help those folks come home, that looks like America. There are people from every conceivable racial and ethnic group and all different religious backgrounds, bound together by what they have in common being more important than the interesting things that divide them.

I say that because I am grateful for what they have achieved with our Allies. But I know, as I look toward the future, when I am long gone from this job, and the world grows closer and closer—but we will still have struggles between those who are left out and those who are included in the bounty of the world. We will still have to deal with terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and international criminal gangs and all, and people will always be trying to feed on the differences, to switch the balance from hope to fear. And it will be very important that the United States of our children and grandchildren be a force for bringing people together, not tearing them apart. And we will not be able to do that, over the long run, to do good around the world, unless we first are good at home.

That is why—that's why I've worked as hard as I can on all the issues involving race; why I know we've got to get rid of this racial profiling; why I know we've got to do more to deal with the threat of violence to our children; why I have asked everybody from the entertainment community to the gun community, to the schools, the people that provide counseling and mental health services, to the parents, to do something—all of us to do something to give our children their childhood back.

That is why I have asked the Congress to invest more in education, to adopt this new market initiative. I like the fact that we will give you tax breaks, tax credits, and loan guarantees to invest in poor countries around the world. I don't want to take them away. I just want you to have exactly the same incentives to invest in poor neighborhoods in inner-city America and Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta and Native American reservations and all those other places.

So I ask you to think about this. This is a night you can be proud of your country. This is a night you can be grateful for the economic prosperity that we have enjoyed, that we have the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates we have ever recorded, that wages are rising for people in all income groups. We can be grateful for that. And you have expressed your gratitude by coming here and giving these funds, for which I am grateful.

But I want you to support our party not just so that Dick Gephardt can be Speaker and Charlie Rangel can be chairman, we can have 3 or 4 chairmen and 19 subcommittee chairs, but for what Mr. Gephardt said: because if we

are in these positions of responsibility, we will show up for work every day. And we will not be interested simply in accumulating power but in using the fleeting power we have been given by the American people to advance the cause, the future, and the hopes of ordinary citizens from all walks of life.

I believe—it's not fashionable to say, I guess, but politics and public service are noble endeavors if they are informed by a high purpose. I have never thought that I was going to be President for life, and I have never thought one bit of power I exercised really belonged to me. It was something that was loaned to me for a little while by the American people, thanks to the remarkable Constitution under which we live.

And so if you give us this kind of responsibility, we will ask the American people to search their consciousness—and to serve their—search their consciences, to think and to feel what we still must do to deepen the meaning of freedom and widen the circle of opportunity and strengthen the bonds of community. That's what a lot of our fights are about. That's what the Patients' Bill of Rights is about. If I get sick tonight, I'm going to be fine. Unless God gets ready to take me home, I'll have the best health care in the world. I don't need it, and neither do most of you.

That's why we're trying to have America join the mainstream and stop being the only country in the world that doesn't even have sensible, commonsense regulation of these handguns, to keep them out of the hands of criminals and kids, and to keep the assault weapons away from the children. The Secret Service is taking care of me; I don't need that. And if anything happened to me, besides, I've already had more life than 99 percent of the people who ever lived. *[Laughter]* I don't have any gripe.

But all those kids—Dick Gephardt reminded us, 13 kids get killed every day, get shot and die and don't have the life that I have had or the life that you have had that has brought you to this point. And I have been so moved by the people at Littleton and how they have responded, and the courage and dignity with which they have borne their awful fate, and the way they have asked us not to let their children die in vain.

But every day, for years, 13 kids die in ones and twos, on the mean streets and the tough alleys in which they live. We want to do some-

thing about that, and we can. It's why we've tried to make college affordable for everybody and put a computer in every child's schoolroom. Our kids—we don't need that; our kids can have their computers.

I say that not to make you feel better than our political adversaries, either. I say that to make this simple point. The same thing that makes us believe that people are better off getting along than they are fighting over their racial or religious differences makes us believe that we ought to have universal excellence in education, universal quality in health care, a strong economy that includes everyone. But because we know down deep inside that that's being smart selfish, we know that we'll be better off and our children will be better off and our country will be stronger if we're not just sailing along alone.

If you ask me what the single most significant difference between the two parties is today and why it is so important that you're here and why we had the historic victory we had in 1998, even though we were outspent by \$100 million, it is because we believe, truly, that we are all God's children, that none of us inherently is better than any other, and that we don't believe, even if we are in the elite, in just the elite and their welfare. And this is not about class warfare, either. This is about whether you believe that individuals and families and businesses are better off when they're part of a fabric of a strong community, where everybody's trying to give everybody else a hand up. And if we ever do it right, there will be no more handouts. If we had enough hand-ups, there would be no more handouts.

So I want you to leave here being proud of what you did tonight, but I don't want you to quit. It's a long road between now and 2000. And we're not getting much encouragement from most of our friends on the other side of the aisle in campaign finance reform, because they figured if they outdid us by \$100 million in '98, maybe they can have a \$200 million advantage in 2000.

But one thing we showed them in 1998, partly thanks to a record African-American turnout, one thing we showed them: It doesn't matter if they have more money than you do if you have enough to be heard. If you have enough to be heard, if you have enough to make those telephone calls and to get those doors knocked on and to send those letters out and to put

those ads on and to be heard if you stand for something, if the power is not an end in itself but to be used as a gift, given for a limited period of time by the people to strengthen the common life of our country, we've proved that great things can happen.

You have done a good thing tonight for your country. I want you to think about it and continue to speak for it. And when people ask you why you were here tonight, I hope some of the words that we have said will give you an answer: because you want us to go forward together.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 p.m. at the National Museum for Women in the Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Robert L. Johnson, chairman and chief executive officer, BET Holdings, Inc.; musician Lionel Hampton; John Stroger, president, Cook County Board of Commissioners, Chicago, IL; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Lottie Shackelford, vice chair, Democratic National Committee; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks at Whiteman Air Force Base in Knob Noster, Missouri *June 11, 1999*

Thank you very, very much. General Lyles, thank you for your introduction and your service. I'd like to thank General Barnidge for making me feel right at home. You can tell he's pretty proud of you, and he makes a good speech, doesn't he? I didn't know whether he was a politician or a general the first time I met him. *[Laughter]* I've got the coin, General. *[Laughter]* I think I know the rules. You got yours? *[Laughter]*

Actually, ladies and gentlemen, when I discovered these coins, I decided one way I could always remember the men and women of our military is to keep every coin I receive visible. And for as long as I have been President, I have done that. And if you saw the speech I gave last night on Kosovo, when the camera zooms in I have three racks of these coins behind me. I now have nearly 300 of these, from every unit, every enlisted person, every officer, every commander that has given me one of these, I still have the coins. And everyone who comes into the Oval Office sees them all, to remember you and what you do for our country. And this will be on that desk tonight when I get home, and I thank you for it very much.

I want to thank my good friend Congressman Ike Skelton for representing you so well and representing all of America's military families and military interests so well. I'd like to thank my National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger, who did a lot of working in planning and exe-

cuting our efforts in Kosovo and others who have come here with me today.

There are a large number of Congressmen here, and I want to acknowledge all of them, because I think it's important that you know you have broad support. We have four Members from Missouri here: in addition to Congressman Skelton, Congresswoman Pat Danner, Congresswoman Karen McCarthy, and Congressman Kenny Hulshof from Missouri. They are all here. I'd like to ask them to stand and be recognized. *[Applause]*

We have Congressman Norm Dicks from Washington and Congressman Steny Hoyer from Maryland, as you heard, two big supporters of the B-2 program. We have Congressman Leonard Boswell from Iowa and Congressman Dennis Moore from Kansas, two of your neighbors here. And we have two Congressmen who came all the way from New York State, Congressman Eliot Engel and Congressman Peter King. I'd like to ask the rest of the members of the congressional delegation to stand. I thank them for being here. *[Applause]*

We all came down from Washington today on behalf of your fellow Americans to salute the men and women of Whiteman Air Force Base, to thank you for a job well done, to honor you for the way you honor America.

Over the past few months, our Nation has faced an extraordinary challenge. A decade of brutal policies in the former Yugoslavia, and in

particular, in Kosovo, exploded into a humanitarian catastrophe when Serbian troops evicted over one million people from homes they had lived in with their families for generations. It was the culmination of a long campaign by the Serbian President, Mr. Milosevic, to exploit ethnic and religious differences to strengthen his power over the people of the former Yugoslavia.

Now, in nearly every country, at some point or another, there are demagogues who have tried to exploit people's ethnic, racial, and religious differences. The difference here is that he wasn't just calling people names. This exploitation involved mass murder, mass rape, mass burning, mass destruction of religious and cultural institutions and personal property records, an attempt to erase the very presence of a people from their land, and to get rid of them dead or alive. We have come to call it ethnic cleansing. The International War Crimes Tribunal prosecutor indicted Mr. Milosevic and the leaders who worked with him for war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is that which the B-2's from Whiteman flew to reverse.

I asked you, our Armed Forces, and our NATO Allies to act when all of our diplomatic efforts failed after Mr. Milosevic had already put 40,000 troops and 300 tanks in and around Kosovo. I asked you to act early because the world community took 4 long years to mobilize itself to stop the aggression in Bosnia, and by the time it happened, there were a quarter of a million people dead and 2½ million refugees.

And the great dream that we all had after World War II and after the cold war, that finally Europe would be free and undivided and at peace, and Americans would never have to go there in large numbers to fight and die again, was threatened by the oldest demon of human society, our fear and hatred of people who are different from us. That is what he exploited, in a systematic way, to threaten the future stability and peace of Europe and the security of the United States and to do unspeakable humanitarian horrors to innocent civilians.

So when diplomacy failed, we and our NATO Allies acted. We attacked the Serb forces with air power for 79 days with three goals: first, to return the refugees with security and self-government; second, to get the Serb forces out of Kosovo; and finally, to have an international security force, with NATO at its core, to deploy to protect all the people of that troubled land, the ethnic Albanians and the ethnic Serbs.

Today, the three objectives have been achieved. The Serbian forces are withdrawing, an international force with NATO at its core is preparing to enter, and very soon the refugees will go home. Mr. Milosevic accepted these conditions for one reason: You made him do it. Thanks to you and the others who flew and supported our air mission and those of our NATO Allies, he ran out of room, and he ran out of time. And thanks to you, the century is ending not with helpless indignation over such unspeakable cruelty but with its opposite, a ringing affirmation by free people of human dignity.

It was not an easy campaign. Kosovo is a long way from Whiteman, even in a B-2. We had to coordinate all the details with 18 NATO Allies. The Serbs had sophisticated air defenses. They placed innocent civilians around military targets. The weather was often downright atrocious, especially when we began the operation.

Yet, day after day, with remarkable precision, our forces pounded every element of Mr. Milosevic's military machine, from tanks to fuel supply, to anti-aircraft weapons, to the military and political support. Most Americans will never know how hard this was or how hard our forces worked, the pilots, the crews, the people who make it happen on the ground. But I want you to know that we are very proud of you.

I'd like to single out a few groups for special thanks today. The pilots, the crews, the weaponeers, the maintenance personnel who are part of the B-2 team stationed here at Whiteman should take special pride in proving what a truly remarkable aircraft can do, flying 30-hour sorties, dropping ordnance, returning to base, night after night. And as our Commander said, as far as we know, they still don't know you were there. Listen to this: The B-2's from Whiteman flew less than one percent of the total missions, but dropped 11 percent of the bombs.

We honor the pilots and the crews, but we should never forget that for every 2-man mission, about 60 people from the mission planning cell worked 2 or 3 days to make sure nothing went wrong. That's what I call teamwork. You put real meaning into the 509th's motto, "Follow Us." A lot of good people are about to follow you back home to Kosovo, and I thank you for it.

I would also like to thank the reservists of the 442d for all you do. I know how badly some of you wanted to take your Warthogs over

to Serbia. I assure you, you're doing a fine job protecting us, just by being ready to drop everything at a moment's notice. And I want to thank the people who make Whiteman such a fine place to live and work, including the Missouri National Guard.

And lastly, I want to pay special tribute to the families who give strength and support to our air men and women who do such a difficult job. The wives, the husbands, the children of our military personnel are a part of our military team, and they serve our country in a very special way.

The statistics of Operation Allied Force tell the story better than I can. There were 30,000 sorties. Two planes were lost, but every single crew member returned safely, an extraordinary testament to your courage and skill. Of course, we cannot forget the two Army airmen we lost while training in Albania, and I hope you will remember them and their families in your prayers, Chief Warrant Officer David Gibbs and Chief Warrant Officer Kevin Reichert.

Let me say one other thing that I hope will try to illustrate what this is really about. I'm proud to be in Whiteman today for many reasons. For over half a century, the brave airmen of this base have been crucial to our efforts to build peace and support freedom. We may be far from Europe here in the heartland, and I suppose it's unlikely that Knob Noster will ever be invaded by a foreign power. *[Laughter]* But you have always been close to the frontlines, and the people in that small community have supported you in being close to the frontlines.

The 442d Fighter Wing supported the D-Day landings 55 years ago last Sunday. The 509th Bomber Wing distinguished itself in the Pacific theater. Whiteman was a bastion of strength throughout the cold war. Ten years ago, for example, who would have thought that a former leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, would come here to have you sing "Happy Birthday" to him—*[laughter]*—or that he would have the gall to accuse General Barnidge of singing off-key. *[Laughter]*

In this decade, in the wake of the cold war, our men and women in uniform have played a crucial role, and so have you. And with the B-2, you have been even closer to the frontlines. From Iraq to Haiti to Bosnia to Kosovo, our men and women in uniform have shown dictators they can't shatter their people and threaten their neighbors with impunity.

But this is the point I want you to think about. You helped to put the lie to Mr. Milosevic's campaign of ethnic cleansing and killing in two ways, not one. First, and most obviously, you did it with the power of the bombing campaign. But second, you did it with the power of your example. What do I mean by that? His whole justification for power has been to tell the Serbian people that they cannot and should not have to live with the Bosnian Muslims, with the Kosovar Albanian Muslims, with the Croatian Catholics, that the only pure and great people worthy to be part of Greater Serbia are those who share their ethnic background and their faith, that their country can only be great when everybody's just like everybody else. Well, look around here. You put the lie to that by the power of your example. And make no mistake about it, it is even more powerful than the power of our bombs.

I invite the people of this world today who say that people cannot get along across racial and ethnic and religious lines to have a good look at the United States military, to have a good look at the members of the United States Air Force in this hangar today. We have proved that when people are bound together by shared values, their differences make them stronger and make our community stronger; that everyone has a contribution to make and everyone is a child of God, worthy to be developed to the fullest of his or her own capacity; and that our differences make our lives more interesting, even more fun, as long as we recognize that fundamentally what is most important is our common humanity.

Make no mistake about it: every day you get up and go to work, every day you work through a difference you're having with somebody who comes from a different part of the country or a different background than you do, every day you learn to live by performing your mission better working together, you put the lie to the idea that has driven Mr. Milosevic's power and that of every other dictator in this century who tried to get people to hate others because they had a different color skin, because they had a different ethnic background, because they worshiped God in a different way.

And make no mistake about it: In a world that is smaller and smaller and smaller, where we are growing closer through the Internet, through links of trade, through shared culture, where people will become more vulnerable to

one another through open borders, it is a very important thing for the safety and security of the United States for us to be able to hold up for the whole world the example of our men and women in uniform and say: This is the future we should all seek in the 21st century.

Yes, I am very proud of the B-2's. I am proud of the cooperation across the services. I know the Air Force is grateful for the radar jamming provided by Navy and Marine aircraft, the Navy TLAMS fired from ships in the Mediterranean that made the flights safer, the Army and Marine units taking care of the refugees. I'm grateful for all of that cooperation, but fundamentally I am most grateful for the power of your example.

In our military, we have Asian-Americans, African-Americans, Latino-Americans, European-Americans of every stripe, including Albanian-Americans and Serbian-Americans. I don't want anybody to get the idea that we have a grudge or bad feelings about the people of Serbia. They were our allies in World War II. They fill many neighborhoods in some of our largest cities. We cheer for them on professional sports teams. Many of us know them as our friends. This is not about a people; this is about a rotten idea that needs to be wiped from the pages of history. That, you have helped to do.

And I say to you, we have to keep working on it. If we want to be a force for good around the world, we've got to keep working to be good at home. We've got to keep working to live up to the ideas of our Founders, that we are all created equal, that we have a constant obligation throughout our lives to broaden the circle of opportunity and deepen the meaning of freedom and draw closer together as a national community.

These past months were a defining moment for the forces of freedom in our Alliance. This was the longest and most difficult military campaign NATO ever engaged in, in its entire 50 years. Mr. Milosevic, who believed that strength comes from everything being the same, thought that his campaign for Greater Serbia would break the unity of the incredible diversity of the NATO Alliance. He thought open societies with free dissent—where, as you know, everybody in America was free to tell me I was wrong about this from the get-go—he thought that made us weak.

But he turned out to be wrong. He turned out to be wrong, yes, because the B-2 is a

great aircraft, and the people flying the fighters out of Germany and Italy did a brilliant job, and the ships firing the TLAMS were great, and because the leaders were strong and tough and they hung together. That's fine, and that had a lot to do with it.

But what made all that possible? How did we get to that moment in the first place? Because we had made a decision as a free people to respect the inherent dignity of every person, to give everybody a chance, to learn from people who are different, to be on the same team. Let me tell you, that is something money can't buy and propaganda can't erase, and it is an example that I hope the world will see all the more clearly in the aftermath of your success in Kosovo.

Think what would have happened if we hadn't done this. Mr. Milosevic's victory would have been a license for despots around the world to deal with ethnic minorities simply by murdering or expelling them from their land. Whenever people have trouble with people who were different, they say: "Well, just get rid of them. Kill as many as you want; nobody will do anything. And if you run them out of your country, the rich countries will take care of them, anyway. Just ethnically cleanse everyplace so you will never have to think about or look at or consider the interest of anybody that's the slightest bit different from you."

But instead, we end the 20th century and begin a new one with a respect for human rights and human dignity and international law. This is not America's first victory over tyranny, and unfortunately, it probably will not be our last. But it is a moment for all of you to thank God for the opportunity we have had to live in our country and serve our country at this moment in history, to reap the benefits of its opportunities, and to have a chance to move it a little closer to its ideals.

As we celebrate the victory, I also ask you to remember this: There are challenges ahead. We still have to win the peace. Those folks have to go home, and they've got to have a roof over their head before it gets too cold to be outside. We've got landmines to take up and businesses to rebuild and a future to make.

That work, too, can be dangerous for those who follow in your footsteps in the peacekeeping missions. But it is very much in our interest to help them rebuild and to draw together—to teach them what we already know, that if

they have something to look forward to and something to work for and something to get up in the morning and smile about, it's a lot easier for people with superficial differences to find common interests. And so we have to be a part of that, as well.

Whenever I come to Missouri, a State I've always loved, since I grew up to the south, in Arkansas, I think of President Truman, who was the President when I was born and whom my family idolized. Congressman Skelton knew Harry Truman, and I think that we would all admit that Harry Truman knew something about standing up for what he believed in. President Truman would be very, very proud of the Whiteman family today.

In the final days of World War II, Harry Truman said: "It is easier to remove tyrants and destroy concentration camps than it is to kill the ideas which gave them birth and strength. Victory on the battlefield was essential, but it was not enough. For a good peace, a lasting peace, decent people of the Earth must remain determined to strike down the evil spirit

which has hung over the world for the last decade."

Well, the decent people of the world are determined to rebuild Kosovo and the Balkans. Think about the spirit.

If you don't remember anything else I said today, remember this. Your victory was achieved for two reasons: one, the power and skill and courage of our pilots and our crews and the awesome capacity of our planes and our bombs; but two, the power of the example that you set in our military, a stern rebuke, on a daily basis, to ethnic cleansing and a reaffirmation of the moral worth and the sheer joy of working together as equal human beings for a good cause.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in Building 1117. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Lester Lyles, USAF, Vice Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force; Brig. Gen. Leroy Barnidge, Jr., USAF, Wing Commander, 509th Bomb Wing; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Excerpt of Videotaped Remarks to the to the United States Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting *June 11, 1999*

The Senate majority even wants to kill our successful COPS program, the very community police who help cut crime in neighborhoods all across America. My balanced budget, on the other hand, extends our commitment to community police into the 21st century, to put even more officers on our streets, especially in the toughest neighborhoods, and give them the tools they need to make those streets safe.

Now is the time to build on our success, not to undermine it. And it's also time—high time—to do more to keep guns out of the wrong hands. But the House leadership seems intent on ignoring the lessons of Littleton, the lessons of all of our recent past. They want to water down the commonsense, modest gun bill passed by the Senate. According to news reports, the NRA is crowing that the House leadership gave them 90 percent of the new loopholes they wanted in the gun show law.

Now, clearly, there's a difference of approach here. We have a simple strategy that is already reducing crime all across America. We want more police on the street and fewer guns in the hands of criminals and children. They want more guns on the street and fewer cops. I think that's the wrong approach for America. The House leadership should heed the clear voice of the American people and stop listening to the deadly backstage whispers of the gun lobby.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 4:25 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room for later transmission to the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting in New Orleans, LA. The release made available by the Office of the Press Secretary was a partial transcript of the President's remarks. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Interview With Jim Lehrer of PBS' "NewsHour" June 11, 1999

Mr. Lehrer. And now to President Clinton. Mr. President, welcome.

The President. Thank you, Jim. I'm glad to be here.

Balkan Peace Process

Mr. Lehrer. Is the peace process, the withdrawal of the Serb troops and the other matters, proceeding on schedule today?

The President. So far it's proceeding in an orderly way. The Serb forces are withdrawing. They're withdrawing in a fashion that appears to our commanders to be consistent with their commitment to be gone in the 11-day time period. And General Jackson is readying our forces to deploy.

Mr. Lehrer. When will that happen, do you think? First, NATO troops—when will they go in now?

The President. I think it will be quite soon. It's his decision, and they are—I think there are a number of factors that are going into his thinking, but they'll have to be in there pretty soon because they're determined not to let some big vacuum develop. But they have a lot of plans to make, and they're mapping them, starting with a strategy for demining, and then dealing with the refugees that are brought back and those that want to come back on their own. And they're working that. But I would expect it would be quite soon.

Russian Troops

Mr. Lehrer. What's your reading of this Russian troop movement today that caused such a turmoil? The Russian troops came from Bosnia into Serbia, and there was some idea that they may go into Kosovo. What's going on?

The President. Well, the last we heard was, I think, when Mr. Ivanov told Secretary Albright that they were just pre-positioning, but that they recognized that we had to work out the arrangements for their participation. And even as we speak, there are discussions going on about that.

Mr. Lehrer. Do you foresee a major problem developing over this?

The President. I don't really think so, but there are some factors I would imagine they'll have to work through. And I haven't received a detailed briefing. But, for example, we're going

to have almost 30 countries this time in this operation, and I would expect that in each one of the zones of responsibility, the areas of responsibility, there will be multiple countries. The Russians, I think, would like to play a major role, but they understand we have to have unity of command under General Jackson. That's the *sine qua non* of the whole thing.

But we also know in every zone we have to have two things: First of all, there has to be the fact and the feeling of safety and security so the Kosovars will go home; secondly, in those sectors where there are Serbs, they have to know that we're committed to protecting them, too. And a lot of thought has been given to how that might best be done and how the Russians can make the strongest contribution there. So our commanders, their people, they're talking about it. They're talking it through, and I expect they'll resolve it.

NATO Airstrike Campaign

Mr. Lehrer. Mr. President, were you surprised that Milosevic hung in there as long as he did, for 78 days?

The President. Not after the beginning. When we started this, I thought there would be one of three possible scenarios. First of all, I absolutely reject the theory that some people have advanced that what he did was worse than he would have done if we hadn't bombed as early as we did. I just simply don't believe that. He had this plan laid out; he was going to carry it into effect last October. He didn't do it because of the threat of bombing.

So what I knew was that if he decided to behave as he had in Bosnia, that there would be a day or two of bombing, then we'd make this agreement that we made today, or a couple of days ago, and it would be over; but that there was a strong chance that it would not, because in the mind of Mr. Milosevic there was a big difference between Bosnia and Kosovo. Bosnia was something that he wanted badly that he didn't have. Kosovo was something that he had that he wanted to take absolute control of by running people out of.

So once he decided to take the bombing, I was not surprised that he took it for quite a long while, because he kept looking for ways

to break the unity of NATO. He kept looking for ways to turn someone against what we were doing.

Of course, the third scenario was that the bombing never worked and we had to take even more aggressive measures. But I always thought there was a much better than 50-50 chance that this bombing campaign would work. And I am gratified that it has achieved our objectives.

Mr. Lehrer. What was it, or who was it, that convinced you that bombing alone would work?

The President. Well, you know, when I talked to the American people about this in the beginning, I made it clear that there was no way that any bombing campaign could literally physically extract every Serbian soldier and paramilitary operative and put them back out of Kosovo. But I knew that our people had made dramatic progress in the last few years, even since Desert Storm, in precision-guided weapons and in the capacity of our planes to deliver them and to avoid even fairly sophisticated anti-aircraft operations. And I just felt that if we worked at it and we could hold the coalition together, that we'd be able to do enough damage that we could do it. And Secretary Cohen and General Shelton felt there was a better than 50-50 chance we could do it; Mr. Berger did.

Mr. Lehrer. Better than 50-50 was as good—

The President. Yes—Secretary Albright did. And I just—I've been dealing with Mr. Milosevic now a long time, you know, more than 6 years, and I think I have some understanding of the politics and the environment in Serbia. And I just felt if we kept pounding away that we could raise the price to a point where it would no longer make any sense for him to go on and where he could no longer maintain his position if he did.

And I regret that he required his people to go through what they have gone through, to lower their incomes as much as they've been lowered and to erode their quality of life as much as it's been eroded and even to have the civilian casualties which have been sustained, although they're far, far less than they were in Desert Storm after the bombing, for example. Still, I hate it. But what we did miraculously resulted in no combat air losses to our people—we did lose two fine Army airmen in training—and minimized the losses to their people, to their civilians. But it did a terrible amount of

damage. And finally, they couldn't go on; it didn't make any sense.

Mr. Lehrer. Mr. President, as I'm sure you're aware, the fact of no casualties by NATO has been used as a criticism of the whole approach here—that yes, ethnic cleansing was bad in Kosovo; yes, we needed to do something; but it wasn't worth risking any American lives to do so.

The President. Well, now, first of all, I never said that, that it wasn't worth risking any lives. We did risk lives, and I think the American people should know that. Our pilots, particularly the pilots in our A-10's, they were quite frequently fired upon by people holding these shoulder missiles, and they would deliberately position themselves in populated areas where there were civilians living. And over and over again, our pilots risked their lives by avoiding firing back, when they could easily have taken those people out who were firing at them. But to do so would have killed civilians. So there was risk to the lives. I remind you, we lost two airplanes and had to go in there and rescue two pilots. So that's not true.

Secondly, if we had put a ground force in for an invasion, it still wouldn't be done today. That is, all this bombing we did, we would have had to do anyway. Let me take you back to Operation Desert Storm, where we deployed a half-million people in the theater; took, as I remember, 4½ or 5 months to do it; bombed for 44 days there, but because of the terrain and the weather, they dropped more ordnance in 44 days than we did in our 79-day campaign.

So we would have had to do everything we have done to do this. I told the American people at the time that we could not have mounted and executed an invasion that would have stopped this ethnic cleansing, because at the time the Rambouillet talks broke down, when the Kosovars accepted it and the Serbs didn't, keep in mind, he already had 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo, and nearly 300 tanks. So no force—there was no way to mobilize and implant a force quick enough to turn it back.

And somehow the suggestion that our moral position would have been improved if only a few more Americans had died, I think is wrong. Believe me, fewer Serbs died than would die if we had had to invade. We would have had to deploy a force of about 200,000. We would have put them at great risk just getting them into the country. That was actually the biggest

risk. I don't think the combat, once in the country, was nearly as big a risk as the problems of deploying into Kosovo.

But I just don't accept that. I don't think that—we moved aggressively. We were criticized by some people in the Congress and elsewhere for starting the bombing too soon. And those who say that we should have used ground forces, even if we had announced on day one we were going to use ground forces, it would have taken as long as this bombing campaign went on to deploy them, probably longer.

Mr. Lehrer. What about just the threat of ground forces? You were criticized—you and your fellow NATO leaders were criticized for taking it off the table at the very beginning, telling Milosevic all he had to do was hunker down.

The President. I was afraid that I had done that when I said to the American people that I did not intend to use ground forces. And shortly thereafter in an interview, I made it clear that I did not do that. And then repeatedly I said that, and I said I thought we ought to be planning for ground forces.

So I think the differences, for example, between the British position and ours and others were somewhat overstated, because we had done quite a lot of planning for a ground force, and we had made it explicit that we weren't taking the option off the table. And Chancellor Schroeder from Germany was reported as having done so. When I talked to him and examined the German text of what he'd said, it was obvious that there had been a little bit of overstatement there.

So I don't think—I think that the NATO—my own view is if this had not worked, NATO would have put ground forces in there and that we were determined not to lose this thing, that we were determined to reverse the ethnic cleansing. I think the Europeans were especially sensitive, as I was, to the fact that it took 4 years to mobilize an action against Bosnia and that there were all kinds of arguments used about it, including the fact that U.N. peacekeepers were there, diplomacy was going on, any action would have upset all that, and they didn't want that to happen this time.

So the truth is that this action against ethnic cleansing was hugely more rapid and more responsive than what was done in Bosnia. And that's why there won't be nearly as many lost lives.

President's Moral Authority

Mr. Lehrer. On a more personal basis, Mr. President, some suggest when this operation began that the Lewinsky impeachment matter had weakened your moral authority to lead the country in a difficult situation like this. Were they wrong?

The President. Oh, I think so. I think the American people have been very good to me, and my family's been very good to me. And we went through a process which resulted in a decision by the public and by the Congress that I should serve. No one—no thinking American wants to have a President of either party and any philosophy who cannot fully serve and does not fully do his job or her job. And so I did what I was hired to do by the American people. And I believe, as strongly as I can say, it was the right thing to do. It was the moral thing to do. And our children will have a better world because we have now stood against ethnic cleansing, and not only that, in this case, we're going to be able to reverse it and let those people go home.

Congressional Support for Airstrikes

Mr. Lehrer. What is your analysis of why, for instance, the overwhelming majority of the Republicans in the House of Representatives did not vote to support this air war in the beginning?

The President. Oh, I don't know. I prefer to be grateful for those who did support it. And quite a number did. And we had very good support, a minority of Republicans in the Senate, but a substantial number supported us in a very vocal and effective way and were prepared to go even further to ground forces, as you know.

So I'm grateful for the support that we did have. A lot of very serious, thoughtful Republicans said they thought we were doing the right thing. Speaker Hastert voted with us, and I would remind you that we got a very good vote early on, with the help of the Speaker, for the deployment of American forces in a peacekeeping operation. And then they voted to support the troops and to fund the air war. So I'm grateful for that, and I leave it to others to interpret why they did what they did.

Criticism of President

Mr. Lehrer. Senator Hagel, Republican from Nebraska, who voted for—

The President. He did.

Mr. Lehrer. —when it was in the Senate, was asked why there were so many Republicans who were not supporting this, and he said it had to do with trust. And he said, quote, “This President has debased the one currency we each have in this business, and that’s trust, and he’ll never get it back,” end quote. That’s what—his explanation as to why Congress didn’t support you any more than they did.

The President. I think that’s pretty self-serving: “I’m not going to do what’s right for my country because I don’t like Bill Clinton.” You know, that’s—I think that’s pretty self-serving.

You know, I was gratified when, a few years ago, a historian of the Presidency said that I had kept a higher percentage of my commitments to the American people than any of the last five Presidents who preceded me—an academic man at the time I’d never even met. And so I think that that element of the party devoted the better part of 7, 8 years almost—now 7 years, more than 7 years—to attacking me personally because they knew the American people agree with my ideas and the direction in which I was taking the country. And on one occasion, much to my eternal regret, I gave them a little ammunition. But I have been trustworthy in my public obligations to the American people, and I have been trustworthy in my dealings with them.

I have—I don’t agree with them, and when I don’t, I tell them. But you know, we’ve gotten quite a lot done when they have put aside their personal frustration in not owning the White House. The truth is, those folks ought to lighten up. They believe they had—they say—a lot of my Republican friends, you know, they rail against the entitlement programs. They don’t like the entitlement programs. But the truth is, for a long time they thought the White House was an entitlement program. They never thought there would be another Democratic President in their lifetime. And they’re all gearing up again because they think they’re entitled to the parking spaces outside here and to the office space and all.

And this job here and this house, it doesn’t belong to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party. The American people own this place. And we’re all just here for a little while. And they ought to just relax and realize I’m a temporary tenant and that we’re all hired hands. And we ought to work for the American

people, do our best, have the elections, and then let the people make their decision and go on again.

I think—that’s what a lot of this is. They were—they’ve just been mad ever since I won because a lot of them really never believed there would be another Democrat in their lifetime. And attacking—if you can’t beat somebody on the ideas and the issues and the philosophy and the direction of the country and if the country is doing very well, so you just get madder and madder when the country does well, then all you have left is a personal attack and say, “Oh, I just don’t trust the guy.”

But that’s not good for America. And you know, I don’t attack them personally. I’m not going to get into it. My door is always open; my phone is always open; and I’m going to keep working with them in every way I can.

Mr. Lehrer. Since, just in the last 24 hours, since this thing has come to this critical concluding point, people who were criticizing this action, not just Republicans but pundits and people in the foreign policy establishment, they’re still criticizing you. They—does that surprise you?

The President. Gosh, no. I find that in Washington, in this sort of, what Professor Deborah Tannen has called this culture of critique, if I make a mistake, people want me to admit that I made a mistake. And I have tried to do that. I think it’s quite therapeutic. It’s hard to do, and I had to get hit upside the head to do it. But I did it, and it was good for me. But if they turn out to be wrong, they just change the subject or just keep insisting that it was, you know, just a fluke.

I think the most important thing is, were we right to take a stand in Kosovo against ethnic cleansing? Were we right to do it more quickly than we did in Bosnia? Should we set up—have a principle that guides us which says: Okay, in a world where people are fighting all the time over racial or ethnic or religious problems, we can’t tell everybody they’ve got to get along; we can’t stop every fight, like the fight between Eritrea and Ethiopia, or the struggles in Chechnya; but where we can, at an acceptable cost—that is, without risking nuclear war or some other terrible thing—we ought to prevent the slaughter of innocent civilians and the wholesale uprooting of them because of their race, their ethnic background, or the way they worship God?

I think that's an important principle, myself. I think it's a noble thing. I think the United States did a good thing. Now, they may argue that I did it—went about it in the wrong way. They may—I've answered that, I hope. At least I'm confident that I did the right thing in the right way. And that's what—historians can judge that based on the long-term consequences of this. But I believe what we did was a good and decent thing. And I believe that it will give courage to people throughout the world, and I think it will give pause to people who might do what Mr. Milosevic has done throughout the world.

I feel awful that we were not equipped and able and on the job to stop what happened in Rwanda. And since then, I have done everything I could to train this Africa Crisis Response team, military from different countries in Africa, so that if that starts again—God forbid—somewhere, they can move in and stop it.

I think the world—the freedom-loving nations of the world need to be organized to try to stop this sort of thing. I mean, don't you think it's interesting that we're on the verge of a new century, and you're going to have all these millennial celebrations, and we're all going to talk about how 100,000 websites get added to the Internet every day, and we're going to unlock the mysteries of the human gene, and what a modern, rapid world we're going to be living in, and here we are bogged down everywhere in the world by the oldest problems of human society: We fear people who are different from us; pretty soon we hate them; once we start hating them, we dehumanize them; then it's easy to kill them.

Now, it seems to me if we're going to reap the promise of the 21st century, if we don't want to go to Europe or some other place and have a bunch of Americans die in a bloody war, where we can nip this stuff in the bud we ought to do it. And that's what I've tried to do. And I think it was the right thing to do.

President's Accomplishments and Goals

Mr. Lehrer. As we sit here right now, Mr. President, is this the best moment of your Presidency?

The President. Oh, no, I wouldn't say that. I don't know—you know, there's so many things that have happened here at home that have been important to me, passing the economic

plan, passing the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. So many things have happened internationally, the role that I was fortunate to be able to play in the peace process in the Middle East and in Ireland. But this could have the biggest long-term positive consequences if we do it right.

But frankly, I haven't—sometimes people say, "Well, do you feel vindicated?" The answer is no. I think America has been vindicated. I think what we stand for has been vindicated. But keep in mind, there have been lots of times in the past where people win a conflict and then squander the peace. So a lot of our work is still ahead of us. We've got to get those folks home. We've got to get those landmines up. We've got to work out these details on who's going to be involved in this peacekeeping mission. We then have to get this—we've got to organize police forces and a civil government for the Kosovars.

And then the really big thing over the long run—our European friends want to take the lead in this, but we ought to help them—we've got to get the World Bank and all these other people involved in a development plan for the Balkans that involves not just Kosovo but Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and, I hope some day, Serbia, if they have a government that respects freedom and democracy and human rights, so that these people have something pulling them together instead of these ancient ethnic troubles pulling them apart.

Now, if we get all that done, it might be perhaps the most satisfying thing because it might prove that people can lay down their hatreds of people who are different.

I basically think free people will figure out a way to make the most of their lives and work out their problems if they can get the rules of engagement right. That's why I gave somewhat of an extended answer to what you said about the Republicans, because I think—you know, differences are good. Nobody's got the whole truth. But you've got to get the rules of engagement right. And I think what we did in Kosovo was profoundly important.

Mr. Lehrer. Mr. President, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 6 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Lt. Gen.

Mike Jackson, British Royal Army, Commander, Kosovo International Security Force; Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov of Russia; CW3 David A. Gibbs, USA, and CW2 Kevin L. Reichert, USA, Apache helicopter pilots killed in a training acci-

dent in Albania on May 5; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; Deborah Tannen, professor, Georgetown University; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Videotaped Address to the Kosovar Refugees *June 12, 1999*

To all the people of Kosovo, who have suffered so much in the face of Mr. Milosevic's savage campaign of ethnic cleansing, I'm happy to say that the time of return is near. The Serb forces who drove you from your homes are leaving Kosovo. All are required to leave. The NATO-led troops who will protect you are beginning to go in. Mr. Milosevic has failed utterly in his efforts to erase your history, your culture, your presence from your land. Soon, you will be going home.

Now we must make sure you can return safely. I know you're anxious to reunite with your loved ones, to find out what condition your homes are in, to reclaim your land. But before you do, we must be certain all the Serbian forces have left and see to it that international forces are in place throughout Kosovo. We must start clearing the landmines, some of which may be in your homes, in your community buildings, along roads and bridges. We need to make sure there's enough food, water, and shelter to meet your needs. And we most urgently need to reach the desperate people who have been trapped in the hills and forests of Kosovo.

Until all of you can return in safety, we will provide aid in Albania and Macedonia. And we will not forget the kindness of the nations that have given you shelter, or their own needs for assistance and stability.

As you prepare to go home, I know you have many reasons to be bitter and full of anger. But I ask you not to let Mr. Milosevic have

the victory of seeing your spirits broken and your hearts turn to stone. No one should do to the ethnic Serbs who live in Kosovo what their leaders did to you. Do not prove Mr. Milosevic right, that people of different ethnic and religious groups are inevitably enemies.

No human being should ever have to experience what you have been forced to endure. We will seek effective justice through law for the perpetrators of these crimes. But we must have an end to ethnic cleansing and the beginning of a Kosovo where every child can go to school, every family can practice its faith, every community can live a normal life in peace. That is what we fought for. That is what NATO peacekeepers will help build when they go in. That is the future we now have a chance to shape together.

I thank you for your courage and your endurance, and I look forward to seeing you go home.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 6:35 p.m. on June 11 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET in the Balkan region. The transcript was embargoed for release until 2 a.m., e.d.t., on June 12. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

The President's Radio Address

June 12, 1999

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about what I believe we must do to ensure that more American families have the high quality health care they need to thrive. Our medical care is the best in the world, and we must make sure our health care system is, too. We all know this system is rapidly changing. Already, more than half of all Americans are in managed care plans. On balance, I think managed care has been good for America, decreasing costs and increasing Americans' access to preventive care.

But clearly, we must do more to make sure that when health care plans cut costs, they don't cut quality and that the bottom line never becomes more important than patients' needs. That's why more than a year and a half ago, I asked Congress to pass a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights that ensures critical protections for Americans in managed care, from the right to see a specialist to the right to emergency room care whenever and wherever you need it, to the right to hold health plans accountable for harmful decisions.

Using my authority as President, I've already acted to make these rights real for 85 million Americans who get their health care through Federal plans, from Medicare and Medicaid to the Veterans Administration health plan that serves millions of veterans and their families.

But until Congress acts, tens of millions of Americans in managed care are still waiting for the full protection of a Patients' Bill of Rights. Democrats in Congress have long been pressing to pass a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, and nearly every doctors' association, every nurses' association, every patients' rights group in America agrees that we need it now.

The Republican leadership in Congress has acknowledged that poor quality in managed care is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. I'm pleased that Senate Majority Leader Lott said he would bring managed care reform legislation to a vote on the Senate floor early this

summer. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership's legislation falls far short of providing American families the protections they need in a changing health care system.

Because it only applies to some health plans, it leaves tens of millions of Americans without these guarantees. It doesn't ensure patients access to specialists, like oncologists and cardiologists. It doesn't prevent health plans from forcing patients to change doctors in mid-treatment. It doesn't provide adequate recourse when a health plan provides less than adequate care. And it does not make clear, once and for all, accountants should not be able to arbitrarily overturn medical decisions.

A Patients' Bill of Rights that doesn't provide these important protections is a Patients' Bill of Rights in name only, and our people deserve better. Protecting our families should be an issue that brings us together. I've been encouraged that many Republicans have said they would work with Democrats to pass strong, enforceable managed care reform.

Today I ask the congressional leadership to move the right kind of managed care reform to the very top of their agenda. After all, we all get sick; we all need health care. No one asks us what our party affiliation is when we show up at the emergency room or the doctor's office. This isn't a partisan issue anywhere else in America; it shouldn't be in Washington, DC. Let's hold an open, fair debate and pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights that will strengthen our health care system, strengthen our families, and strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:57 p.m. on June 10 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Commencement Address at the University of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois
June 12, 1999

Thank you very much. President Sonnenschein, members of the faculty, distinguished guests; to the family and friends and the graduates. I was very interested to hear the account of William McKinley's trip here and wondering how many of you would rather it had rained. *[Laughter]* You wouldn't be so hot, and you'd be assured of a short speech. *[Laughter]*

Let me say to those who have spoken before, to the three student speakers and to Dr. Fuchs, I appreciate what you said, and I was very impressed by it. I'm also delighted to see Dr. Janet Rowley here, to whom I recently presented the National Medal of Science, a great tribute to her and to this great institution.

I got asked a lot of interesting questions by the students as they were passing by and were shaking hands. Some were wondering what I could possibly be thinking about as 850 of you went by. One of the things I was thinking about was, how can I make this speech shorter for you? *[Laughter]* And I would like to summarize what I came here to say.

Originally, I wanted to come here to talk about the global economy in which you will live and work and the society which embraces it and what challenges we face in shaping it in the best possible way. I know that is of concern to a lot of people here because so many of the graduates went by with their little white stickers that said, "Fair trade, not free trade: I signed the pledge." Right? You did? *[Applause]* That's what that means; that means that we're worried about this global economy. We're not sure it's working in a way that's fair.

And I would like to speak primarily about that, but I also would like to say just a word or two in the beginning about what is happening in Kosovo, because I think it is symptomatic of the world that you will or will not face.

Don't you think it's interesting—look around the senior class here, all of you that went through and got your degrees—as America grows more and more diverse, as we live in a world where, near as I can tell, the number of webpages on the Internet is growing by about a million a day, where soon the mysteries of the human genome will be unlocked and many

of you when you have your first children will be able to get a roadmap to your child's health and the problems in ways that will preserve life and quality of life in a manner undreamed of just a few years ago, that in all this modern age which embraces you and toward which you look, that the biggest problem the world has today is really the oldest problem of human society: We are naturally afraid of people who are different from us.

And it is quite an easy thing for fear to be transformed into hatred, to be transformed into dehumanizing the other, and then to be transformed into a justification for uprooting or killing them. That is what is going on in Kosovo.

We have—my administration and I, my wife and I, my Vice President and I—all of us have personally committed ourselves for over 6½ years now to working for peace in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, anyplace in the world where the United States could be a positive force to get people to lay down their racial, their ethnic, their tribal, their religious hatreds.

We intervened militarily in Kosovo because I believe that when ethnic hatred and fighting turns into the mass slaughter and uprooting of totally innocent civilians, if we have the power to stop it, we ought to. It took us 4 years before action was taken in Bosnia when the same thing happened, and by that time a quarter of a million people had died, and 2½ million people had become refugees.

In Rwanda 700,000 people were slaughtered in just 100 days. We were caught flat-footed. And for 4 years I have worked to train the militaries of many African countries so that we can work together to stop anything like that from ever happening again on the continent of Africa.

And today the NATO forces, the British defense, the Americans, and others to come, soon to be nearly 30 countries, moved into Kosovo. We are determined to reverse the ethnic cleansing. We look forward to working with Russia and others who may not have agreed with our military campaign but do agree with the proposition that all the people of that tiny land, Serb and Albanian alike, should be able to live in

peace and dignity. You will have to decide. [Applause] Thank you.

One of the things that you will have to decide is how much you care about that. There are serious people who say that we should not have done this because, at least nominally, Kosovo is a part of Serbia; so no matter how lamentable the human suffering was, no one should have done anything about it. We should have just said, "We're very sorry. We wish you would stop. And if you want to do it, no one will stop you." I think that would have been a terrible mistake. But you will have to decide.

Soon all of you will be in the position of responsibility, of decisionmaking. But if you just look around at the people who got their diplomas today, people from every conceivable culture, every country, all kinds of racial groups, doubtless every conceivable political view, free people will normally work out their differences and their challenges in a good and satisfactory way if the rules of engagement are fair and decent and people treat each other with respect and honor their fundamental human dignity.

I believe we did a good thing in Kosovo. It is perhaps the first conflict ever fought where no one wanted any land or money or geopolitical advantage. We just wanted to stop and reverse ethnic cleansing and stand up for the proposition that in the 21st century world all of us ought to be able to live and work together. Even when we don't get along, even if we fight, the innocent civilians should not be swept up, en masse, as they were there. I hope you will uphold that principle when you're in a position to make decisions.

Now let me give you a summary of what I meant to say—I came here to say, about the economy. All of you are already, by definition, having graduated from this great university, guaranteed winners in the global economy. It's an interesting place. Why? For one thing, you're almost certainly far more computer literate than any of your parents, in a world that is linked together increasingly by ties of both communication and commerce.

The world is growing increasingly democratic, also increasingly digital, increasingly interactive. Listen to this: Every single day a half a million airline passengers, 1.4 billion E-mail messages, and \$1.5 trillion cross national borders. There are now over 7 billion E-mail messages every day just within the United States, but over a

billion cross national borders; over \$1½ trillion moving around the world every day.

This is a world economy the United States had a lot to do with creating and one from which we have, doubtless, richly benefited, with the strongest economy we have enjoyed perhaps in our entire history. But it is not an economy or a society free of challenges. So while we embrace the idea that free societies and free markets can create enormous economic opportunity, I wanted to come here to this campus, where long ago it was proclaimed that economic and political freedom are indivisible, to say that we now know, as a newer group of scholars here have told us, that the power and logic of the free market needs—to fully succeed—enduring, strong social institutions that preserve the integrity of work and family, of community and nation.

They do so by ensuring the integrity of the market, moderating the cycles of boom and bust, and building a social safety net and the opportunity for all to move up the ladder. A legal framework of mutual responsibility and social safety is not destructive to the market; it is essential to its success.

And all of us know that the problem with the new global economy is that it is both more rewarding and more destructive. More people are doing well, but more are also being left behind, sometimes whole countries left behind. The aggregate debt of sub-Saharan Africa, for example, today is twice the annual income.

So the question is, how can we create a global economy with a human face, one that rewards work everywhere, one that gives all people a chance to improve their lot and still raise their families in dignity and support communities that are coming together, not being torn apart?

It is, actually, the same question the United States was facing when President McKinley came here 100 years ago, except we were asking, "How can we create a national economy that can deal with this vast uprooting of people moving from the farm to the factory, from rural areas to the cities? How do we deal with the abuses of child labor? How do we deal with all the problems that were created when, to be sure, vast new opportunities were established, but there was so much churning change it was difficult to believe that there would be a net result in social justice for ordinary people?"

Well, through the Progressive Era, all the way through the New Deal, for more than 20 years,

the American people worked through their Government to try to develop a national economy with a human face.

What did they do? They created the Federal reserve law. They then created the regulatory agencies that preserve the integrity of our markets, the securities and exchange laws, the commodities laws that govern the Chicago commodities market. They created economic policies to moderate the cycle of boom and bust. And they created a social safety net to try to give everybody the chance to be a part of our life. They guaranteed the right of people to organize at work and to get a decent education. And after the Second World War, they opened up higher education to middle class people on a massive scale. And we're still living with the benefits in the United States of America.

Our task is to advance these same values in the international economy. I don't ask you to agree with my prescriptions, but I ask you to agree that this is a challenge. To pretend that all the answers are self-evident, after all we have seen just in the last 5 years, would be folly.

The first thing we have to do is to keep our own country on the cutting edge of progress and change. That means we have to continue legitimate investments in the research of tomorrow, just as Government support led to splitting the atom beneath Stagg Field a half a century ago, and Government support helped to create the Internet just a very few years ago, which set off a chain reaction that in its own way was more powerful than the chain reaction of the atom.

One study shows today the Internet economy generates \$300 billion in revenue, provides 1.2 million jobs. Seven new people join the Internet every second. So should the Government help to create the next generation of Internet, a thousand times faster than today, able to transmit the contents of the Encyclopedia Britannica every second? I think the answer is yes.

The spread of this technology to tens of millions of ordinary citizens will not only increase productivity; it will democratize economic opportunity. It will give us a freedom web in a world transformed.

The second thing we have to do is to figure out how to make the choice between the things on the sticker go away, free trade and fair trade. We have to figure out how to build a system that is both free and fair and not just for work-

ers in the United States but in other countries of the world.

I would like to say, first of all, a few facts. The United States has 4½ percent of the world's population, 22 percent of its income. We cannot sustain our standard of living unless we sell some things to other people. It won't happen.

Secondly, it is simply not true that trade has, on balance, been a negative for the United States or for other countries. Millions and millions, hundreds of millions of people have moved to middle class existences around the world because of more open borders and more open trade.

Third, it is true that trade can lead to disruptions and that some of them are not justified by economic forces. The problems facing the steel industry today, because of dumping into our markets after the collapse of the Asian economy and the Russian economy for the last 2 years, is a good example of that.

So the trick is to find a way, first of all, to help people who are unavoidably dislocated to start a new life if what they are doing cannot be sustained in the economy; secondly, to enforce our trade laws vigorously if people are unfairly discriminated against; and thirdly, to continue to expand trade but on terms that benefit all people.

I have long believed that a strong economy in a foreign land is not a threat to our jobs; it's a new market for America's products, an engine of human dignity and environmental preservation, a partner for peace and freedom and security. But I strongly believe that the only way to do that is to have trade agreements that lift everybody up, not pull everybody down. They shouldn't undermine labor rights or environmental standards. They should enhance labor standards and environmental protection all across the world.

Presidents have used trade talks to protect interests in intellectual property and interest in food safety. I want Congress to give me the ability to use trade talks to protect the environment and the rights of workers, as well.

I want us to stand for the right to organize against an end to forced labor and especially against abusive child labor. You know, in many, many communities around the world, tens of millions of children work in conditions that shock the conscience and send the products to us and to other wealthy countries.

Last year we increased by 10 times our efforts to stop abusive child labor around the globe. Today I'm directing all State and Federal agencies to make absolutely sure they're not buying any products of abusive child labor. Next week I am going to Switzerland to seek a worldwide agreement to ban the worst child labor in every nation in the world.

But I ask you to think about this. People will say, "Well, we're a poor country. We have to earn money however we can." If you could see the conditions these 8- and 9-year-old children are working in, if you want them to go to school, if you understand those countries will never grow until they begin to educate their children—the girls as well as their boys, which is a big issue in a lot of countries—we have to start with the abolition of child labor.

Meanwhile, I think we ought to continue to expand trade. We ought to enforce our agreements more vigorously. But I do not believe that a country with 4½ percent of the world's people can maintain its standard of living if we don't have more customers. We did it for a year last year, but we can't do it over the long run.

I want to do more with our friends in Africa and Central America and the Caribbean. I want to bring China into the World Trade Organization on fair and strong terms. I want to resist quotas but to vigorously enforce our trade laws. I do believe you can have fair and freer trade. But we'll have to work at it.

Very briefly, you heard me say that \$1½ trillion crosses national borders every day. There are now problems with the global financial economy, completely independent of the global trading system; \$1½ trillion is way more than the total value of trade in goods and services every day. There has become an independent market for money in itself, as you would imagine.

But what happens is, even though this free flow of capital has helped a lot of countries to grow wealthy, it has also increased the vulnerability to rapid ups and downs and shocks and instability. Over the long run, countries that have suffered in the last 2 years, like Korea and Thailand, are still much better off than they were 10 years ago. But we have to do more to tame the cycles of boom and bust in the global economy, and we are working hard on that.

I'm going to Europe next week to talk to the leaders of the large industrial nations about

the other steps we have to take. We have to spread the benefits of global growth more widely. It is in our interests for other countries to do better. The global community cannot survive as a tale of two cities: one modern and integrated, a cell phone in every hand, a McDonald's on every street corner; the other mired in poverty and increasingly resentful, covered with public health and environmental problems no one can manage.

We have to widen the circle of opportunity. We should invest more in the education of children around the world. We should invest more in helping people deal with public health problems, like AIDS, and helping people turn back their serious environmental problems. And we must reduce the burden of debt on the poorest countries of the world.

Today our Treasury Secretary, Bob Rubin, is putting forth a proposal to more than triple debt relief for the world's poorest nations and then to target the savings they will get to the education, health care, and alleviation of poverty of their citizens. It is a good thing, and I hope the people of the United States will support it.

Finally, I believe perhaps the greatest thing that will occupy you for the next 20 to 30 years on this front is the need to find a way to grow the global economy and to continue to improve the environment and, specifically, to reduce greenhouse gases so that we can avert further global warming.

It's interesting to me that some people say this is not a problem at all, and others say it can only be solved by actions that will weaken our economy. I disagree. We now have the technology—for the first time in history, in the last few years, we have the technology to grow a big economy without industrial-age energy use.

This is a university of big ideas. If you want to leave here with just one idea, don't let anybody convince you that the only way America can have a strong economy, the only way India can grow its economy, the only way China can grow its economy is to maintain the same sort of energy use patterns, with huge emissions of greenhouse gases making big contributions to global warming, that we used for the last 50 years. It is not true.

And I have asked the Congress to provide tax incentives to the private sector and further research, to make sure we can make this technology widely available. I issued an order last

week to the Federal Government that will cut our greenhouse gas emissions in Federal buildings by 30 percent over the next few years. I'm telling you, we can do this on presently available technology.

But we are in the grip of an old idea. Many people in America are. People all over the world are. We have got to join together to learn how to alleviate poverty around the world, expand the middle class everywhere, provide more economic opportunity for all of you who are so well-positioned, and still understand that we can reduce pollution and environmental problems and global warming. It is not true anymore that you have to destroy the environment to grow the economy, and you can lead the charge in turning the world away from that.

But that's what I want to say to you about the economy you're moving into. We have not made the adjustments to put a human face on the global economy that we made in the early decades of this century to put a human face on our national economy. It will require a trading system that is both freer and fairer. It will require the alleviation of debt in the poorest

countries. It will require the respect of environmental and labor rights in all countries. It will require new investments in education and health care.

It will require a genuine commitment—a genuine commitment—to the proposition that societies should be free, but they should be coherent; that we should always be able to balance work with family and community; and that what unites us is profoundly more important than all of our differences. I hope that that is the world of your future, the world that you will make.

Thank you, congratulations, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. in the quad at the University of Chicago. In his remarks, he referred to Hugo F. Sonnenschein, president, Elaine Fuchs and Janet D. Rowley, professors, and Ana Christina Faria, Thymaya O'Brien Payne, and Michael Rossman, students, University of Chicago. The Executive order of June 12 on child labor and the Executive order of June 3 on Government energy management are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the Illinois Air National Guard in Chicago *June 12, 1999*

Thank you very much. General Keistler, General Rezac, General Austin, ladies and gentlemen, it's a great honor for me to be here today with the men and women of the 126th Air Refueling Wing and its supporting units, the 217th Engineering and Installation Squadron, the 264th Combat Communications Squadron, the 566th Air Force Band, with all the families and friends.

I know this is an emotional day for you. This has been a very important installation to the people of Chicago. And when I told Hillary what I was doing today, she was very jealous that she couldn't be here with me, but she's in California bringing our daughter home from school. Those of you who've had your children go off to school know that's a pretty big day. But I am profoundly honored to be here at your final coming together before the Wing goes to Scott Air Force Base and others go to Peoria and to Springfield.

I wanted to come here more than anything else to thank you for your many years of service. I know the people of Chicago will miss you and that they, too, are especially grateful for their Chicago Air Guard. You have been a very important part of the life of this city, as well as the defense of your country. I know many of you must be relieved that the transition is almost over, not to have to make the umpteenth trip between here and Belleville. But I wanted to say that as difficult as it might be, this move, I believe, will work out well for all concerned. It will clearly be good for the economy of the city of Chicago, for the Air National Guard, and for our military because, as all of you know, in order to maintain the quality of life of our service personnel and to have adequate funds for modernization to keep our forces ready to defend freedom, we have to streamline our infrastructure.

I wanted to come here to help mark this turning point for you, again, mostly to say thanks but especially to do so now, when you and other Air Guard members all across America have done so much to help our operation in Kosovo succeed. Thank you so much for a job very well done there. You should be proud of yourselves.

I sometimes think the American people don't understand as much as they should about the role the Air Guard and our Reserve forces play in the defense of our country. You are an essential component in our total force. And in this case, once again America called on you, and you delivered.

No one should be surprised. I think it is fitting to recall a little history at this last meeting. The 126th has risen to security challenges for generations. Your predecessor unit went to France in World War I and served with the American Expeditionary Force there. You provided vital air defense in World War II. You were the first Air Guard unit in America to take up the challenge of air refueling. You took to the skies in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. You supported our efforts for peace in Bosnia and contributed to humanitarian relief operations. For more than two decades you have had aircraft on full alert, ready to go anytime, anywhere, to provide refueling and airlift support. In Operation Allied Force, you did the job once again, readying these KC-135 Stratotankers, flying sortie after sortie, fueling NATO's efforts.

Some of you may know that yesterday I went to Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri to thank our B-2 pilots there. And all the B-2 pilots and their crews said repeatedly, "We could never have done this if it hadn't been for the people who ran the refueling operations." So again I say, thank you, thank you, thank you.

We prevailed in Operation Allied Force because of units like yours and the others in the United States military and those of our Allies. But I would like to say today to you what I said yesterday in Whiteman. In addition to your power, I appreciate the power of your example. Troops from all across our NATO nations speak different languages; from different ethnic and religious backgrounds they come; they stand side by side for a world of justice and tolerance. But especially the American military reflects the kaleidoscope of peoples, the races, the tribes,

the ethnic groups, the religious convictions that are increasingly being brought into closer and closer contact in this world.

Here in Chicago it is very important for me to say again, we have no quarrel with the Serbian people. They were our allies in World War II, and they fought bravely. And this country has been immensely enriched by the contributions of Serbian-Americans. I know and am very proud of the fact that in this very Wing you have ethnic Serbs and ethnic Albanians, some with relatives in Kosovo. You have people of Serbian and Albanian descent flying together, proving that we do find strength in our diversity and we come together for the common good. That should not only make us proud to be Americans, it should convince us that the same thing can and should happen in the Balkans, in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, in South Asia, wherever today people still find themselves bedeviled by their hatred of one another because of their different races, because, in the case of Africa, their different tribes, because of their different ethnic groups, because of the different ways in which they worship God.

I want you to think about that tonight and be especially proud. We want—we want—the people who live in the Balkans to be able to work together the way the people in this unit who come from the Balkans work together. We are all children of God, endowed with certain inalienable rights and entitled to mutual respect. And you do that, and I thank you for that.

Thanks to you and others, today our NATO troops entered Kosovo, the British, the French, and the Americans beginning. Eventually, there will be troops from nearly 30 nations there. We are working now with the Russians to ensure that we can work together with a unified command structure, as we have done so well in Bosnia. I think this is important, because if we can work there with the Russians as we have in Bosnia, we will demonstrate clearly our commitment as Americans to protect all the civilians of Kosovo, the Serbs and the Albanians alike. That is what we have pledged to do; that is what we intend to do.

But today in the camps in Albania and Macedonia, in the villages and in the hills of Kosovo where so many innocent people have had to hide and forage for food, among the Kosovar Albanians who have taken refuge elsewhere including here in the United States, people are getting ready to go home. They will go back

to their homes and their lives with safety and self-government.

And the United States will have stood for the proposition that we can't expect everyone to get along; we can't expect people never to fight; but we do expect that when we can stop it, innocent civilians will not be slaughtered, burned out of their homes, have their houses of worship blown up, have their personal records destroyed, have their children abused. We will not tolerate ethnic cleansing and killing. It should not be a part of the 21st century world, thanks to you.

And so let me say just one last time, as you prepare to leave O'Hare, to retire or head for your new homes and duties, the whole world is grateful to you. You have ended this chapter in the history of your Wing and your units on

a truly triumphant note. You have helped to end this century, which has seen so much bloodshed and hatred, not with a feeling of helpless indignation at yet another travesty but instead with a ringing reaffirmation of the dignity of all human beings. You did it. It's quite a way to close out your stay here.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. in Hangar 30 at Chicago O'Hare International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Harold E. Keistler, USAF, Commander, 126th Air Refueling Wing; Brig. Gen. Frank D. Rezac, USAF, Commander, Illinois Air National Guard; and Maj. Gen. Richard G. Austin, Illinois National Guard, Adjutant General, State of Illinois.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Military Personnel as Part of the Kosovo International Security Force

June 12, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On March 26, April 7, and May 25, 1999, I reported to the Congress, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, concerning U.S. participation in the NATO air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and in supporting operations in the region, in response to the FRY Government's campaign of violence and repression against the civilian population of Kosovo. In my report of June 5, 1999, under section 8115 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-262), I noted the FRY had accepted the detailed set of principles for ending the conflict, as presented by Finnish President Ahtisaari along with Russian Special Envoy Chernomyrdin. I also stated that I had authorized the deployment of a significant contingent of military personnel to Kosovo as part of an international security presence (KFOR), provided it became clear that Belgrade had fully adopted NATO's conditions and was withdrawing its forces.

I can now confirm that the FRY has accepted NATO's conditions, and the process of implementing them has begun. On June 9, Lieutenant General Sir Michael Jackson, the NATO com-

mander of KFOR, concluded a Military-Technical Agreement (MTA) with FRY authorities. The MTA specifies the detailed modalities and schedule for the full withdrawal of all FRY military, paramilitary and police forces from Kosovo. The MTA also details the role and authorities of KFOR, confirming that it can take the measures necessary to create a secure environment for the return of the Kosovars to their homes in safety and self-government. Among other authorities, KFOR is empowered to ensure that the withdrawal of FRY forces proceeds on schedule, to protect KFOR and the civil implementation presence, and assist other international entities involved in restoring peace to Kosovo.

Conclusion of the MTA and the subsequent start of Serb force withdrawals paved the way for NATO to suspend its air campaign on June 10, 1999, and for the United Nations Security Council on the same day to adopt Resolution 1244 authorizing the establishment of the international security force.

In view of these events, I have directed the deployment of approximately 7,000 U.S. military

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personnel as the U.S. contribution to the approximately 50,000-member, NATO-led security force (KFOR) now being deployed into Kosovo. The KFOR will operate under unified NATO command and control, and with rules of engagement set by the Alliance. As part of the central NATO role that we have insisted upon, and consistent with the recommendations of my senior civilian and military advisors, U.S. personnel participating in these efforts will be under the operational control solely of officers from the United States or other NATO countries. In addition, a total of approximately 1,500 U.S. military personnel, under separate U.S. command and control, will deploy to other countries in the region, as our national support element, in support of KFOR.

I expect that after the withdrawal of all Serb forces from Kosovo and an initial stabilization period, KFOR will be progressively reduced as the security situation permits and international

and local police forces are established. The KFOR ultimately will transfer responsibilities to the international provisional administration, local institutions, and other appropriate organizations.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the continued support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 14.

Remarks on Gun Control Legislation June 15, 1999

The President. Please be seated, everyone. Welcome to the Rose Garden on this beautiful afternoon. I want to especially thank those who will be speaking after me, Representatives Connie Morella and Carolyn McCarthy and our leader of the Democrats in the House, Dick Gephardt. I thank the many Members of Congress who are here, and others for whom they speak who are not able to be here this afternoon.

I also want to thank Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, Treasury Under Secretary Jim Johnson, Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics Jan Chaiken, representatives of the law enforcement and faith communities, gun advocacy, and victims groups who are here today.

Five and a half years ago, here at the White House, I signed the Brady bill into law. I was especially pleased to be standing that day beside two great women fighters against gun violence, Sarah Brady and Attorney General Janet Reno. Today I am proud to be here with Congresswoman Morella and Congresswoman McCarthy and many other of the women Members of the United States House of Representatives, along

with some men they allowed to come along today—[laughter]—and who appreciated being invited.

I think it is important to note that women Members of both parties in Washington and women who belong to both parties in America, all over this country, have been in the forefront of this fight. They care about it as mothers, as sisters, as daughters, as citizens of this country. In the audience with us today are a number of mothers and fathers whose children have been victims of gun violence, and others who have personally suffered from it. Particularly to those who have been personally affected, I thank you for coming.

On that day when I signed the Brady bill, I said that our efforts to produce this bill proved once again that democracy can work. The American people and their grassroots demand for commonsense action against gun violence prevailed over the entrenched and very powerful Washington gun lobby. Now, in the aftermath of the terrible shootings at Littleton, our Nation is even more galvanized to act on every front

to reduce crime, especially violence committed by and against our children.

In recent weeks, we've talked about the need to reduce our children's exposure to violence in the media and have taken steps to do just that. We've talked about the need for parents to be more present in their children's lives, and we are taking steps to give parents new time to do so. We've talked about the need for a national grassroots citizens effort to combat violence against children, and we're in the process of establishing that. But we've also talked about the need to take new steps to keep guns out of the hands of juveniles, criminals, and others who shouldn't have them.

Now is the time for those of us in Government to act by strengthening the Brady law. Congress has a chance to do that this week. Once again, the gun lobby is resisting with all its might. Once again, we're battling not just for the safety of our families but for the soundness of our democracy.

Support for the Brady bill is as bipartisan, as broad as the American people. Teachers, doctors, law enforcement officials, even gun manufacturers, support it. About the only ones who are against it, still, are the NRA and its allies in Congress. It seems that every day they try another procedural or rhetorical trick to confuse everyone and avoid responsibility. These are the same kind of tactical smokescreens they threw up 6 years ago.

Back then—now, let's just remember—I want every Member of Congress to think about this before they vote on Thursday. What did they say 6 years ago? They said the Brady bill threatened the right of citizens to own firearms. Well, today we know the second amendment, hunting, and sport shooting are alive and well in America, just as alive and well as they were in 1994. But we also know they said gun violence wouldn't be reduced if the Brady bill passed. But since 1993, gun crimes have fallen by over 25 percent. Police chiefs all across America believe the Brady law is vital to their efforts.

You remember the gun lobby said that requiring background checks at gun stores wouldn't keep guns out of the hands of criminals, because criminals don't buy guns at stores, they said. Well, that claim has now been disproved hundreds of thousands of times.

Periodically, the Justice Department estimates how effective the Brady law has been in keeping guns out of the hands of those who shouldn't

have them. Today I'm pleased to announce the latest figures. Since it went into effect in 1994, the Brady law has blocked over 400,000 illegal gun sales. That's a pretty good record for the United States of America.

Two-thirds—two-thirds of those sales were to people indicted or convicted of felony crimes. Most of the rest were fugitives or had records of domestic violence, drug abuse, or mental illness. We have stopped over 400,000 gun sales that were dangerous since 1994 because Congress listened to the American people and not the NRA and passed the Brady bill. And I'll say again, every single red flag they threw up about all the danger and all the burden and all the problems this would be to gun owners was wrong, wrong, wrong.

Now, Congress has another vitally important choice before it. Are they going to strengthen the Brady bill or weaken it? The Brady law has worked. It's worked so well, in fact, that criminals now have to buy their weapons at places not fully covered by the gun laws, like gun shows and flea markets.

Now, you remember when the NRA said in 1994, "We don't really need the Brady bill, because people don't buy their guns at gun stores; these criminals don't buy their guns there." So, now they want to protect the sales at the places where the criminals do buy their guns, the flea markets and the gun shows. Someone ought to go back before we vote on Thursday and read them what they said in 1994 and remind them where they do buy the guns.

Earlier this year, I sent to Congress measures to close the loophole by expanding the background checks to gun shows and to flea markets where guns are sold along with other items. Last month the Senate passed these measures, thanks to a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Gore and despite efforts by the gun lobby to shoot new loopholes in the Brady law. The Senate did the right thing, and the House should follow suit.

Now, I want to be fair to the House Members who are not here. This is a harder vote in the House, and we have to work harder to help them and to stand by them. Why? Because some of our Members who desperately want to vote for this bill come from congressional districts which are less populous than almost all States and where the influence of the NRA and their ability to promote scare tactics and misinformation is relatively greater. So, it's a harder vote,

and we're going to have to work harder, all of us.

But look at what they're being asked to do. They're being asked to reject the measures that the Senate passed, which were by any standard moderate and commonsense, and instead adopt bills that were ghostwritten by the NRA. Listen to this: The gun lobby's bill would leave a gaping loophole in the gun show provision, would exempt flea markets from Brady checks altogether. Now, this is from the same group that told us in 1994 there was no point in regulating sales at gun stores because the criminals got their guns somewhere else. So, now we want to go somewhere else, and they can't wait to protect that. Someone should ask about this before we have a vote on Thursday.

This provision of theirs would invite felons, fugitives, and stalkers to buy their weapons at flea markets or walk out in the parking lot at the gun show. The gun lobby's bill would shorten the time allowed for background checks, giving thousands of criminals a year the chance to slip through the system. They would let gun dealers ship weapons—now, listen to this—I want to say this again. Sometimes we get up here, we read these speeches, and I get too much in a hurry. I want you to listen to this. They would let gun dealers ship weapons directly to unlicensed buyers across State lines, reversing 30 years of settled law that has helped to control interstate gunrunning.

I want the House to reject these bills and pass legislation that will strengthen, not weaken, the Brady law. I want us to honor the sacrifices of those people in Littleton, Colorado, not turn our backs on them.

I also think the House should take further action to reduce gun violence, especially among the young. Yesterday the Vice President announced a new Government study showing that young people, age 18 through 20, make up just 4 percent of our population but commit 24 percent of all gun murders. We could save lives by raising the legal age of handgun possession from 18 to 21, and I ask the House to do that as well.

I also call on the House to mandate that child safety locks be sold with all new handguns, as the Senate has done.

Let me say, I have been deeply encouraged by the comments we've been getting, the calls we've gotten here at the White House, from

people identifying themselves as Republicans as well as Democrats, people identifying themselves as long-time NRA members, who say, "This is crazy. Why are we out here fighting an attempt to close the loopholes in gun shows and flea markets? How can we be against child safety locks? Why should kids under the age of 21 be walking the streets with these guns?" America is in a different place than they were in 1994. The numbers are larger and more intense. We have all been sobered by what we have been through in these school shootings and the 13 children a day that die by gun violence in ones and twos and never make the evening news.

This is too important an issue to be decided by strong-arm lobbying tactics in Washington. The heart and soul of America is on the line. And out in America, this is not a partisan issue.

I would like now to introduce someone who embodies the best of our bipartisan efforts, Congresswoman Connie Morella, from the State of Maryland.

[At this point, Representatives Constance A. Morella, Carolyn McCarthy, and Richard A. Gephardt made brief remarks.]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, we're about to adjourn. Congress has to go back to cast a vote. I want to thank Congresswoman Morella, Congresswoman McCarthy, Leader Gephardt, all the Members who are here.

I don't know what will be on the evening news tonight, but one thing I hope will be remembered: Carolyn McCarthy, who has earned a right to stand here before God and every American and say whatever she pleases about this issue, said that the Congress needed to hear from the American people in the next 2 days. And Dick Gephardt said that Congress needs to listen to its heart. Connie Morella said it is a nonpartisan issue. I hope those three things will be heard and remembered.

God bless you, and thank you for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sarah Brady, chair, Handgun Control, Inc.

Remarks Honoring Rosa Parks at the Congressional Gold Medal Award Ceremony June 15, 1999

Thank you so much. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gephardt, Senator Daschle, Representative Carson, Senator Abraham, Representative Clyburn, Representative Watts, to all the Members of the House and the Senate here, and those not here, who supported this resolution, I thank you for what you have done. Dr. Ogilvie, Dr. Ford, Reverend Jackson, members of the Cabinet and the civil rights community who are here, Dr. Height.

I'd like to say a special word of welcome to two members of the Little Rock Nine who came here to honor Rosa Parks: Minnijean Brown Trickey and Robert Jefferson, welcome to you. I want to thank the Howard University Gospel Choir and the incomparable Jessye Norman for their wonderful, wonderful music.

The previous speakers have spoken with great power, eloquence, and truth. In less than 200 days now, we will mark the end of another century. They have told you the story of one brave woman and the ripples of impact she had upon all the millions of people who lived in the United States. It is, in many ways, the quintessential story of the 20th century, a time with trials and tribulations which still, fundamentally, is the story of the triumph of freedom, of democracy over dictatorship, free enterprise over state socialism, of tolerance over bigotry.

It was a fight waged on the beaches of Normandy, on the islands of the South Pacific, at Checkpoint Charlie, behind the Iron Curtain, and countless known and unknown, large and small villages across the globe; here, at home, a fight waged in classrooms, lunch counters, and on public buses in the segregated South. For us, what has always been at stake is whether we could keep moving on that stony road, closer to the ideals of our Founders, whether we really could be a country where we are all equal, not only endowed by our Creator with, but in fact living with, the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Forty-four years ago Rosa Parks reminded us all that we were a long way from those ideals, that for millions of Americans, our history was full of weary years, our sweet land of liberty bearing only bitter fruit and silent tears. And so she sat, anchored to that seat, as Dr. King

said, "by the accumulated indignities of days gone by and the countless aspirations of generations yet unborn."

Rosa Parks said, "I didn't get on that bus to get arrested. I got on that bus to go home." [Laughter] In so many ways, Rosa Parks brought America home to our Founders' dream.

You know, when we look across the history of the civil rights movement, we celebrate President Lincoln and the Congress of that era—for Constitutional amendments. We celebrate William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass. In our own period, we celebrate President Eisenhower and sending the troops to Little Rock, the commitment of John and Robert Kennedy, the magnificent legislative achievements of President Johnson and that Congress, reaching across party lines.

But we know that in a funny way, people who have no position or money and have only the power of their courage and character are always there before the political leaders. We know that.

When Rosa Parks got on that bus in Alabama, I was a 9-year-old boy, living in Arkansas, going to segregated schools, riding public buses every single day, where all the colored people sat in the back. My family got a television when I was 9 years old, just a few months before it became worldwide news that Mrs. Parks had gotten on the bus. I thought it was a pretty good deal and so did my friends. And we couldn't figure out anything we could do, since we couldn't even vote. So, we began to sit on the back of the bus when we got on. [Laughter]

It seems like—I say this—now, this is a little thing. I say it only to say we must never, ever, when this ceremony is over, forget about the power of ordinary people to stand in the fire for the cause of human dignity and to touch the hearts of people that have almost turned to stone.

I thank the Congress for honoring Rosa Parks. I was honored, Rosa, to give you the Medal of Freedom, and I was thrilled during the State of the Union Address when you got that enormous bipartisan ovation here. But remember, my fellow Americans, freedom's work is never

done. There are still people who are discriminated against. There are still people—there are still people that because of their human condition are looked down on, derided, degraded, demeaned. And we should all remember the powerful example of this one citizen. And those of us with greater authority and power should attempt every day, in every way, to follow her lead.

God bless you, Mrs. Parks, and God bless America.

Now—[*applause*]*—thank you. Now, I would like to—again, this is my errand for Congresswoman Carson and Senator Abraham and the Speaker and Mr. Gephardt and the other leaders here. I understand the actual medal has not been struck yet, but a “gold line” copy of the resolution that authorizes the medal has been struck, or prepared, for Mrs. Parks. And I’d like to ask all of you to look to my left, to your right, for a glimpse of the proposed design for the medal.*

Could we—Julia, why don’t you go down there, and you and Spence can—[*laughter*]*—wow, it’s beautiful. Really beautiful, isn’t it? Let’s give a big hand to Artis Lane, who was the artist who prepared this. Didn’t she do a wonderful job? [Applause]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. in the rotunda at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Julia Carson and Senator Spencer Abraham, sponsors of the legislation to authorize award of the medal, Public Law 106–26; Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Chaplain of the Senate; James David Ford, Chaplain of the House; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; Dorothy Height, chairman of the board, National Council of Negro Women; Minnijean Brown Trickey and Jefferson Thomas, members of the Little Rock Nine, students who integrated Central High School in Little Rock, AR, in 1957; soprano Jessye Norman; and artist Artis Lane, who submitted the design for the medal.

Remarks on Proposed Work Incentives Legislation

June 15, 1999

That was a speech of a man who is not running for reelection. [*Laughter*] Since I’m not either, I can only hope to do as well. [*Laughter*]

I would like to point out something, since we are here in the LBJ Room, named for President Johnson, a room in which he worked for many good causes as Senate majority leader. Thirty-five years ago he said, “I am convinced that it is morally right, that it is socially just, that it is economically sensible, that it is administratively feasible to open the door of employment opportunity to Americans with disabilities.”

Now, our country has done a lot on that road in the last 35 years, especially beginning with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 1997 we dramatically strengthened the IDEA Act, and I’m very proud to have been a part of that with the people who are here. But the full promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act will never be realized until we pass this legislation.

I am profoundly indebted to all these Senators who are here, Senators Lott and Moynihan and, of course, to Senators Jeffords and Ken-

nedy, but let me—I know most of you here understand this, but let me just give you one specific example. I think it’s important to humanize this.

I had a town meeting about this issue in New Hampshire on February the 18th. And there was a man there who had been very badly injured in a skiing accident and was paralyzed, basically, from the chest down. And because of the special opportunity he had, he actually was able to keep his health care and work. His health insurance—his health care costs were \$40,000 a year, just to maintain him. But he worked very productively and very successfully for about 75 percent of that; that was his salary. Now, if he were not working, he’d still get the \$40,000 in health care, but he wouldn’t be working. He’d be much less happy, much less fulfilled. He wouldn’t be paying income taxes to the Federal Government. He wouldn’t be paying the other revenues through which we fund Medicare and Social Security, including, interestingly enough, the money from Social Security that goes to the disabled.

This is a crazy system that we have allowed to develop, because you lose Government health insurance if you go to work and you make a certain amount of money. That's what these fine people are trying to do. And I thought what Senator Kennedy said was great. I'd like it if it passed by Independence Day, but I'd like it, for sure, if we could get it up to the White House and have a signing ceremony by the 26th of July, which is the ninth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

But I would like to ask all the members of the press that are here to make sure that our fellow Americans understand the practical impact. There are thousands of these stories. But with all the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, you will never get the tens of thousands of people who could come into the work force—maybe hundreds of thousands that aren't there—without this bill. This is a profoundly important piece of legislation.

And I would like to make one last economic argument. There's a lot of discussion now about how our economy can continue to grow even more with unemployment as low as it is without

inflation. The only way to do that is to find new markets and new workers. And as nearly as I can tell, there are only two or three options. You can sell more American products overseas, or you can put people to work in high unemployment areas in America, in the urban and rural areas, or you can reach the unreached population of Americans who are dying to go to work, which are the remaining people on welfare who want to work and an even larger number—much larger number—the American disability community, fully capable of working in thousands and thousands and thousands of jobs—now with them closed because of the health care barrier.

We need to get this story out. The Senate is going to pass this bill. The House will have it, and we'll have a great celebration on July the Fourth and again on July the 26th.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Room at the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Statement on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Report on Security at the Energy Department Weapons Labs *June 15, 1999*

On March 18, 1999, I asked the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, the PFIAB, to undertake a review of the security threat at the Department of Energy's weapons labs and the measures that have been taken to address it. PFIAB Chairman Warren B. Rudman presented the Board's findings to me today. I have asked the PFIAB to make the report available to Congress and to the public.

I would like to thank Senator Rudman and the Board members who undertook this important study over a 90-day period, reviewing hundreds of documents and conducting dozens of interviews. As the report recognizes, the Department of Energy represents the best of America's scientific talent and expertise. The value of their contributions makes it imperative that we place a premium on ensuring that we have instituted the best possible measures for the protection

of our nation's most valuable secrets at Department facilities.

This administration already has taken unprecedented steps to reduce the vulnerability of our secrets at the labs. Over a year ago I issued a sweeping directive to strengthen counterintelligence across the board at the Department of Energy, and Secretary Richardson has aggressively instituted new rules and procedures for counterintelligence and security at DOE facilities. The PFIAB has made a number of proposals which we will carefully review. We remain committed to taking the necessary steps to safeguard our Nation's secrets.

As these vital national security issues are addressed, we will be most successful if we continue our efforts in a bipartisan manner with close cooperation between the Executive and Legislative branches of Government.

June 15 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Commodity Credit Corporation

June 15, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 13, Public Law 806, 80th Congress (15 U.S.C. 714k), I transmit herewith the report of the

Commodity Credit Corporation for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Congress Reporting on United States Participation in a Multilateral Guarantee of Credit for Brazil

June 15, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

On November 9, 1998, I approved the use of the Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF) to provide up to \$5 billion for the U.S. part of a multilateral guarantee of a credit facility for up to \$13.28 billion from the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) to the Banco Central do Brasil (Banco Central). Eighteen other central banks and monetary authorities are guaranteeing portions of the BIS credit facility. In addition, through the Bank of Japan, the Government of Japan is providing a swap facility of up to \$1.25 billion to Brazil under terms consistent with the terms of the BIS credit facility. Pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C. 5302(b), I am hereby notifying the Congress that I have determined that unique or emergency circumstances require the ESF financing to be available for more than 6 months.

The BIS credit facility is part of a multilateral effort to support an International Monetary Fund (IMF) stand-by arrangement with Brazil that itself totals approximately \$18.1 billion, which is designed to help restore financial market confidence in Brazil and its currency, and to reestablish conditions for long-term sustainable growth. The IMF is providing this package through normal credit tranches and the Supplemental Reserve Facility (SRF), which provides short-term financing at significantly higher interest rates than those for credit tranche financing. Also, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank are providing up to \$9 billion in support of the international financial package for Brazil.

Since December 1998, international assistance from the IMF, the BIS credit facility, and the Bank of Japan's swap facility has provided key support for Brazil's efforts to reform its economy and resolve its financial crisis. From the IMF arrangement, Brazil has purchased approximately \$4.6 billion in December 1998 and approximately \$4.9 billion in April 1999. On December 18, 1998, the Banco Central made a first drawing of \$4.15 billion from the BIS credit facility and also drew \$390 million from the Bank of Japan's swap facility. The Banco Central made a second drawing of \$4.5 billion from the BIS credit facility and \$423.5 million from the Bank of Japan's swap facility on April 9, 1999. The ESF's "guarantee" share of each of these BIS credit facility drawings is approximately 38 percent.

Each drawing from the BIS credit facility or the Bank of Japan's swap facility matures in 6 months, with an option for additional 6-month renewals. The Banco Central must therefore repay its first drawing from the BIS and Bank of Japan facilities by June 18, 1999, unless the parties agree to a roll-over. The Banco Central has informed the BIS and the Bank of Japan that it plans to request, in early June, a roll-over of 70 percent of the first drawing from each facility, and will repay 30 percent of the first drawing from each facility.

The BIS's agreement with the Banco Central contains conditions that minimize risks to the ESF. For example, the participating central banks or the BIS may accelerate repayment if the Banco Central has failed to meet any condition of the agreement or Brazil has failed to

meet any material obligation to the IMF. The Banco Central must repay the BIS no slower than, and at least in proportion to Brazil's repayments to the IMF's SRF and to the Bank of Japan's swap facility. The Government of Brazil is guaranteeing the performance of the Banco Central's obligations under its agreement with the BIS, and, pursuant to the agreement, Brazil must maintain its gross international reserves at a level no less than the sum of the principal amount outstanding under the BIS facility, the principal amount outstanding under Japan's swap facility, and a suitable margin. Also, the participating central banks and the BIS must approve any Banco Central request for a drawing or roll-over from the BIS credit facility.

Before the financial crisis that hit Brazil last fall, Brazil had made remarkable progress toward reforming its economy, including reducing inflation from more than 2000 percent 5 years ago to less than 3 percent in 1998, and successfully implementing an extensive privatization program. Nonetheless, its large fiscal deficit left it vulnerable during the recent period of global financial turbulence. Fiscal adjustment to address that deficit therefore formed the core of the stand-by arrangement that Brazil reached with the IMF last December.

Despite Brazil's initial success in implementing the fiscal reforms required by this stand-by arrangement, there were some setbacks in passing key legislation, and doubts emerged about the willingness of some key Brazilian states to adjust their finances. Ultimately, the government secured passage of virtually all the fiscal measures, or else took offsetting actions. However, the initial setbacks and delays eroded market confidence in December 1998 and January 1999, and pressure on Brazil's foreign exchange reserves intensified. Rather than further deplete its reserves, Brazil in mid-January first devalued and then floated its currency, the *real*, causing a steep decline of the *real's* value against the dollar. As a consequence, Brazil needed to prevent a spiral of depreciation and inflation that could have led to deep financial instability.

After the decision to float the *real*, and in close consultation with the IMF, Brazil developed a revised economic program for 1999–2001, which included deeper fiscal adjustments and a transparent and prudent monetary policy designed to contain inflationary pressures. These adjustments will take some time to restore confidence fully. In the meantime, the strong sup-

port of the international community has been and will continue to be helpful in reassuring the markets that Brazil can restore sustainable financial stability.

Brazil's experience to date under its revised program with the IMF has been very encouraging. The exchange rate has strengthened from its lows of early March and has been relatively stable in recent weeks; inflation is significantly lower than expected and declining; inflows of private capital are resuming; and most analysts now believe that the economic downturn will be less severe than initially feared.

Brazil's success to date will make it possible for it to repay a 30 percent portion of its first (December) drawing from the BIS credit facility and the Bank of Japan swap facility. With continued economic improvement, Brazil is likely to be in a position to repay the remainder of its BIS and Bank of Japan obligations relatively soon. However, Brazil has indicated that it would be inadvisable to repay 100 percent of the first BIS and Bank of Japan disbursements at this point, given the persistence of risks and uncertainties in the global economy. The timing of this repayment must take into account the risk that using Brazilian reserves to repay both first drawings in their entirety could harm market confidence in Brazil's financial condition. This could undermine the purpose of our support: protecting financial stability in Brazil and in other emerging markets, which ultimately benefits U.S. exports and jobs. Given that the BIS and Bank of Japan facilities charge a substantial premium over the 6-month Eurodollar interest rate, the Banco Central has an incentive to repay them as soon as is prudent.

The IMF stand-by arrangement and the BIS and Bank of Japan facilities constitute a vital international response to Brazil's financial crisis, which threatens the economic welfare of Brazil's 160 million people and of other countries in the region and elsewhere in the world. Brazil's size and importance as the largest economy in Latin America mean that its financial and economic stability are matters of national interest to the United States. Brazil's industrial output is the largest in Latin America; it accounts for 45 percent of the region's gross domestic product, and its work force numbers approximately 85 million people. A failure to help Brazil deal with its financial crisis would increase the risk of financial instability in other Latin American countries and other emerging market economies.

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Such instability could damage U.S. exports, with serious repercussions for our workforce and our economy as a whole.

Therefore, the BIS credit facility is providing a crucial supplement to Brazil's IMF-supported program of economic and financial reform. I believe that strong and continued support from the United States, other governments, and multilateral institutions are crucial to enable Brazil to carry out its economic reform program. In

these unique and emergency circumstances, it is both appropriate and necessary to continue to make ESF financing available as needed for more than 6 months to guarantee this BIS credit facility, including any other roll-over or drawing that might be necessary in the future.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 15, 1999.

Remarks to the International Labor Organization Conference in Geneva, Switzerland

June 16, 1999

Thank you very much, Director General Somavia, for your fine statements and your excellent work. Conference President Mumuni, Director General Petrovsky, ladies and gentlemen of the ILO, it is a great honor for me to be here today with, as you have noticed, quite a large American delegation. I hope you will take it as a commitment of the United States to our shared vision and not simply as a burning desire for us to visit this beautiful city on every possible opportunity.

I am delighted to be here with Secretary Albright and Secretary of Labor Herman; with my National Economic Adviser, Gene Sperling, and my National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger. We're delighted to be joined by the president of the American Federation of Labor, the AFL-CIO, John Sweeney, and several other leaders of the U.S. labor movement, and with Senator Tom Harkin from Iowa, who is the foremost advocate in the United States of the abolition of child labor. I am grateful to all of them for coming with me and to the First Lady and our daughter for joining us on this trip. And I thank you for your warm reception of her presence here.

It is indeed an honor for me to be the first American President to speak before the ILO in Geneva. It is long overdue. There is no organization that has worked harder to bring people together around fundamental human aspirations and no organization whose mission is more vital for today and tomorrow.

The ILO, as the Director General said, was created in the wake of the devastation of World

War I as part of a vision to provide stability to a world recovering from war, a vision put forward by our President, Woodrow Wilson. He said then, "While we are fighting for freedom, we must see that labor is free." At a time when dangerous doctrines of dictatorship were increasingly appealing, the ILO was founded on the realization that injustice produces, and I quote, "unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperiled."

Over time the Organization was strengthened, and the United States played its role, starting with President Franklin Roosevelt and following through his successors and many others in the United States Congress, down to the strong supporters today, including Senator Harkin and the distinguished senior Senator from New York, Patrick Moynihan.

For half a century, the ILO has waged a struggle of rising prosperity and widening freedom, from the shipyards of Poland to the diamond mines of South Africa. Today, as the Director General said, you remain the only organization to bring together governments, labor unions, and business to try to unite people in common cause: the dignity of work; the belief that honest labor, fairly compensated, gives meaning and structure to our lives; the ability of every family and all children to rise as far as their talents will take them. In a world too often divided, this organization has been a powerful force for unity, justice, equality, and shared prosperity. For all that, I thank you.

Now, at the edge of a new century, at the dawn of the information age, the ILO and its

vision are more vital than ever, for the world is becoming a much smaller and much, much more interdependent place. Most nations are linked to the new dynamic, idea-driven, technology-powered, highly competitive international economy.

The digital revolution is a profound, powerful, and potentially democratizing force. It can empower people and nations, enabling the wise and farsighted to develop more quickly and with less damage to the environment. It can enable us to work together across the world as easily as if we were working just across the hall. Competition, communications, and more open markets spur stunning innovation and make their fruits available to business and workers worldwide.

Consider this: Every single day, half a million air passengers, 1.5 billion E-mail messages, and \$1.5 trillion cross international borders. We also have new tools to eradicate diseases that have long plagued humanity, to remove the threat of global warming and environmental destruction, to lift billions of people into the first truly global middle class.

Yet, as the financial crisis of the last 2 years has shown, the global economy with its churning hyperactivity poses new risks, as well, of disruption, dislocation, and division. A financial crisis in one country can be felt on factory floors half a world away. The world has changed, much of it for the better, but too often our response to its new challenges has not changed.

Globalization is not a proposal or a policy choice. It is a fact. But how we respond to it will make all the difference. We cannot dam up the tides of economic change anymore than King Canute could still the waters. Nor can we tell our people to sink or swim on their own. We must find a third way, a new and democratic way, to maximize market potential and social justice, competition and community. We must put a human face on the global economy, giving working people everywhere a stake in its success, equipping them all to reap its rewards, providing for their families the basic conditions of a just society. All nations must embrace this vision, and all the great economic institutions of the world must devote their creativity and energy to this end.

Last May I had the opportunity to come and speak to the World Trade Organization and stress that as we fight for open markets, it must open its doors to the concerns of working people

and the environment. Last November I spoke to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank and stressed that we must build a new financial architecture as modern as today's markets, to tame the cycles of boom and bust in the global economy as we can now do in national economies, to ensure the integrity of international financial transactions, and to expand social safety nets for the most vulnerable.

Today I say to you that the ILO, too, must be ready for the 21st century, along the lines that Director General Somavia has outlined.

Let me begin by stating my firm belief that open trade is not contrary to the interest of working people. Competition and integration lead to stronger growth, more and better jobs, more widely shared gains. Renewed protectionism in any of our nations would lead to a spiral of retaliation that would diminish the standard of living for working people everywhere. Moreover, a failure to expand trade further could choke off innovation and diminish the very possibilities of the information economy. No, we need more trade, not less.

Unfortunately, working people the world over do not believe this. Even in the United States, with the lowest unemployment rate in a generation, where exports accounted for 30 percent of our growth, until the financial crisis hit Asia, working people strongly resist new market-opening measures. There are many reasons. In advanced countries the benefits of open trade outweigh the burdens. But they are widely spread, while the dislocations of open trade are painfully concentrated.

In all countries, the premium the modern economy places on skills leaves too many hard-working people behind. In poor countries, the gains seem too often to go to the already wealthy and powerful, with little or no rise in the general standard of living. And the international organizations charged with monitoring and providing for rules of fair trade, and enforcement of them, seem to take a very long time to work their way to the right decision, often too late to affect the people who have been disadvantaged.

So as we press for more open trade, we must do more to ensure that all our people are lifted by the global economy. As we prepare to launch a new global round of trade talks in Seattle, in November, it is vital that the WTO and the ILO work together to advance that common goal.

We clearly see that a thriving global economy will grow out of the skills, the ideas, the education of millions of individuals. In each of our nations and as a community of nations, we must invest in our people and lift them to their full potential. If we allow the ups and downs of financial crises to divert us from investing in our people, it is not only those citizens or nations that will suffer; the entire world will suffer from their lost potential.

It is clear that when nations face financial crisis, they need the commitment and the expertise not only of the international financial institutions; they need the ILO as well. The IMF, the World Bank, and WTO, themselves, should work more closely with the ILO, and this organization must be willing and able to assume more responsibility.

The lesson of the past 2 years is plain: Those nations with strong social safety nets are better able to weather the storms. Those strong safety nets do not just include financial assistance and emergency aid for poorest people; they also call for the empowerment of the poorest people.

This weekend in Cologne, I will join my partners in the G-8 in calling for a new focus on stronger safety nets within nations and within the international community. We will also urge improved cooperation between the ILO and the international financial institutions in promoting social protections and core labor standards. And we should press forward to lift the debt burden that is crushing many of the poorest nations.

We are working to forge a bold agreement to more than triple debt relief for the world's poorest nations and to target those savings to education, health care, child survival, and fighting poverty. I pledge to work to find the resources so we can do our part and contribute our share toward an expanded trust fund for debt relief.

Yet, as important as our efforts to strengthen safety nets and relieve debt burdens are, for citizens throughout the world to feel that they truly have a hand in shaping their future, they must know the dignity and respect of basic rights in the workplace.

You have taken a vital step toward lifting the lives of working people by adopting the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work last year. The document is a blueprint for the global economy that honors our values: the dignity of work, an end to discrimination, an end to forced labor, freedom of association,

the right of people to organize and bargain in a civil and peaceful way. These are not just labor rights; they're human rights. They are a charter for a truly modern economy. We must make them an everyday reality all across the world.

We advance these rights first by standing up to those who abuse them. Today, one member nation, Burma, stands in defiance of the ILO's most fundamental values and most serious findings. The Director General has just reported to us that the flagrant violation of human rights persists, and I urge the ILO governing body to take definite steps, for Burma is out of step with the standards of the world community and the aspirations of its people. Until people have the right to shape their destiny, we must stand by them and keep up the pressure for change.

We also advance core labor rights by standing with those who seek to make them a reality in the workplace. Many countries need extra assistance to meet these standards. Whether it's rewriting inadequate labor laws or helping fight discrimination against women and minorities in the workplace, the ILO must be able to help.

That is why in the balanced budget I submitted to our Congress this year I've asked for \$25 million to help create a new arm of the ILO to work with developing countries to put in place basic labor standards, protections, safe workplaces, the right to organize. I ask other governments to join us. I've also asked for \$10 million from our Congress to strengthen U.S. bilateral support for governments seeking to raise such core labor standards.

We have asked for millions of dollars also to build on our voluntary anti-sweatshop initiative to encourage the many innovative programs that are being developed to eliminate sweatshops and raise consumer awareness of the conditions in which the clothes they wear and the toys they buy for their children are made.

But we must go further to give life to our dream of an economy that lifts all our people. To do that, we must wipe from the Earth the most vicious forms of abusive child labor. Every single day, tens of millions of children work in conditions that shock the conscience. There are children chained to often risky machines, children handling dangerous chemicals, children forced to work when they should be in school preparing themselves and their countries for a better tomorrow. Each of our nations must take responsibility.

Last week, at the inspiration of Senator Tom Harkin, who is here with me today, I directed all agencies of the United States Government to make absolutely sure they are not buying any products made with abusive child labor.

But we must also act together. Today, the time has come to build on the growing world consensus to ban the most abusive forms of child labor, to join together and to say there are some things we cannot and will not tolerate.

We will not tolerate children being used in pornography and prostitution. We will not tolerate children in slavery or bondage. We will not tolerate children being forcibly recruited to serve in armed conflicts. We will not tolerate young children risking their health and breaking their bodies in hazardous and dangerous working conditions for hours unconscionably long, regardless of country, regardless of circumstance. These are not some archaic practices out of a Charles Dickens novel. These are things that happen in too many places today.

I am proud of what is being done at your meeting. In January I said to our Congress and the American people, in the State of the Union Address, that we would work with the ILO on a new initiative to raise labor standards and to conclude a treaty to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world. I am proud to say that the United States will support your convention. After I return home, I will send it to the U.S. Senate for ratification, and I ask all other countries to ratify it, as well.

We thank you for achieving a true breakthrough for the children of the world. We thank the nations here represented who have made genuine progress in dealing with this issue in their own nations. You have written an important new chapter in our effort to honor our values and protect our children.

Passing this convention alone, however, will not solve the problem. We must also work aggressively to enforce it. And we must address root causes, the tangled pathology of poverty and hopelessness that leads to abusive child labor. Where that still exists, it is simply not enough to close the factories where the worst child labor practices occur. We must also ensure that children then have access to schools and their parents have jobs. Otherwise, we may find children in even more abusive circumstances.

That is why the work of the International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor is so important. With the support of the United

States, it is working in places around the world to get children out of the business of making fireworks, to help children move from their jobs as domestic servants, to take children from factories to schools.

Let me cite just one example of the success being achieved, the work being done to eliminate child labor from the soccer ball industry in Pakistan. Two years ago, thousands of children under the age of 14 worked for 50 companies stitching soccer balls full-time. The industry, the ILO, and UNICEF joined together to remove children from the production of soccer balls and give them a chance to go to school, and to monitor the results.

Today, the work has been taken up by women in 80 poor villages in Pakistan, giving them new employment and their families new stabilities. Meanwhile, the children have started to go to school, so that when they come of age, they will be able to do better jobs raising the standard of living of their families, their villages, and their nation. I thank all who were involved in this endeavor and ask others to follow their lead.

I am pleased that our administration has increased our support for IPEC by tenfold. I ask you to think what could be achieved by a full and focused international effort to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Think of the children who would go to school, whose lives would open up, whose very health would flower, freed of the crushing burden of dangerous and demeaning work, given back those irreplaceable hours of childhood for learning and playing and living.

By giving life to core labor standards, by acting effectively to lift the burden of debt, by putting a more human face on the world trading system and the global economy, by ending the worst forms of child labor, we will be giving our children the 21st century they deserve.

These are hopeful times. Previous generations sought to redeem the rights of labor in a time of world war and organized tyranny. We have a chance to build a world more prosperous, more united, more humane than ever before. In so doing, we can fulfill the dreams of the ILO's founders and redeem the struggles of those who fought and organized, who sacrificed and, yes, died for freedom, equality, and justice in the workplace.

It is our great good fortune that in our time we have been given the golden opportunity to make the 21st century a period of abundance and achievement for all. Because we can do

that, we must. It is a gift to our children worthy of the millennium.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the Assembly Hall at the United Nations Building. In his remarks, he referred to Juan Somavia, director general, Alhaji Muhammad Mumuni, conference

president, International Labor Organization; and Vladimir Petrovsky, director general, United Nations Office at Geneva. The President also referred to IPEC, the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor. The Executive order of June 12 on child labor is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Senate Action on Work Incentives Legislation

June 16, 1999

Nearly a year ago, I committed to working with Senators Jeffords and Kennedy to pass the "Work Incentives Improvement Act." In January, in my State of the Union Address, I urged the Congress make this historic, bipartisan legislation a top priority and fully funded it in the budget I sent to Congress. And on June 4th I challenged the Congress to send the work incentives bill to me by July 26th, so I could sign this legislation into law on the ninth anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Today, in an overwhelming 99 to 0 vote, the Senate passed the work incentives bill. This impressive vote sends a strong signal that all Americans, including people with disabilities, should have the opportunity to work. Americans with disabilities can and do bring tremendous energy and talent to the American work force, but the unemployment rate for all working-age adults with disabilities is nearly 75 percent. One of

the most glaring problems is that people with disabilities frequently become ineligible for Medicaid or Medicare if they go back to work. This puts people with disabilities in the untenable position of choosing between health care coverage and work. The "Work Incentives Improvement Act" would improve job opportunities for people with disabilities by increasing access to health care and employment services.

Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, Roth, and Moynihan deserve special recognition for their leadership on this historic legislation. I urge the House to follow their lead. Under the leadership of Congressmen Bliley, Dingell, Waxman, and Lazio, I am confident that it will. I also hope and expect the Senate and House to find offsets for this bill that are acceptable to all parties. This bill will provide critical work opportunities to people with disabilities, and I look forward to signing this groundbreaking legislation.

Statement on Proposed Legislation on Immigrant Children's Health Improvement

June 16, 1999

I am pleased that today a bipartisan group of Senators, led by Senators Chafee and McCain and including Senators Graham, Mack, Moynihan, and Jeffords, have taken an important step in ensuring health care coverage for children by introducing the "Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act of 1999."

When I signed the 1996 welfare reform law, I pledged to work toward reversing the unneces-

sary cuts in benefits to legal immigrants that had nothing to do with the goal of moving people from welfare to work. As part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the Agricultural Research Act of 1998, my administration worked with Congress to restore vital health, nutritional, and disability benefits to hundreds of thousands of vulnerable legal immigrants. Recognizing that more needs to be done, my budget includes

a \$1.3 billion proposal to restore health care benefits to children and pregnant women, nutritional assistance to elderly individuals, and disability and health assistance to legal immigrants who become disabled after they arrive in the United States.

The proposal introduced today, which is similar to the one in my budget, would provide health care coverage for over 55,000 children,

allowing States to use Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for pregnant women and children who are legal immigrants, regardless of when they came to the U.S. I look forward to working with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to enact this legislation to help many children lead healthier and more productive lives.

The President's News Conference With President Jacques Chirac of France in Paris

June 17, 1999

President Chirac. We wanted to have the Sun shine for President Clinton's visit, and I would like to welcome him most warmly for the meeting this year, in the framework of frequent contact and very pleasant contacts—always very pleasant contacts—whether it's over the phone or whether it's a friendly meeting such as today's. And I'm very pleased that President and Mrs. Clinton were able to take some time to come through Paris on the occasion of the President's trip to Cologne for the G-7/G-8.

Yesterday evening we had a very pleasant dinner. I can't say that we worked a great deal yesterday evening, to tell you the truth. But however, we did spend time which personally I very much enjoyed. So a bit yesterday evening and much more this morning, we first of all drew the lessons from the crisis in Kosovo, and we noted that our victory in Kosovo will be a complete victory only once all refugees have been able to come back to their homes and when all the communities living in Kosovo are able to live in safety, namely, thanks to the vigilance of the military security force which is at present deploying in the region.

We also discussed a number of other problems: the European defense system, in particular, concerning recent events which have occurred in the Balkans, but also following positions taken at the Washington summit; the re-launching of the peace process in the Middle East, such as we very much hope for following the forthcoming appointment of the government of Israel, and the role which Europe and France might play and the help we might contribute

to those efforts made to ensure an effective launching of the peace process.

We also considered various problems on the agenda of our Cologne meeting, summit: the very important initiatives that we're taking on the eve of the next century concerning the debt owed by poor countries; the reinforcement and adjustment of the international financial system; the social dimension, which you know I'm very deeply attached to, of globalization and the consequence to be drawn from this.

And I also suggested to President Clinton that the G-8 Summit consider the possibility of taking initiative in an area which is of great concern, namely to Europeans at present, and which is that of food security, safety of food-stuffs. Our people are increasingly concerned, worried, and I would like to suggest that the setting up of a global higher scientific council for food safety. I shan't go into the details, but I have proposed this to the heads of state/government of the G-8, and I shall have an opportunity to develop this point in Cologne. But my wish is to have this considered by heads of state and government of the G-8, and that we see whether it might be possible to find a solution able to better guarantee the health of Europeans—of all of the inhabitants of the world, of course.

And before giving the floor to President Clinton, I should like to say in concluding how very much I welcome the very good quality of Franco-American relations. Everybody knows, and it's obvious, occasionally we have differences of views. But we know how to deal with them, and have done so for some time, and to resolve

these differences in a spirit of friendship between partners who respect each other. And it is probably a fact which is based on a very long, very long, century-old friendship between our two peoples and our two countries.

Bill, you have the floor.

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I will be brief. President Chirac has given you a good summary of the things that we discussed today.

I would like to thank him again, publicly, for the wonderful dinner that he and Mrs. Chirac gave to Hillary and to me last night. We had a terrific time. We did not discuss a lot of business. We mostly discussed archaeology and endangered species around the world. But we had a wonderful dinner.

Let me say a few words about Kosovo. As of today, 26,000 Serb soldiers have left Kosovo; 15,000 of our KFOR forces have arrived. The refugees are coming home, indeed, in many cases, faster than we think safe because of the landmines, which we are working hard to remove. But they want to go home.

It has been very moving to me to see the troops of all of our nations cheered by the people there; also moving to see our soldiers uncovering evidence of what we stood against, evidence of mass graves, evidence in the form of the piles of documents stripped from the refugees to erase their identities.

I'd like to pay particular tribute to President Chirac for his leadership and his firmness in this crisis. This was the longest operation in which NATO had engaged in 50 years. We had 19 countries representing hundreds of millions of people with all manner of different domestic situations. But we stayed together, and we will stay together, and we will continue our mission there until we succeed.

But the French President was especially adamant that, having begun, we had to stay until we won, and we had to do it in the right way and to do whatever it took to do that. And I am very grateful to him for the relationship that we have enjoyed personally and for the relationship that our countries have enjoyed and the solidarity we've had within NATO.

Now we have to finish the job. We have to help the Kosovars to restore their homes and the basic conditions of living, the institutions of civil society necessary for them to exercise autonomy. We also have to help the region. We have made a commitment at the NATO

Summit, which I know will be reaffirmed at the G-7/G-8 meeting and which the EU has already articulated, to try to build a different future, a more prosperous, more democratic future for the entire region. And we are all committed to doing that. If we don't want the Balkans and southeastern Europe to be torn apart in the future by ancient religious and ethnic hatreds, we have to give them a better tomorrow to work for. And we are strongly committed to that.

Now, we also discussed any number of other subjects, but I think it would be better for me to open the floor to questions. I would close by saying I was particularly moved by the discussion we had about the Middle East peace process. Hopes are high now, but we all know that we have to give the Prime Minister-elect the opportunity to put his government together and get off to a good start. But the reports we have about a broad-based coalition are quite encouraging, and I think it's fair to say that France and all of Europe, the United States hope that we can play a constructive role in what we hope will be a productive next step in that.

NATO–Russia Negotiations on Kosovo

Q. President Clinton, what is the latest from the Russians? There is a report—

President Clinton. Go ahead, Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News].

Q. President Clinton, what's the latest on the Russians, sir? There's a report that they may have agreed on the command structure acceptable to NATO but are still insisting on something like a zone. What can you tell us?

President Clinton. Well, I can tell you that just before I came over here for my meeting with President Chirac, I got an update. You know that Secretary Cohen has been meeting with the Russian Defense Minister, Sergeyev. You know that Secretary Albright left here and flew to Helsinki to meet with Foreign Minister Ivanov. And the atmosphere is pretty positive and pretty hopeful. President Chirac and I talked about it for a long time.

We want the Russians to be involved in this mission in a comprehensive way. We think it is important. But we also think it is important that we maintain clear unity of command, under KFOR, according to the U.N. resolution. And they're working through that, and I hope and believe they will reach a successful conclusion.

I don't have any specific details for you because they're in the middle of trying to work this out. But I know that—I'm aware that there are two or three options they're working on, all of which would be acceptable to us and to our partners, including the French. So we're working on it.

Reconstruction of the Balkans

Q. In the reconstruction of Yugoslavia, do you take into consideration the only full member state of the NATO having a direct border with Yugoslavia, Hungary, that applied many times for being the center and headquarters of the reconstruction?

[At this point, another question was asked in French, and a translation was not provided.]

President Chirac. The certainty of France is that it is necessary to organize as soon as possible in the region a system which is democratic. It is by enabling democracy to put down roots that it shall be possible to create the conditions for tolerance. And it is tolerance that will allow communities that have clashed for a long time to live together at peace. It will take time.

Naturally, there is an objective. The objective is the possibility, calling for these countries to become members of the European Union and their interest to do so. And therefore, the prospect for France is to do our utmost to help the region to overcome the difficulties that presents but also to do our utmost to convince them that their future is the European Union, and this entails peace at home. And this peace can only be found thanks to development and to the enrooting of democracy.

President Clinton. You asked me a question about whether Hungary might be the center of the reconstruction efforts. Actually, I have—as you know, the Hungarian President was just in Washington for a state visit, and it was a wonderful success. And then I called your Prime Minister to thank him for his solidarity with NATO during this very difficult period for Hungary.

Both of them expressed a willingness for Hungary to play a role in the reconstruction of Kosovo and the entire Balkans region. Both expressed some interest in being the center of the reconstruction effort. That decision is a decision which would have to be made by all of our allies, and not just by the United States, especially given the leading role the European

Union has played in making commitments to the long-term redevelopment of the area.

But I think that because of Hungary's ties to Serbia, because of the large number of Hungarians in northwest Serbia and Vojvodina, I think it is very important that the Hungarians be very much involved in this.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

War Crimes Trials/Aid to Yugoslavia

Q. Mr. President, now that the conflict is over, do you and President Chirac think that a full-court press should be made to bring Slobodan Milosevic to trial to answer for the war crimes indictment? And President Chirac, do you agree with President Clinton that there should be no reconstruction aid for Belgrade as long as Mr. Milosevic is in power?

President Chirac. Great democracies, in particular, and the international community, in general, have, as a rule, to give development aid to a country only if the country meets the democratic criteria which are usually retained. And there are still some countries, unfortunately, which are subject to embargoes, do not receive aid, precisely because they are not democratic regimes. And this is the reason why. Personally, I absolutely share the feelings of President Clinton; that is, that there can be no economic development aid to a regime which is not democratic and whose present leader, furthermore, has been indicted with crimes against humanity by the international war crimes court.

Development aid is one thing; humanitarian aid is a different thing. What we wish to sanction is a regime that does not apply democratic rules, obviously; it is not unfortunate Serbs who are also victims. Hence, humanitarian aid, yes; development aid, economic aid, no—so long as democratic criteria are not met.

President Clinton. Let me say, first of all, I—as you know, I agree exactly with what President Chirac has said, also on the humanitarian issue. I think there's some humanitarian support we should make available to all the people of the region, including the Serbs in Serbia. But on redevelopment, I believe what he just said; we're all together on that.

Even though I strongly support the decision of the War Crimes Tribunal—or the prosecutor, Mrs. Arbour, too, to make the charges she did, I think it's important that we not in any way mislead people about what happens next. Our heaviest responsibility, the NATO Allies, is to

get the Kosovars back home in safety and then to give them self-government, autonomy, and rebuilding assistance, and then work on the region.

Under the rules that we have followed, any of us, if we had jurisdiction over Mr. Milosevic, would turn him over, or anyone else who had been charged, just as we do in Bosnia. If he remains in Serbian—inside the confines of Serbia, presumably he's beyond the reach of the extradition powers of the other governments.

But sometimes these things take a good while to bear fruit. I think we'll just have to wait and see how that develops. But I think, given the evidence that was presented by Mrs. Arbour and what we know to be the evidence, I think she made the right decision. I think it's a very important thing. But I do not believe that the NATO Allies can invade Belgrade to try to deliver the indictment, if you will.

And I don't think we should be—that does not mean that this is not an important thing or that there won't someday be a trial, but we need to focus on our obligations, our fundamental humanitarian obligations to get the Kosovars home and to continue to uncover whatever evidence of war crimes there is in Kosovo, as well.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, what are the steps that your administration intends to undertake to revive the Middle East peace process, and to what extent are you determined to achieve a major breakthrough before the end of your second term?

President Clinton. Well, as you know, I have spent an enormous amount of time on this, for 6½ years now. The major step I took to revive the peace process was 9½ days at Wye Plantation last year in the Wye peace talks. I don't believe that I will have to take any steps to revive the peace process. I believe when the new government takes office, if what we see in the press reports is right about the composition of this broad-based coalition government, I believe that there will be a vigorous pursuit of all channels of the peace process.

And the United States will do what it can, as I have for 6½ years, and as we have done as a nation before, to support the parties that are seeking peace and to provide whatever security and other—economic and other incentives we can to bring it to a successful conclusion. But I expect there to be a revival of the peace

process generated by the parties themselves. And then I expect to support it very strongly, and I would expect that President Chirac and the European Union will do the same.

President Chirac. Allow me to add that Europe today unanimously—and Europe has shown this once again in Berlin—and France naturally, given the traditional ties France has with all countries of the region, are absolutely determined in this new context to give maximum support to the efforts made by the parties concerned and, obviously, by the United States.

Serbian Withdrawal From Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, do you expect the Serbs to get the other 14,000 troops out by the Sunday deadline? And are you surprised that President Milosevic has kept his word so far?

President Clinton. The short answer, I guess, is yes and no. Yes, I do expect them to meet the deadline, unless there is some practical reason they can't. And it's interesting, when the Serb military made the agreement, we even got word from some of the Kosovars that they expected the agreement to be kept. They thought that if the Serbian military forces actually gave their word, they would keep it. And I thought that was a hopeful reaction in terms of our ability to see some work together in the future.

Now, as you know, General Jackson has already—our Commander in Kosovo—has already given permission at one phase of this withdrawal for a day's delay. So if General Jackson were to be asked and were to accede to some reasonable change because there were some fact that I'm unaware of, I wouldn't necessarily oppose that. I've got great confidence in him. But they are keeping to schedule.

And am I surprised that Mr. Milosevic is doing that? No, I'm not, not really, because—not only because of the impact of our military campaign but because we have forces going in on the ground.

Of the previous understandings that I have had over the last several years with Mr. Milosevic, the ones we had at Dayton, coming out of Bosnia, have pretty much been honored. But the facts were the same; we had forces on the ground. And I believe that that has a way of reinforcing people's commitments, when we have our forces there.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, is there still a strong disagreement with the United States as to how to get out of the crisis with Iraq—accept the principle of the French proposals on Iraq concerning the 100-day suspension of embargo on Iraq?

President Clinton. Well, as you know, there is some difference here. I think largely it's a difference over what is likely to be more effective. The United States supports the efforts of the British and the Dutch and the Security Council because we believe that without the strongest possible inspection mechanism, Saddam Hussein will attempt to rebuild weapons of mass destruction stocks, particularly in the chemical and biological areas and perhaps missile technology, as well.

President Chirac can speak for himself, but he believes that if the French-Dutch resolution were—I mean, the British-Dutch resolution were to pass, that it would simply be not accepted by Saddam Hussein, and so we would still be at an impasse. So there is a difference of opinion there. We agreed that we would discuss it further at the G-8 and we would try to come to a conclusion on it.

This is not an easy issue, and I respect the efforts that the French are making, that the President is making. I can tell you generally what my concern is. It is not so much Saddam Hussein himself as my belief that 10 years from now, the person who is standing here as President and the person who is standing there as the President of France will be—and all of you, those of you who will be here asking questions, one of the things that you will be really worried about is the spread of biological and chemical weapons, probably high-tech, small-scale weapons, into the hands of international terrorist groups and organized crime groups that have loose relationships with irresponsible countries that give them these things. And I think it will be a substantial problem for the first couple of decades of the next century. And I just think we ought to do everything we possibly can to minimize that problem.

But I think I have fairly stated the practical difference between our two positions, and I think the President should speak for himself.

President Chirac. Well, obviously, I have the same concerns as President Clinton. But I think that the most important is, today, to once again

reestablish inspections on Iraq's weapons, international verification. And to do so, what we need, at the very least, is to reexamine the conditions of the embargo—what is necessary, in any case, it seems to me, for reasons that have to do with the very serious degradation of living conditions of the Iraqi people, who are the victims of the situation. So we shall discuss a way of synthesizing, bring together these concerns.

But let us not challenge the solidarity and the unity of the Security Council if we are not convinced that we're going to reach a result. And the present state of affairs, as President Clinton was saying a moment ago, that in any case Iraq will refuse the resolution which is at present being drafted, and therefore, it would be a somewhat pointless gesture which would not lead to any concrete results but might strain the solidarity of the Security Council. And you know how very deeply France is attached to the U.N., in general, and the Security Council, in particular. Thank you very much.

President Clinton. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, do you believe the Russians lied to you, sir?

Q. [Inaudible]

President Clinton. We're going to be out there some more tomorrow.

Gun Control Legislation

Q. [Inaudible]—NRA may win with the—[inaudible]—

President Clinton. I know. I got up at 5 a.m. and started making calls this morning. I'm doing my best.

Q. What's your view?

President Clinton. I don't know yet. I'm not close enough to have a good count.

Presidential Candidacy Announcement

Q. How do you think Al Gore did yesterday?

President Clinton. Wonderful. I thought he was terrific.

NOTE: The President's 175th news conference began at 11:24 a.m. in the Garden at Elysee Palace. President Chirac spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to Bernadette Chirac, wife of President Chirac; Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak of Israel; Defense Minister Igor Sergeev and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov of Russia; President Arpad Goncz and Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary; President

Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Louise Arbour, independent chief prosecutor, International War Crimes Tribunal; Lt. Gen. Mike Jackson,

British Royal Army, Commander, Kosovo International Security Force; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Memorandum on Voluntary Service Opportunities in the District of Columbia

June 17, 1999

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Strengthening Our Commitment to Service Through Voluntary Opportunities

Volunteer community service is a great American tradition and a profound expression of the civic values that bind us together as a Nation. Nowhere is the spirit of volunteerism more alive than among employees of the Federal Government, thousands of whom serve their country with dedication at work and as volunteers in their local communities. On April 22, 1998, I directed Federal departments and agencies to expand community service opportunities for Federal employees by making maximum use of existing flexibility in work scheduling policies. Today, I am encouraging all departments and agencies with operations in the District of Columbia to apply those policies so that their D.C.-based employees can take advantage of a vitally important community service opportunity: helping D.C. public school students become better readers this summer.

From June 28 through August 6, an estimated 30,000 D.C. school children with low test scores will be in mandatory and enrichment summer school programs run by the D.C. Public School system. Students whose scores do not markedly improve risk being held back a grade. This is part of the District's ambitious plan to end social promotion while also giving children the extra help they need to meet higher standards—the

kind of positive reform I have called on all school districts to adopt. As the District's largest employer, the Federal Government has a unique opportunity to help children improve their scores and rejoin their classmates this fall.

That is why I am pleased that the Corporation for National and Community Service is assisting Federal departments and agencies in recruiting 1,500 Federal employees to become volunteer reading tutors through the *D.C. Reads This Summer* program. Employees who choose to sign up with *D.C. Reads This Summer* will receive training and be able to work one-on-one with students once a week for 6 weeks at one of 32 school- and community-based tutoring sites around the city. I encourage departments and agencies that have not already done so to inform employees of this rewarding volunteer opportunity and assist where possible in transporting employees to and from the sites. I also ask that you continue to encourage and support employees who choose to volunteer through other community programs. In addition to *D.C. Reads*, there are many excellent programs being run through libraries and religious and community centers throughout the D.C. area. Finally, I encourage you to maintain or strengthen any preexisting partnerships that your department or agency may already have with D.C. or other local school systems.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks on Gun Control Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters in Paris

June 17, 1999

The President. I would just like to make a brief statement. Sometime today the United States Congress will be called upon to vote on whether to close the gun show loophole. It seems to me there's a very simple, direct question. If we close the loophole and do background checks in a comprehensive fashion at the gun shows, will we succeed, as we have with the Brady bill, in keeping more guns out of the hands of criminals and others who shouldn't have them—at very little inconvenience to legitimate gun owners?

The answer to that question is yes. Everyone knows the answer to that question is yes. Therefore, I hope that this vote will be cast by Congress in the spirit that has gripped the country after the tragedy at Littleton, thinking about those children and other children that we can still save.

Once again, I think that the gun lobby is just wrong about this. And we've seen several gun manufacturers come forward and say that the gun show loophole ought to be closed. We've seen several individual Republicans, and members of the NRA, come forward and say this. They're just wrong here. And I hope and pray that Congress will do the right thing.

Q. Mr. President, have you talked to Mr. Dingell, and why is he doing this to the Democrats?

The President. I don't think he thinks he's doing this to the Democrats. I believe that this is something on which we have a profound disagreement on. I believe that John Dingell believes he's doing the right thing. But I know that most Members of Congress in both parties agree that the gun show loophole, if closed, would keep more guns out of the hands of criminals. That's what they think. And of course, we have about 80 percent of the Democrats in favor of this, maybe more, maybe 90 percent—I don't know, but way the vast majority. And most of the Republicans are voting the other way, the vast majority. They feel a certain amount of gratitude to the NRA for putting them in the majority in the House in the first place, by frightening people over the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. And I understand that.

But now we've got 5 years of experience with the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. All lawful gun owners can still go hunting, can still engage in sport shooting, but we kept 400,000 guns out of the wrong hands with the Brady bill. And now they know that a lot of people with criminal backgrounds are trying to get guns at gun shows and flea markets and things of that kind. It is time to close the loophole. It's a simple, simple, straightforward question on the merits. And if everyone voted on the merits it would carry by 80 percent. And I think we all know that.

NATO–Russia Negotiations on Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, can you report any progress at all in the talks with the Russians and resolving the situation of their role in Kosovo?

The President. I just got an update. They're still talking. We haven't resolved all the issues, but they have made pretty good progress today. I'm pleased, and I would urge them to keep working, and I think we'll bring this to a successful conclusion in the next little while—the next day or so I think we'll get it worked out. There has been progress today. I'm pleased with that.

Q. Does that progress relate to control of the airport?

The President. I think that until we have it all worked out—I don't want to get into what's been done and what hasn't. But I have—I can tell you that there has been substantive progress on very important issues. We've still got, I think, maybe just one issue, maybe two to resolve. But we're making progress. Everybody is working in good faith, and I expect it to be done.

Q. When do you think it will get worked out?

The President. Soon. They know we don't have a lot of time, and they know that we need to be—all of us need to be putting all of our energies on rapid, comprehensive deployment so that we can provide security to everyone and begin to work on building the institutions of civil government in Kosovo that will treat all the citizens of Kosovo in a fair and equitable

way. And the quicker we get to work on that, the better.

Now, we're doing that now. We've got, as I said, we've got—I told you today, earlier, we've gotten 15,000 of our troops in there; we're deploying as rapidly as we can. We've been working like crazy on this mine problem; we don't want to lose any more of the refugees coming home, to landmines. They desperately want to come home. They love their country. They want to be there. And so that's what I want us to focus on. That's what I want all of us to focus on.

We had a very, very good partnership with the Russians in Bosnia, and I think once these agreements are made, people on all sides will keep all the commitments, and we'll have a good partnership here.

Gun Control Legislation

Q. Mr. President, you said several times today that the gun vote is difficult for many Members. You've been talking to Members, presumably to Democrats it's most hard for. Why is it so hard for them? What are they telling you?

The President. Well, I think that a lot of them who represent rural districts, where there are a lot of gun owners, know that in 1994 the NRA beat somewhere between 12 and 20 of our Members. I mean, let's just put it—and they did it by scaring legitimate gun owners into thinking the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban were going to do terrible things to them and would do no good in fighting crime.

But 5 years later, I'd like to point out, number one, it didn't do terrible things to legitimate gun owners. Number two, it kept 400,000 guns out of the wrong hands. And number three, the country has moved on this; rural people have moved on this. And Littleton galvanized the country. This is crazy for the United States to be the only advanced country in the world that doesn't take comprehensive, sensible, thorough steps to keep handguns out of the hands of criminals. It's just—it doesn't make any sense.

So I think that—my belief is that if a Member in a difficult district is willing to cast this vote and then aggressively defend it, there will be no losses. In fact, they will be rewarded for doing this, even in the difficult districts, in 2000. But I have told them all—you know, I've had very honest, non-pressure-oriented conversations. This is something I care deeply about. I come from a State where this is a big issue.

I was profoundly proud that every Southern Democrat voted to close the gun show loophole in the United States Senate. And that means not only that they know it's the right thing to do; it means that they're confident they can go home to our part of the country and defend it. And I believe that.

And I don't believe—again, I don't believe this is a big partisan issue anywhere but Washington. I think that's at least like the Patients' Bill of Rights. I think—you know, I had a friend of mine from the Intermountain West in Washington last week, whose brother owns an arsenal of weapons, literally, including semi-automatic weapons. He's a big collector of guns. And his brother, he sent me a message, he said, "You know, this ought to be passed. I keep my guns locked. I'm trained to use them. I'm careful about them. I don't want anybody to have any of this stuff they shouldn't have. And this is wrong."

So I think that serious—I'm amazed by how many people have called into the White House on our comment line and identified themselves as NRA members, identified themselves as Republicans, who disagree with me on my things, encouraging us to go forward on this. The country has moved on this. And everybody knows that the only way anyone can get beat on this is if the facts are misrepresented to the voters. Now, there were some voters that were in a—they weren't in a most positive frame of mind in '94, anyway. But the public is in a positive frame of mind now. They know our economy is working. They know our crime rate is down. They know our welfare rolls are down. They know our social problems are diminishing. And they are profoundly moved by what happened at Littleton. They don't want these children to have died for nothing.

And this should not be a partisan issue. There are some people, like Mr. Dingell, who honestly disagree. They ought to have a chance to vote their convictions. But you know and I know and everybody that covers the Congress knows that the overwhelming majority of the Congress believes that if we close the gun show loophole, that we'll keep more guns out of the hands of criminals; we'll save more lives; and we won't inconvenience legitimate gun owners. Everybody knows that's the truth on the merits. So I just pray that they'll go in there and vote on the merits. Then if they'll defend their votes in the

election, none of them, Republicans or Democrats, will be defeated.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 6:03 p.m. at the U.S. Ambassador's residence. In his remarks, the President referred to Representative John D. Dingell. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan in Cologne, Germany

June 18, 1999

Prime Minister Obuchi. I look forward very much to meeting you again next summer, in July, when we host the Kyushu-Okinawa summit. I hope to see you there.

President Clinton. And I'm very pleased that it's going to be in Okinawa. That's great.

Gun Control Legislation

Q. Mr. President, as you know, Dingell won and McCarthy lost, and the NRA is crowing that they beat you. What's your reaction?

President Clinton. They did. But they didn't beat me; they beat the American people. When the NRA got the House leadership to put the vote off a month, past the Memorial Day recess, so that the memories of Littleton would fade and they could wear the Members out—from these districts where they were vulnerable—they were given a terrific advantage. And they did what they always do with backroom politics; they made the most of it.

But I noticed even last night they kept putting the vote off. When did they vote, 1:30 a.m.? After, so it wouldn't be on the evening news, in the hope that no one would find out that they are still running the Congress, this Congress, for their own convenience, instead of for the interest of the people.

They did win, and it's a great tribute to their money and their power. But it's not a tribute to the children or the future of America. So one more time the Congress of the United States, with the majority in the lead, says, "We don't care what's necessary to protect our children. We can't possibly bear to make anyone in the NRA mad." And the American people are going to have to send them a signal some way or another. Because the NRA can always produce several hundred telephone calls for every one an ordinary citizen would make. The

people who feel strongly about this are not organized. They don't have a lot of money, and they don't normally threaten people in public life the way the NRA threatens them.

So now they say, "Okay, if you go to a gun show and you'd rather not have your background checked, just walk outside and swap guns and money, and everything is fine." I think when the American people figure out what they did in the dead of night, they will be bitterly disappointed; they'll be shaking their head; and they'll wonder what in the world is going on in Washington. What is going on is business as usual. And it was a great victory for the NRA, but it was a great defeat for the safety of our children.

There's a reason they did this at 1:30 a.m. They will never be able to explain why it's okay not to have a background check if these guys go outside, or why it's okay to have a background check that the FBI has already told them will let over 20 percent more criminals get handguns. They'll never be able to defend it, so they did it at 1:30 a.m.

NATO-Russia Negotiations on Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, what do you hear from Helsinki this morning?

President Clinton. That they're still working, that they've got almost all the issues resolved, that there are still some matters still to be resolved. When I was briefed this morning it didn't seem to me that it would take too much longer, given the nature of the issues.

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]—you and President Yeltsin to solve the issue?

President Clinton. Well, I think the important thing right now, insofar as possible, is to focus on making decisions that will work. I don't think that—it may be necessary for this to be resolved

not only at our level but the involvement of Prime Minister Blair, President Chirac, Chancellor Schroeder, and others. But I don't think so, I think the Defense Ministers are working. Secretary Cohen is consulting, basically, all the time with our Defense Ministers and NATO.

The thing that I think we need to focus on is what is necessary to make this work. You know, you folks have done—the news media has done a stunning job in the last day or two in reporting what our people are finding, now that they're finally in Kosovo, about the dimensions of the wholesale slaughter that went on there. We must not make any decisions which will, in any way, shape, or form, undermine the ability of the Kosovars or the willingness of the Kosovars to come home.

So we can work through all this. We want to protect the Serb minority; they deserve that. We want this to be a balanced force. But we have got to achieve our objectives. And certainly the horrible, horrible stories that have been coming out in vivid detail in the last 2 days should reinforce that in the minds of all of us, including, I would hope, the Russians. So I expect we'll get this worked out today.

Economic Recovery in Japan

Q. Mr. President, do you think the Japanese economy has turned the corner with the strong—[inaudible]—

President Clinton. [Inaudible]—they had good news. I certainly hope so. I want to talk to the Prime Minister about it. His opinion would be better than mine, but I was thrilled by their economic performance in the last quarter. And

I think it's a tribute to the steadfast economic reform program of the Prime Minister. I hope that they will be able to keep doing that. I think it's good for the world for Japan to have this kind of growth. And the United States should welcome it, too, because as one part of it, as you probably know, is that there has been a substantial drop in the trade deficit we had with steel, imported Japanese steel which, as you know, has been a huge bone of contention in America.

So I hope we can keep making progress on that, and I hope they can keep growing, because I think it's good for the world, as well as for the Japanese people.

Q. So do you think Mr. Obuchi's economic policies are paying off now, with the 7.9 percent economic growth—

President Clinton. It's very good news. I know that he wants to see it continue, and so do I. But I think—you know, this is good news. The people of Japan have endured a lot of disappointing quarters. They must be very happy about this, and the people in the United States, we're all pulling and hoping that this is a trend and that we'll see more of it.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:21 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jacques Chirac of France; and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters in Cologne, Germany June 18, 1999

Situation in Kosovo

President Clinton. I would just like to make a brief comment. The Prime Minister and I are looking forward to having a discussion about the next steps on Kosovo. But I think it's important to point out, and I think we should all just take a moment to reflect on the fact that this is the eighth day of the agreement; 35,000 Serb troops have left Kosovo; 19,000 KFOR

troops are in there. They're going about their work, and they're busy establishing security.

The refugees are beginning to come home, some of them even before we think it's safe. But the three things that we've fought for 79 days to achieve, the Serb forces out, the international force with NATO at its core, and the refugees coming home, are being achieved. And

I am profoundly grateful for that and very grateful for the strong voice of Prime Minister Blair in our common endeavor.

Do you want to say anything before we start?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I would simply like to echo those words and say to you that, as we see the full horror of what went on in Kosovo, I think we can see how important it was that we took the action that we did and that we were prepared to see this conflict through to a successful conclusion. And there couldn't be any better testament to the new spirit there is in the world than the fact that we were prepared to stand up for the values of civilization and justice as we approach the 21st century. It's a good basis upon which to kick off the new millennium.

Let me just say one other thing. I think the other thing that was important was the unity of the NATO Alliance throughout this period of time, and I give my thanks to all my European colleagues. But in particular, I would like to thank President Clinton for his leadership and for his courage and his support throughout this time, because without the United States of America, without your leadership and without the American people's support, we simply couldn't have brought this to a successful conclusion. And again, there couldn't be any better illustration of the unity that there is, that we managed to bring this about.

Q. Mr. President, do you really think it is possible to build a multinational Kosovo now, knowing the horrors of the torture chambers and so on that we've seen and the departure of the Serbs?

President Clinton. I think the important thing is to get the truth out and make all the people safe. And then I think we will have to do a lot of work. I think we'll have to give a lot of care to the emotional and the psychological scars of the Kosovars, especially the children. I think that we will have to bring religious leaders together from both their traditions and perhaps others around the world. I think people who have gone through this in South Africa and other places will have to be asked to help.

But yes, I do. And finally, let me say I think—I know the Prime Minister and I feel especially strongly about this—we have to give them a different tomorrow to work for. We have to not only rebuild Kosovo, we've got to rebuild southeastern Europe in a way that gives them

the incentive to work together and to accommodate their differences.

You see this happening in Romania and Hungary and other places. Yes, it can be done. But it's going to be a great challenge. The main thing is, we've reversed the ethnic cleansing, and we're getting to the truth here. As Prime Minister Blair said, it is a worse truth than we had dared dream of and we had hoped we would find, eerily reminiscent of what happened in Bosnia. But at least we acted more quickly here. We have reversed it, and I think that's the important principle.

Gun Control Legislation

Q. Mr. President, do you accept the fact that the NRA seems to have beaten you fair and square on the gun issue, on gun shows? Or is there another throw of the dice here?

President Clinton. Well, for one thing, I've been working on this for years. And I think the thing I'm worried about is, I don't want the American people defeated here. I have a simple question after this vote: Will this vote mean that we're going to permit criminals who otherwise would never have gotten handguns to get them because of the NRA, because of the relentless pressure they put on Members of Congress? Does that mean that people will be shot and maybe some people will die, and we could have saved their lives and lowered the crime rate further? I think the answer to that is clear.

So sometimes it's a good thing to lose if you're fighting for what you believe in. It's better than not making the fight. And I have found that if you just keep working at it, we keep making progress. Now, look at the Brady law. We've kept 400,000 improper sales from occurring. So everybody knows more and more the criminals are turning to the gun shows and to the flea markets. Therefore, there ought to be the same sort of background checks. That's my position. That's the position of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

The pressure and the effective lobbying of the NRA has kept the Congress from embracing that position. I understand that. They beat a lot of people in '94 who stood up for the Brady bill, and I hope those people sleep better at night because of a lot of Americans are alive because they were willing to take on the NRA. So I just intend to keep on fighting. I think we'll keep making progress because we're right.

The United States is a great country, but it is the only country in the world that's still living as if you don't have to take reasonable precautions to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals. This has nothing to do with the second amendment. And we've made a lot of progress—that's why we've got the lowest crime rate in 30 years; we're going to make some more. I'm just getting warmed up. I'm energized for the fight, and I hope Carol McCarthy is and Sarah Brady and all of our allies. We'll just keep working on it.

Reconstruction of the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, you spoke of rebuilding. Do you believe Europe should carry the bulk of the cost of that rebuilding in southeastern Europe, as has been reported?

President Clinton. Yes, but I think the international financial institutions should do a lot of it, and I think the United States should contribute. But keep in mind, what we want is to see what happened—the Marshall plan analogy is overused, but one big thing about the Marshall plan was that in order to participate in the Marshall plan, all the European countries had to file a joint plan to redevelop.

So if you just look more on the scale of what was done for Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic after the Berlin Wall fell, and you add to that the notion that these countries should plan together for their future—and the European Union has been very forthright in saying that there should be more integration within the Balkans, within southeastern Europe and then a closer relationship to the European Union—that, it seems to me, to be—is the direction we ought to follow.

A lot of this can and should be done through the IMF, the World Bank, and I think the United States should contribute to this because I think it's in our interest. But I think when it's all said and done, I think all of this will more or less balance out. We've paid for most of the air campaign, but we're only providing 15 percent of the troops to KFOR. So Europe's paying for most of that. But we'll balance this out.

I think we need to do it in a fair way, and we need to stay together, and we need to keep our eye on the ball, which is achieving the objective.

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. Thank you.

Q. Prime Minister, may I ask you if you agree that Europe should supply the vast bulk of the funds for the reconstruction work necessary in Kosovo? And on the question of debt relief at this summit, why all the pussyfooting? Why not right now go ahead and wipe out the debts of all the poorest developing countries?

Prime Minister Blair. Firstly, on that issue, we are, in fact, going to take a huge step forward at this summit in terms of debt relief for those that are the poorest countries in the world. We will be writing off literally billions of dollars worth of debt, and I believe this summit will mark, probably, the single biggest step forward in debt relief and help for the poorest countries that we've seen in the international community for many years.

Now of course, there are things that we can do that go even further than that, but I don't think we should pause from the subject without acknowledging the huge step forward that will be taken by agreement at this summit.

Secondly, in relation to reconstruction, I agree entirely with what the President has said. And do understand, you've got to balance this out, as he was saying, across a whole range of issues. America has provided enormous help and, indeed, the bulk of the help and the costs in terms of the military action. We acknowledge our responsibility in relation to reconstruction. There's a different set of balances in relation to the cost of the troops that are going in now, and you've got to look at everything in the round.

But I think the main point is this. I mean, we will obviously work this out and negotiate it amongst ourselves, but the main point is this: All the way through this conflict, we derived huge support from those frontline states that, in circumstances of real difficulty and real political pressure, stood by us and allowed us to do the job of reversing this ethnic cleansing.

Now, we said all the way through that we would help them to reconstruct the Balkans, to make the Balkans a place of peace and security within Europe in the future, not a region that's based on ethnic conflict. Our job is to make sure that the promises that we made to them during the course of the conflict we now honor, post-conflict.

So as I say, I think we can debate about the cost and balance it out in terms of the overall military campaign, how we deliver the proper administration in Kosovo, how we then

reconstruct the Balkans. But the key thing about this is our determination to make sure that reconstruction actually happens.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:42 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, the Presi-

dent referred to Representative Carolyn McCarthy and Sarah Brady, chair, Hand Gun Control, Inc. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany in Cologne June 18, 1999

Character Education in Public Schools

Q. Mr. President, in another House action, the House has passed a measure which would permit the Ten Commandments to be posted in public schools. Do you think that's constitutional?

President Clinton. I think it raises constitutional questions. I think what they're trying to do is to say that the schools ought to teach basic elements of character education, and I agree with that. And Secretary Riley and I have worked on that for several years, now. So I would—what I would like to do is to, rather than get into a big constitutional fight, is to have the Secretary meet with the Members of Congress, show them what we're trying to do in this area that is plainly constitutional, and maybe get them to support that, so we can intensify our efforts.

And the idea that the schools ought to build the character of children I think is a very good idea. But it ought to be done in a way that respects the wide diversity of our student body and that doesn't lead to a long, drawn-out legal challenge.

I understand the impulse behind it, and I think the impulse is good. We just have to be—we don't want to raise constitutional questions. There is another option here that I think achieves their objective. I'm going to—when I get home I'm going to talk to them about it.

NATO-Russia Negotiations on Kosovo

Q. [Inaudible]—you think there will be a solution with the Russians concerning the problems in Kosovo?

President Clinton. I do. The Chancellor and I—we're going to talk about it.

I'd like to begin by thanking the *Bundeskanzler* for hosting this and for doing such an outstanding job not only leading the G-8 but also leading the EU in this period and for being a wonderful leader in our Alliance in the campaign in Kosovo.

We have been working very hard in the last days, as you know, to get our troops in as the Serbs leave. Today, we have 19,000 in; 35,000 of theirs have gone. And this is a good day. And I do believe, based on what I have just heard, that we have a good chance of reaching a resolution today on the role of the Russians in our KFOR. So we have to discuss this, but I think if we can get everybody together on this in the next couple of hours, we'll have an agreement. I'm hoping.

Debt Relief

Q. Chancellor Schroeder, the indebted nations want debt forgiveness now, about \$100 billion. Is that doable?

Chancellor Schroeder. I think that sum will certainly not be achieved, whatever it will get to. But we certainly get together here during the summit to talk about the fact that we would like to assist the poorest countries with their development and their debt problems.

We, of course, have to—we're at the beginning of the summit—have to go in and discuss the more finite detail, and then we'll come up with a result which we'll share with you at the end of the summit, and not now, at the beginning. [Laughter]

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:51 p.m. in the Isabellensaal Room at the Gurzenich. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

June 18 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement on House Action on Gun Control Legislation

June 18, 1999

Instead of closing the deadly gun show loophole, the House of Representatives voted in the dark of night to let criminals keep buying guns at gun shows. This vote will not stand the light of day. I will keep working until the Congress

stands up to the gun lobby and makes the commonsense measures passed by the Senate the law of the land. We owe it to the families of the children who died in Littleton to give all Americans the safety they deserve.

Statement on House Action on Gun Control Legislation

June 18, 1999

This week, instead of listening to the American people and strengthening our gun laws, the House of Representatives listened to the gun lobby and did nothing at all. The House leadership gutted this bill in the dark of night to keep commonsense gun legislation from seeing the light of day.

The American people will not stand for this. Our Nation is waiting for Washington to pass a real law that keeps guns away from children and out of the hands of criminals. I call on the Congress to stop playing politics and start living up to its responsibility to help save lives.

Statement on the G-7 Agreement on Debt Relief for Poor Nations

June 18, 1999

The G-7 agreement we reached today is an historic step to help the world's poorest nations achieve sustained growth and independence while targeting new resources for poverty reduc-

tion, education, and combating AIDS. It represents a sound, humane effort to promote widely shared prosperity in the new millennium.

Remarks on the Agreement on Russian Participation in KFOR and an Exchange With Reporters in Cologne

June 18, 1999

The President. Let me say, first of all, how pleased I am and appreciative I am for the efforts made by Secretary Cohen and Defense Minister Sergeyev to reach the agreement under which the Russian forces will join KFOR in Kosovo.

I have been briefed on the terms of the agreement. They provide for unity of command. They provide for a significant range of responsibilities for the Russians, which I think are entirely appropriate and will enhance the mission's

effectiveness. And I am fully supportive of this agreement and very pleased by it.

This has been a good day. We are achieving our objectives now. We know that we have 35,000 Serb forces out, 19,000 KFOR forces in. Now we have the agreement with the Russians, and the Kosovars are going home. So I feel very good and very grateful for this.

And again, I know that Secretary Cohen and Mr. Sergeyev have worked very hard, and I'd also like to thank Secretary Albright and Foreign

Minister Ivanov, because I know they've been also in Helsinki working away. So I'm very pleased.

Q. What will the Russian troops be doing, and why is it significant that they would not control a sector of their own?

The President. Well, for one—the main reason is they are actually needed in more than one sector.

Q. Why?

The President. Because even though the Serb population of Kosovo is concentrated primarily in one north central sector and then a north-eastern sector, they're actually—the religious and cultural sites are spread throughout the country and there are pockets of Serbs throughout the country, and we think it's quite important that every effort be made to secure both the physical sites and the personal security of the Serb minority, as well as the Kosovar-Albanian majority. And we think it will give confidence to them if the Russians are in more than one sector.

Q. Will the Russians answer to the NATO commanders?

The President. They have worked out their agreements on unity of command, and Secretary Cohen and Mr. Sergeyev are discussing it now—I think the briefing is going on now, so there's no point in my trying to answer their questions for them. They'd do a better job than I would, and if made a mistake, just have to clean it up.

Q. Is this better than Bosnia, sir?

Gun Control Legislation

Q. The House vote to kill the gun legislation—was that inevitable to kill the legislation because of changes the House wanted to make on gun control and the background checks?

The President. Did they do that today?

Q. I think they're about to.

The President. They're going to kill it all?

Q. They have killed it all.

Q. They have.

The President. Well, then maybe that means we'll go back to square one and pass a good bill.

Q. What happened? A month ago it was so different, wasn't it?

The President. They made a—the decision made by the leadership not to act before Memorial Day gave people—gave the NRA time to mobilize and lobby and put pressure on the

House and gave people's attention time to wander from the heartbreak of Littleton and the determination to do something about it.

But I think people still feel very strongly that there's more we can do to protect our children, and my attention hasn't wandered. I've been working on this for years, and I've seen a lot of ups and downs, so I'm more than happy to keep at it. And I would just urge all the advocates of sensible legislation to keep their spirits up and keep working and keep fighting. And I'll be there with them, and we'll get some things done.

Russian Participation in KFOR

Q. Is this more than Bosnia for the Russians, Mr. President? Is this an enhanced role than what they had in Bosnia?

The President. Yes, I would say so, because—but it's different. You see, in Bosnia, we shared a sector in Bosnia, and we worked very well together. I think all of our people will tell you they were very well pleased. And then the French had a sector and the British had a sector, and there were lots of other countries involved, just as there will be here. There will be nearly 30 countries involved.

But the—we didn't have the same dynamic here. We've got just two ethnic groups, and the Serbs are a small minority, but they're a substantial number of people and they're spread out. You know, of course, I hope that conditions will be such that those ordinary civilians who didn't commit any crimes who left will feel that they can come back, too.

So I think having the Russians there and then playing the administrative role at the airport gives them a broader range of responsibilities, because as I said, I think it's perfectly consistent with the mission. I think it will help us to send the message, to model the message to both groups that we really do want all law-abiding people to be able to live in peace in Kosovo, and we intend to honor our commitments to that end.

So I feel quite good about this, and I've reviewed the, as I said, the terms of command and control and the basic elements. I think it will work. My test about all this has always been, will it work; will it bring the Kosovars home; will it enable them to live in safety with self-government; will it enable us to protect everyone's religious and cultural and other appropriate sites? I think the answers to all those

questions, if this agreement is faithfully implemented—and I believe it will be—the answers to those questions are yes.

Q. Do you trust the Russians?

The President. Well, we—all I can tell you is, every time I've had an understanding with Boris Yeltsin, he's kept it. And we did work with them on a consistent, long-term basis for years now in Bosnia, and it's worked out. So I believe now that the agreement is worked

out, I think it will be honored. I expect it will be honored.

Q. Despite last week—

The President. Yes, absolutely.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 p.m. in front of the Cologne Cathedral. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Defense Igor Sergeev, Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov, and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address

June 19, 1999

Good morning. Tomorrow will mark the 2-month anniversary of the terrible school shooting in Littleton, Colorado. This tragedy shocked our Nation and galvanized our determination to protect our children from violence.

Together with the entertainment industry, we're finding new ways to reduce our children's exposure to graphic and gratuitous violence in movies, TV, and video games. Together with parents, teachers, and community leaders, we're talking about how we can increase our involvement in our children's lives and reach out to troubled young people before they act in violence; how together we can form a grassroots campaign against violence directed at young children. Together as a nation, we're searching our hearts and minds for the best way to prevent anything like this from happening again.

Now, one of the most urgent lessons of Littleton and the plea of so many parents who've lost their own children to gun violence is that, to keep our children safe, we simply must do more to keep guns away from young people and out of the hands of criminals.

Time and again, the gun lobby has used every weapon in its arsenal to defeat any effort to strengthen our gun laws, no matter how sensible. This week it, sadly, happened again.

I sent to Congress a very sensible, moderate proposal to apply Brady background checks to gun shows. These are the same simple background checks that have now stopped 400,000 illegal gun sales without stopping a single legitimate purchaser from buying a gun over the last 5 years. Thanks to a tie-breaking vote by

Vice President Gore, the Senate did the right thing and passed this measure. But the sound of the gavel hadn't died in the Senate Chamber before the gun lobby set its sights on the bill before the House of Representatives.

This week the House of Representatives gutted our bill in the dark of night—literally, after midnight—because the gun lobby didn't want commonsense gun legislation to see the light of day.

That is unacceptable. We can't allow the gun lobby to rewrite our laws and undermine our values. So today, again, I say to Congress: You've still got an opportunity, and you've still got an obligation to do the right thing and pass real legislation that will strengthen our gun laws, not weaken them. Pass a law that applies to all gun shows, not one that lets criminals turn flea markets and parking lots into gun bazaars. Pass a law that gives law enforcement enough time to run real background checks, not one that lets more criminals slip through the cracks. Pass a law that closes the deadly gun show loophole once and for all.

Try this: Before you send me that final bill, ask yourselves questions that are on every American's mind: Will this bill make it easier or harder for criminals to get guns? Will more lives be lost or more lives be saved? Is this about politics or putting our children's safety first?

I say to the gun lobby again: I wish you would help us. Nobody is going to be hurt by this legislation. But we've overcome your scare tactics and strong-arm pressure before. We did it with the Brady law; we did it with the assault

weapons ban. We've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years. The American people are safer, and honest hunters and sportsmen haven't been hurt a bit. The American people understand that commonsense gun laws don't infringe our rights; they protect our lives. It's that simple.

This isn't a partisan issue anywhere else in America. It shouldn't be a partisan issue in Washington. Let us learn from the lessons of Littleton. Let us remember the children of Littleton and, indeed, honor the memory of all

the children who lost their lives to gun violence in our country. Let's build a stronger and safer America for our kids in the 21st century.

Thank for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:43 p.m. on June 18 in the Senator Room at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Cologne, Germany, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. e.d.t. on June 19. The transcript was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Interview With Wolf Blitzer of Cable News Network's "Late Edition" in Cologne June 20, 1999

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Mr. Blitzer. Mr. President, thank you so much for joining us on this very special "Late Edition" from here in Cologne.

There have been reports that President Yeltsin has been ill, erratic, that his behavior has been shaky. You just met with him a little while ago. What's your impression?

The President. Well, his behavior was neither erratic nor shaky today. He was strong, clear, forceful, and looking to the future. We actually had quite a good meeting. We got a lot done. We set out an agenda to continue to work on reducing the nuclear threat; to continue to work on reducing the likelihood of any cooperation of Russian entities with Iran's missile technology development; with working to help Russia comply with the IMF and get its economy going strongly again; and obviously, we talked about our commitment to fully implement the agreements we made over Kosovo.

So, today all I can tell you is I had good personal experience. He was clear, concise, and direct and strong.

Russia-U.S. Nuclear Security Cooperation

Mr. Blitzer. But a lot of people were concerned when the Russians sent those 150 or 200 soldiers into Pristina so secretly. With the Russians still having thousands of nuclear warheads, should Americans be concerned about the security, the safety of that nuclear arsenal if there's a problem between civilian and military control of the Russian military?

The President. Well, so far, I can only tell you what our experience is, now in its 6½ years. We've worked very well with the Russian military to implement the system that was set up actually before I became President, although we've tried to strengthen it, to strengthen the Russian security over nuclear weapons, to strengthen security over other materials. President Yeltsin and I agreed last year to destroy 50 tons of plutonium arising out of nuclear operations. We have great confidence in that, and it's working quite well. I have no reason to believe that it won't continue to do so.

Russian Role in Kosovo

Mr. Blitzer. But will you concede, though, that the dash for the airport in Pristina and the grabbing hold of that piece of territory helped them get a better deal for their peacekeepers in Kosovo than would have been the case if they had not done so?

The President. I'm not sure that's right, for the following reason: I felt it was important myself—and I told all of our people this, and several of our NATO Allies—that Russia have a different role in Kosovo, because of the importance of making clear our common commitment to protect civilians, both the Kosovar Albanians who are coming home and the Serbs who remain. Therefore, I thought it was important for Russia to have its forces in more than one of these sectors. And of course, as you know now, they'll be working with us and with the Germans and the French.

So they may believe that; the Russians may believe that. But in my own mind, I had already determined that if our Allies would go along, they should be in more than one sector.

Mr. Blitzer. But not necessarily in control of the airport, which originally was going to be the strategic headquarters for the peacekeepers.

The President. Yes, but now the division of labor they have worked out at the airport is quite acceptable to us and guarantees that the mission can go forward. So I think that's the most important thing.

We have to—every decision we made, including the agreements made with the Russians, had one thing uppermost in their minds: Will the mission succeed? That is, today it's a very happy day. The Serbian forces will go out on schedule, the last of them. We have about 20,000 of our NATO peacekeepers in there; 62,000 of the Kosovars have already come home, some of them before we wanted them to, because of the demining operations. So I feel very good about where we're going with this now, and I'm leaving here with real confidence that we are going to succeed in achieving all of our objectives.

Safety of U.S. Troops

Mr. Blitzer. But you have to be concerned about the potential for the KLA, the Kosovo Liberation Army—the revenge, the hatred, the fact that they're not going to be satisfied with autonomy, they're going to want full independence from Serbia—the potential for danger to those U.S. troops is very, very real.

The President. There is a potential for danger for all troops, from both disgruntled Kosovar Albanians or disgruntled or frightened Serbs in Kosovo. But I am encouraged that the leaders of the KLA have now signed on to the commitment to demilitarize. They've agreed to put away their uniforms; to give up their big weapons, their non-pistol weapons; to do everything we have asked them to do.

Might there be individuals or small groups who are full of anger and seek revenge? Of course, and we'll have to be very vigilant, just as we've had to be vigilant in Bosnia.

I also think we're going to have to work hard, to take initiative, to try to take some of that venom out of the atmosphere. When Elie Wiesel, our Nobel laureate who survived the Holocaust, came back from the tour I asked him to take of the camps, he talked about how

troubled he was by the children, the families, how much we needed to work on that, and how hard we'd have to work to get people—religious leaders and others in there to try to get people to turn away from revenge.

But this is a problem everywhere where such things occur. And you'd look at these hideous accounts that are just now coming out, even worse than we imagined, about the mass killings and the graves and the unusual, almost unimaginable cruelty. So it will take them some time to get through that, and we're going to work with them.

Mr. Blitzer. You know, some in the U.S. military, though, are concerned that just as—when the U.S., when President Reagan sent troops into Lebanon, there were high expectations. When you sent troops into Somalia, there were high expectations. Things could go sour quickly. Is that realistic, or are you taking certain steps that will prevent another Lebanon or Somalia?

The President. Well, I think we learned a lot about that. And when we went to Bosnia, where all the same things were present—remember, we'd had a quarter of a million people killed; we'd had 2.5 million refugees; we had all those horrible internment camps—all the hideous, awful stories we're hearing now out of Kosovo, we had in Bosnia for a longer period of time.

So we did a lot of extra work on security, and we were quite careful about how we defined our mission and how we carried it out, based on lessons learned both in Lebanon and in Somalia.

And so we'll try to carry those lessons through. I can't tell the American people there will not be any violent incident, that no American will ever be harmed or killed. But I can say that we have learned the lessons of the last several years, and I think what we are doing is profoundly important.

Aftermath of Situation in the Balkans

Mr. Blitzer. In your Oval Office address, you declared victory. Some of your critics, though, say that as long as President Slobodan Milosevic is in power, there is no victory.

The President. Well, that's two different things. Let me first say that when I spoke to the American people, I said we had three objectives: to reverse the ethnic cleansing and bring the Kosovar Albanians home—we're doing that, 62,000 are already back; to do it in a way that

would keep our Alliance together—we're stronger than we ever were; and that I would seek a partnership with Russia as we had in Bosnia. We have now formalized that partnership, so that even though our relationships with Russia were quite strained during this period of the conflict, I think that we're actually in a position to have a stronger relationship with Russia in the future than we had before the conflict started. And so I feel good about that. So that is victory.

Now, do I think the Serbian people would be better off without Mr. Milosevic? You bet I do. He has been indicted by the War Crimes Tribunal, and every day now we see the vivid pictures which graphically demonstrate that it was even worse than we imagined. There is no statute of limitations on that. The Serbian—the leader of the Serbian church has now called for him to step aside. And I certainly hope that will happen, and we have time to focus on that. But first, we've got to do the mission. We've got to bring the folks home in safety and self-government.

Mr. Blitzer. Well, what the critics also say is that the U.S. and the NATO Allies have done nothing to go after other leading indicted war criminals, Serbs Ratko Mladic, Radovan Karadzic, Arkan. Why should President Milosevic be any more concerned than they are? They're all still free men.

The President. Well, in our sector in Bosnia, we have arrested people who were indicted, and so have the British, and we have worked with them. And I think that would be a big mistake for Mr. Milosevic now. We may not have an extradition agreement with Serbia. But he—as long as he remains at large, there is no statute of limitations. And if I were in his position, I wouldn't take too much comfort from that. But the best thing that can happen for the Serbian people is if he were no longer President.

Mr. Blitzer. And you think that's realistic, that that could happen anytime soon?

The President. Well, I think that I shouldn't comment on that right now. But I think that there's—with the church leaders calling for him to step down, with the people in the opposition in Serbia calling for him to do so, and with the commitment we have made as allies to support humanitarian aid to the Serbs but no reconstruction aid as long as he's there, I think that's a pretty clear message.

Mr. Blitzer. You know about the reports that you've signed an intelligence finding to actively seek to undermine his regime?

The President. I don't comment on those things. I can't—

Expectations of Operation Allied Force

Mr. Blitzer. I knew you wouldn't, but I figured I would ask anyhow.

Let's move on to talk about—under the category of “now the truth can be told.” When you gave the order to launch the airstrikes, did you ever believe in your wildest imagination it would take 78 days, and all the devastation that it did take, to finally declare a victory?

The President. I'll tell you what I thought. I thought that there was maybe a 50 percent chance it would be over in a week, because once he knew we would do it, I thought he would remember Bosnia, and I thought he would understand what we could do. But I knew that if he decided to take the punishment of the air campaign, it could go on quite a long while, because he would be trying all along to divide the allies or to bring pressure from the outside to try to find some way to bring it to a close.

And so I told everybody when we started, I said, “Look, if we start this and it doesn't work out in 2 or 3 days, we've got to be prepared to go on.”

I knew that we had, because of the facts of this case, the capacity—with the sophisticated weaponry and the skill of our pilots—I knew we had the capacity to essentially take down the military apparatus and the economic apparatus supporting it. But I knew it could take quite a long time. I didn't have any specific deadline, but I knew it could take quite a long time.

Response to Genocide and Minority Oppression

Mr. Blitzer. Mr. President, some of your aides are now talking about a Clinton doctrine in foreign policy in the aftermath of this war against Yugoslavia. Is there, in your mind, a Clinton doctrine?

The President. Well, I think there's an important principle here that I hope will be now upheld in the future and not just by the United States, not just by NATO but also by the leading countries of the world, through the United Nations. And that is that while there may well be a great deal of ethnic and religious conflict

in the world—some of it might break out into wars—that whether within or beyond the borders of a country, if the world community has the power to stop it, we ought to stop genocide and ethnic cleansing. People ought—innocent civilians ought not to be subject to slaughter because of their religious or ethnic or racial or tribal heritage.

That is what we did, but took too long in doing, in Bosnia. That is what we did and are doing in Kosovo. That is, frankly, what we failed to do in Rwanda, where so many died so quickly, and what I hope very much we'll be able to do in Africa if it ever happens there again.

Gun Control Legislation

Mr. Blitzer. All right. Let's move on to some domestic issues. Guns—a big subject this past week. Do you really believe it's realistic, it's appropriate to register all guns in the United States? And if that were done, would that stop the violence?

The President. Well, you asked two questions. Realistic? In this Congress, perhaps not. Appropriate? Sure. We register cars. And if we did register them, it would be easier to track sales and easier to do comprehensive background checks.

But that's not what I asked the Congress to do. All I asked the Congress to do was to close the loophole for sales at gun shows and flea markets, so we could do the same background checks we now do at gun stores. And do I think that would make America a less violent place? Yes, I think there would be less crime with guns if that happened.

We already—under the Brady bill, we've stopped 400,000 improper sales. And we also have a 25-year low in our crime rate and violent crime coming down, on average, even slightly more than that. So do I think violent crime would go down more? Absolutely, I do.

Mr. Blitzer. And the registration, you're going to hold off on, for the time being?

The President. Yes. I mean, if we can't close the gun show loophole, we're certainly not going to pass that.

But let me ask you this—and that doesn't have anything to do with the right to keep and bear arms. We have—there's a constitutional right to travel in America, enshrined by the Supreme Court as a constitutional right. No one believes that registering our cars or proving that we know how to drive them undermines our

constitutional right to travel. It facilitates our constitutional right to travel by making sure we're safe on the road and that we know what we're doing.

Mr. Blitzer. All right, but you will concede, though, that the Democrats have a potential political bonanza from this defeat of the legislation this past week, going into the elections next year.

The President. Well, if the public supports this. But I didn't want a political bonanza. I wanted a safer America. And our party did not seek political points on this. We sought—if we wanted a political bonanza, we would have gone in with a bunch of issues that we knew were popular that we had no chance to pass. We thought—we went in there with an agenda that we thought we could pass, that we knew would make America a safer place.

No one questions—no one seriously questions, after the experience of the last 5 years with the Brady bill, that if we close the gun show and flea market loophole, that there will be fewer improper sales and it will make America safer at minimum disruption to the people who buy and sell guns and use them lawfully. So that's—what we've tried to do is to get things done that would make America a safer place.

2000 Presidential Election

Mr. Blitzer. All right. Speaking about politics, let's talk about Presidential politics. Do you think that Texas Governor George W. Bush is qualified to be President of the United States?

The President. Well, that's a decision the American people have to make.

Mr. Blitzer. Well, what do you think?

The President. Well, I think—you know, for one thing, we've got to see where he stands on the issues. So far, we know almost nothing of that, except what we know from his record as Governor. He said—his announcement speech was very well crafted and was strikingly reminiscent of what those of us who call ourselves New Democrats have been saying since 1991.

But on the specifics, I just don't know. I mean, for example, he said nothing about this gun battle going on in the House. He signed the concealed weapons bill in the Texas Legislature. That's just the one example.

The one thing I thought the Vice President did particularly well when he announced was to say, "I'm very proud of what we've done

in the last 6½ years. I've got all the relevant experience to be President. But the important thing is, what are we going to do in the next 4 years? And here are specific things I will do." I think that Governor Bush owes it to the American people to say the same thing.

Mr. Blitzer. Well, why is Vice President Gore so far behind Governor Bush in the polls, and what does the Vice President have to do to catch up?

The President. Well, I think in historical terms, he's not particularly far behind. I think if you go back and look at this point in 1959, when candidate Richard Nixon, Vice President Richard Nixon, was going to run as the Republican nominee, he was considerably further behind Adlai Stevenson, who was the best-known Democrat at the time.

I think the American people—the encouraging thing to me is that two-thirds of them have said they want to know more about all the candidates, including the Vice President. And I believe when they look at experience, proven success, and the program for the future—most—all elections are about tomorrow—I think he's going to do very well.

Mr. Blitzer. Do you think that he was trying, this week, to distance himself from you, the Vice President, by saying, almost volunteering, that your behavior last year was inexcusable?

The President. Well, I took no offense at it. He didn't say anything that I hadn't said in much starker terms a long time ago. So there was nothing inappropriate about that.

I thought the most important thing he did, frankly, by far, was to say, "I've got experience in areas that matter, and we have succeeded; here's what I'm going to do, specifically, if you elect me; and the real choice is whether you want to build on this record of success and go beyond it, or you want to go back."

I think—keep in mind, the American people will view this election, as they should—as they should—as about them, their children, and their future. All elections are about tomorrow. So if you've been a good Vice President or a good Governor of Texas, for the voters at election time, that's only valuable if it's evidence that you'll do good tomorrow.

They hire you; they give you a check every 2 weeks to do a good job. So I thought the most important thing he did was to talk about his future vision.

Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy

Mr. Blitzer. All right, let's talk about the First Lady's potential run for the Senate from New York. When did you discover, when did you learn that the First Lady was a New York Yankees fan?

The President. Oh, when I first—shortly after I met her, because I'm a big baseball fan. I mean, I'm——

Mr. Blitzer. You know, a lot of people think she just came up——

The President. I know that. But she said how it came to be. Her primary allegiance all her life has been to the Chicago Cubs. If you go to Chicago, basically, most of the people on the north side are for the Cubs; most of the people on the south side are for the White Sox. And she said, but I also—I remember back in the seventies, we were talking about other baseball, and she said, "But I like the Yankees, too." I said, "Well, why don't you like the White Sox?" She said, "If you're from Chicago, you're for the White Sox or the Cubs, and normally not both." So our family always liked the Yankees.

Mr. Blitzer. All right. You know, there——

The President. I learned it a long time ago.

Mr. Blitzer. ——you know, there are reports out today in U.S. News and World Report that she's thinking of moving out of the White House and getting a place in New York in the fall.

The President. Well, it's not true that she's going to move out of the White House. But let me answer the report. Months ago, we said that we intended to get a place in New York. We talked—we started talking not long after we moved to the White House about where we would live when we got out. She's always wanted to live in New York, so we said we'd do that. And I would divide my time between New York and going home to Arkansas and finishing my library and doing my work there.

Now, if she runs for the Senate, she'll obviously have to spend a lot more time there. But it will be more like an incumbent Member of Congress running for reelection. That is, she's not going to stop being First Lady and doing her other responsibilities, but she'll have to spend a lot more time in New York, and we'll have to get a place there for her to be while she's spending her time there.

Mr. Blitzer. If she runs for the Senate, will you be eligible to vote for her in New York

State? In other words, would you move your voting registration from Arkansas to New York?

The President. Well, I might, because I think every vote counts, and I'd certainly want her to win if she ran.

Mr. Blitzer. Could be that close?

The President. I will say this. I think if this is what she wants to do, if she wants, if she decides to do this, I will be enthusiastically supportive, because I think she would be truly magnificent. I think she'd be great for the people of New York and good for the people of America.

In all the years I've been in public life, of all the people I've ever known, she has been the most consistently, seriously dedicated to the kinds of public issues that I think are important today: to the welfare of children, the strength of families, the future of education, quality of health care. I mean, this is something—if the people of New York chose her, they would have somebody with 30 years of unbroken, consistent, committed dedication, who knows a lot and is great with working with people. So if that's what she wants, I'm strong for it.

Mr. Blitzer. And so you're ready to move from—

The President. I'm ready to do whatever she wants. I will be—whatever the facts are about her running for the Senate, I'll be dividing my time between New York and home, because I've got a library to build; I've got a public policy center to set up; and it's a real gift I want to give my native State, and I want it to be something wonderful and good. So, I've spent quite a lot of time on it already.

Post-Presidency Plans

Mr. Blitzer. Mr. President, you've always been someone who's looked ahead. When you look ahead to your personal life after you leave the White House, what do you see?

The President. Well, it depends in part on what Hillary does. You know, I'll probably be going to meetings of the Senate spouses club, if she decides to run. But I want to continue to be active in areas that I care a great deal about. And I think that through my library and through the public policy center and perhaps through some other activities, I can continue to work on some of the issues of world peace and reconciliation of people across these racial and religious lines that I've devoted so much of my life to. I can continue the work at home

on issues that I care a great deal about, including involving young people in public service, whether it's young people in AmeriCorps or young Americans who are interested in running for public office. I've given a lot of thought to it.

But I'll find something useful to do. I want to work hard. I'm too early—it's too early to quit work, and I'm not good enough to go on the senior golf tour. So I expect I'll have to just keep on doing what I'm doing.

Mr. Blitzer. So what—I'm hearing more of the Jimmy Carter model as opposed to a Gerald Ford model?

The President. Yes, that may just be a function of age and circumstance. I think President Carter has been the most effective former President in my lifetime and one of the three or four most important former Presidents, in his public service and the quality of his work, in the entire history of the United States. So what I would do wouldn't be exactly what he has done, but I think the model of what he has done and how he's done it is a good model for every former President who gets out who still has good health and a few years left.

Mr. Blitzer. Okay, Mr. President. I'm told we're all out of time. I want to thank you very much for joining us for this special "Late Edition" here in Cologne.

The President. This is your last trip with me, so I want to thank you for 6½ good years. Good luck.

Mr. Blitzer. Thank you very much. It's been an honor to cover you.

NOTE: The interview was videotaped at 4:27 p.m. in the Bibliotek Room at the Hyatt Regency Hotel for later broadcast on Cable News Network. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Serbian Patriarch Pavle, president of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church; and suspected war criminals Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic, and Zeljko (Arkan) Raznatovic, indicted by the International War Crimes Tribunal. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Yevgeniy Kiselev of Russia's NTV in Cologne June 20, 1999

Mr. Kiselev. Mr. President, hello, and let me express my gratitude for your interview.

The President. Thank you very much. I'm glad to do it.

Russian Participation in KFOR

Mr. Kiselev. And let me start with this question. For the past week and a half, relations between Russia and the West have been complicated by the unexpected deployment of the Russian peacekeepers to Pristina. What was at the heart of the disagreement between Moscow and the West regarding Russia's participation in KFOR? How did you overcome this disagreement?

The President. Well, first of all, let me say that this entire difficulty in Kosovo has been a great test for the relationship between the United States and Russia, but it is a test, I believe, that both countries have passed—on your part, thanks to the leadership of President Yeltsin and the work that our foreign ministers and defense ministers have done, the work that Prime Minister Stepashin has done.

I don't know that there ever was much disagreement about Russian participation. I said from the beginning that I strongly felt in order for the peacekeeping force to have credibility and full impact, Russia would have to be a very important part of it. And the agreement we have reached regarding Russian involvement in terms of leadership over the airport and being involved here in three different sectors I think will enable all of us to achieve our objectives: to bring the Kosovars home in peace and security, and to make sure that the Serb minority as well as the Kosovo Albanian majority are both treated freely and fairly.

Meeting With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Mr. Kiselev. Today, Mr. President, you met with Russian President Yeltsin. What questions did you discuss, and what did you manage to agree on?

The President. First of all, we discussed Kosovo. We talked about what a difficult challenge it had been to our relationship, and we both committed to implement our agreement in good faith in a way that will, I think, reflect credit on the leadership and greatness of Russia

and the Russian people, and on those of us who are working with Russia in Kosovo.

Secondly, we discussed the importance of continuing our efforts to reduce the nuclear threat and the threat of proliferation of missile technology. And we agreed to work together on that. Among other things, President Yeltsin said that he hoped that START II would be ratified by the Duma, and that we would begin soon parallel discussions on START III to take our nuclear arsenals down even more and on the ABM Treaty.

Then, the third thing we discussed was the need to do more to try to support economic development in Russia, to get Russia qualified in the IMF program and, of course, that requires some action in the Duma. And I expressed my strong support for IMF assistance to Russia, as well as for help on the Soviet-era debt problem and some other things that can be done, I believe, to boost Russian economic prospects and help the lives of ordinary citizens in Russia, which all of us think is very, very important.

Mr. Kiselev. Mr. President, let me ask you this. Both in Russia and in the West, the question of Yeltsin's health, President Yeltsin's health constantly comes up. How did you find Mr. Yeltsin today?

The President. Today he was strong, clear, alert, vigorous. He stated Russia's case very forcefully on every issue, and we did what we have done in all of our meetings—we've now had 17 meetings in the last 6½ years. We had an agenda; we reached agreements; and we committed to go forward. So I would say, today he did very, very well.

He has acknowledged from time to time that he's had some health problems, but in all of my conversations with him about Kosovo, and especially today, I found him to be alert and very much on top of his responsibilities.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Mr. Kiselev. Mr. President, let me ask you about this. NATO's operation in the Balkans has led to manifestations of anti-Western and anti-American sentiments in Russia. What are you planning to do to improve America's image

in Russia's eyes, and what kind of specific concrete steps will you take to improve relations between Russia and the U.S.?

The President. Well, first, I hope that this interview will help to some extent by giving me the opportunity to clarify my country's position and our commitment to a strong, successful, democratic Russia, fully participating in world affairs and a leadership role, and fully integrated into Europe in the major economic and political institutions that will be so important to the welfare of ordinary Russian citizens in the new century.

Second, I think that as we work together in Kosovo and as you are able to bring to the Russian people the facts of the horrible atrocities committed against the Kosovars by Mr. Milosevic's forces, the nightmares that are so much like what we saw in Bosnia before the United States and Russia and others went in there, at least perhaps the Russian people will understand what was behind what we were doing. We sought no political or economic advantage, we sought no change in the balance of power worldwide. We were only trying to reverse ethnic cleansing and genocide. And now it is something we are doing together with the Russian forces. So I hope that will help.

And finally, I think it's very important that we get back to our larger agenda: to reducing the nuclear threat and the burden and—it imposes on Russian as well as American people; to reducing the threat of the proliferation of dangerous weapons technology; and to building up the Russian economy in ways that benefit ordinary Russian citizens. These are things that are in the interest of the American people, things we are deeply committed to.

And I believe as we continue to work on these things together, I would hope that the feeling the Russian people have for the American people in the United States will warm up again, because we strongly want our partnership with Russia to endure and to be felt in the hearts of ordinary citizens in both countries.

Aftermath of Situation in the Balkans

Mr. Kiselev. Mr. President, with regard to NATO's operation in the Balkans, let me ask you this—this question is asked by many people nowadays. Does it not seem to you that the actions of the United States and NATO show some sort of double standard—I mean, that America doesn't act, say, in the Balkans the

same way as it does in Kurdistan or Rwanda and other regions of the world where authorities are conducting a policy of genocide or national oppression of minorities?

The President. First, let me say—

Mr. Kiselev. Will NATO be just as—I'm sorry to interrupt you—

The President. Yes?

Mr. Kiselev. —will NATO be just as firm with the KLA, for example, as it has been against Serb forces if they try to take over Kosovo or endanger the Serb population?

The President. The answer to the last question has to be yes, and a strong yes. Our commitment, as I said from the beginning, is a Kosovo in which no innocent civilians were subject to death, uprooting, or oppression. Our commitment, therefore, now must be to give equal protection to all the innocent civilian citizens of Kosovo. And I would just note that KLA has agreed now to demilitarize, to give up its large weapons, to suspend any kind of military operations or training, including even the wearing of the uniforms. So we will have to be vigilant, but I am pleased with the progress of that.

And I want to say again, I am committed to protecting all the people of Kosovo, and one of the reasons that I wanted the Russians to come in and first have a partnership is so that the Serbs, as well as the Kosovar Albanians, would feel that the KFOR force was committed to their protection and that they would all try to live together again. It's going to be hard; a lot of horrible, horrible things have occurred. But we will work with them and we will do our best to help reconcile the civilians who had no role in the wrongdoing, to help them reconcile to one another.

Response to Genocide and Minority Oppression

Mr. Kiselev. And as far as the first part of my question?

The President. The first part of your question, I have spoken to quite extensively in America. First, America did actually play a very major role in preserving an area of protection for the Kurds in northern Iraq for several years after the Gulf war. And we have, several times, intervened to try to help protect the Kurds and will continue to be sensitive to that.

Secondly, I have said repeatedly that the slaughter of the Rwandans, the genocide in Rwanda occurred in the short space of about 100 days, and we were caught flat-footed. I feel

terrible that we did nothing. And I would hope that if anything like that develops in Africa again that the United States and Russia, indeed, all the major powers of the United Nations would move aggressively to try to stop it.

We should not countenance genocide or ethnic cleansing anywhere in the world if we have the power to stop it. That's not to say that we can expect all people of all different ethnic groups to always like each other and never even to fight. But when innocent civilians are subject to mass slaughter and ethnic cleansing, if we can stop it, we should.

Russian Role in Balkan Peace Negotiations

Mr. Kiselev. Let me ask you about the role of Russia in the Balkans peace deal more in detail. There are basically two views. Some believe that NATO was forced to turn to Russia for help because only Russia could sit down with both sides and convince Milosevic to accept the peace deal. Others believe that the West could have avoided turning out Russia and only did so out of good will and a desire to preserve Russia's role in the Balkans. What is your point of view?

The President. I would say there's a little bit of both there. The United States and the other NATO authorities do view Russia with good will, not ill will, and we do want and believe Russia should appropriately have a role in the Balkans. But also, I always believed if we were going to get a diplomatic solution here, we had to have Russia's involvement.

Keep in mind, before the bombing began, for 14 months we worked closely with the Russians to try to find a diplomatic solution in the Balkans, because we knew that Russia's positive influence would be essential. Then, when it appeared that the diplomatic solution might be possible and could bring an end to the bombing and bring the Kosovars home, President Yeltsin was willing to appoint Mr. Chernomyrdin.

He then came to us and made it clear that he would like someone who could represent the rest of Europe in these negotiations, and President Ahtisaari of Finland became his partner. And I believe that the Russian people should be very, very proud of the role, the indispensable role that Russia played in these diplomatic negotiations, and the role of Mr. Chernomyrdin in particular. He and President Ahtisaari did a very, very good job, and it's something that

I think is a great credit to Russia and to the people of Russia.

G-8 Summit/Financial Aid to Russia

Mr. Kiselev. And there's probably now one last topic that I wanted to dwell upon. Today is the last day of the G-8 summit. The Western press usually refers to it as G-7-plus-Russia, even though more than a year ago in Birmingham, Russia was officially admitted, accepted to the club of the world leading nations. Is Russia, in fact, a full-fledged member of the G-8, or is it still early to talk seriously about this because of Russia's economic weakness? And is the U.S. going to pressure the IMF to provide credits to Russia, and is the U.S. going to help Russia's economy apart from IMF?

The President. Let me try to answer all of your questions. There is a G-8 now, not a G-7-plus-one. It is a G-8; Russia is a full member.

Mr. Kiselev. Please do it.

The President. The communique that we issued today, which covers a wide range of economic and social issues, was fully participated in by Russia. The Russians had a full hand, along with all the rest of us, in developing this communique. And President Yeltsin was at the meeting today when the leaders went over the sections and, in effect, ratified and said we wanted it out there. So I think you can feel quite good about that and about the fact that there is a G-8 and Russia is a full member of it.

Secondly, you ask about the future and whether we would pressure the IMF to help Russia. The answer is that we have always strongly, strongly supported IMF assistance to Russia. We also strongly, however, support the changes that the Duma has been asked to make in order to give Russia a competitive world economy. Because no matter how much the IMF tries to help Russia, unless your country has made the basic changes that every country must make to compete in the global economy, the private money will not flow into Russia that will really bring it back to the position that the Russian people deserve and that, frankly, the rest of the world needs. It's very much in the interest of the United States to have an economically successful, strong, prosperous Russia. And I will do everything I can to that end.

And your third question was whether there were things apart from the IMF that we could do to help the Russian economy, and the answer

to that is yes. And I discussed some of those with President Yeltsin today.

I want you to understand that the United States believes that a strong and prosperous democratic Russia, actively involved with the rest of Europe, actively involved with the United States, actively working together in partnership to solve the world's problems, from terrorism to the threat of weapons of mass destruction to the need to stop ethnic cleansing—that this is in our interest. We do this because we genuinely want the Russian people to have a leading role in the world and to have personal prosperity, because we think it gives us a safer world and it's better for the American people.

Mr. Kiselev. Mr. President, thank you for your time, thank you for your answers, and I wish you good luck.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was videotaped at 5:16 p.m. in the Bibliotek Room at the Hyatt Regency Hotel for later broadcast in Russia. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Sergey Stepashin and former Prime Minister and Special Envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Joint Statement Between the United States and the Russian Federation Concerning Strategic Offensive and Defensive Arms and Further Strengthening of Stability

June 20, 1999

Confirming their dedication to the cause of strengthening strategic stability and international security, stressing the importance of further reduction of strategic offensive arms, and recognizing the fundamental importance of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty) for the attainment of these goals, the United States of America and the Russian Federation declare their determination to continue efforts directed at achieving meaningful results in these areas.

The two governments believe that strategic stability can be strengthened only if there is compliance with existing agreements between the Parties on limitation and reduction of arms. The two governments will do everything in their power to facilitate the successful completion of the START II ratification processes in both countries.

The two governments reaffirm their readiness, expressed in Helsinki in March 1997, to conduct new negotiations on strategic offensive arms aimed at further reducing for each side the level of strategic nuclear warheads, elaborating measures of transparency concerning existing strategic nuclear warheads and their elimination, as well as other agreed technical and organizational measures in order to contribute to the

irreversibility of deep reductions including prevention of a rapid build-up in the numbers of warheads and to contribute through all this to the strengthening of strategic stability in the world. The two governments will strive to accomplish the important task of achieving results in these negotiations as early as possible.

Proceeding from the fundamental significance of the ABM Treaty for further reductions in strategic offensive arms, and from the need to maintain the strategic balance between the United States of America and the Russian Federation, the Parties reaffirm their commitment to that Treaty, which is a cornerstone of strategic stability, and to continuing efforts to strengthen the Treaty, to enhance its viability and effectiveness in the future.

The United States of America and the Russian Federation, recalling their concern about the proliferation in the world of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, including missiles and missile technologies, expressed by them in the Joint Statement on Common Security Challenges at the Threshold of the Twenty First Century, adopted on September 2, 1998 in Moscow, stress their common desire to reverse that process using to this end the

existing and possible new international legal mechanisms.

In this regard, both Parties affirm their existing obligations under Article XIII of the ABM Treaty to consider possible changes in the strategic situation that have a bearing on the ABM Treaty and, as appropriate, possible proposals for further increasing the viability of this Treaty.

The Parties emphasize that the package of agreements signed on September 26, 1997 in New York is important under present conditions for the effectiveness of the ABM Treaty, and they will facilitate the earliest possible ratification and entry into force of those agreements.

The implementation of measures to exchange data on missile launches and on early warning

and to set up an appropriate joint center, recorded in the Joint Statement by the Presidents of the United States of America and the Russian Federation signed on September 2, 1998 in Moscow, will also promote the strengthening of strategic stability.

Discussions on START III and the ABM Treaty will begin later this summer. The two governments express their confidence that implementation of this Joint Statement will be a new significant step to enhance strategic stability and the security of both nations.

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

Remarks to the American Community in Bonn, Germany

June 20, 1999

Lord Mayor Dieckmann, thank you very much for your words and for your wonderful gift of Beethoven's music; Mr. Ambassador; ladies and gentlemen.

Let me begin by saying a word of thanks to our Embassy staff and to those of you here in Bonn who have been our hosts for so many years. We are very proud of our long presence here, but we know, as the Lord Mayor said, that our departure is made possible by something we have dreamed of for a very long time, the Germany envisioned when the American High Commission came to Bonn in 1951. Also, thanks in large measure to Germany's leadership and example, we see the Europe envisioned in the days of Truman and Adenauer, a Europe free, undivided, and at peace, at last within our grasp.

The man for whom this chapel was named, Henry Stimson, shared those dreams of Germany and Europe. I understand one of his relatives, Arthur Stimson, is here today, and we are honored by that. I also want to wish the chapel's pastor, Dr. Hubbard, well as he returns to America tomorrow after his service here. We thank you, sir, and we wish your successor, Reverend Satre—and Father McNally, thank you for being here.

Hillary and I and Secretary Eizenstat, who's about to become the Deputy Secretary of the

Treasury—he's moving, too—all of our Americans here are profoundly grateful to those of you who have served in Bonn and have done a remarkable job of forging the truly incredible relationship we have with Germany. It is a security alliance, an economic partnership, and a cultural bond. The gift of this chapel is meant to symbolize that whole relationship and to make it stronger. I thank all of you who have made it possible.

As I think about where we are today compared to where we were 50 years ago and the work we did today for the Europe our children and grandchildren will live in 50 years from now, I think it is altogether fitting that we are here in Bonn, the home of Beethoven, for his life makes possible for us to see one of the most important admonitions of the Scriptures. The Bible says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Beethoven, I believe, was the greatest composer in the history of the world. He was also stone deaf. He wrote his music because of his vision, because of the melding together of his mind, his heart, his memory, his imagination. Human beings are at their best, not only individually but working together, when they are guided by their visions and they are good.

The summit we have just completed was the last leaders' meeting of the 20th century. It followed our victory in Kosovo for values and for the vision we have of the 21st century.

I want to talk very briefly—and I thank the rain for letting up. [Laughter] God approved my interpretation of the Scriptures, you see? [Applause] Thank you. I want to say just a few words about the vision we have for southeastern Europe, for our relations with Russia, for the challenges of the new global economy.

Consider first the lessons we would be leaving this century for the next if we had come to Cologne without having taken a stand in Kosovo. Then we would be saying that innocent men, women, and children could be singled out for destruction because of their ethnic heritage or religious faith, even in the heart of Europe; that innocent people could be driven from their homes, loaded on train cars, raped and killed, their religious faith and their culture erased, and the world would not hear, see, speak, or act to stop it; that the world's most powerful alliance is simply powerless to stop crimes against humanity, even those on its own doorstep.

Years from now, people would say that we lived through a time of amazing progress in human freedom and economic prosperity. But the children of the 21st century would have to look back and say that we failed a decisive moral test, that our inaction imperiled our own security, that we had not learned the lessons of the bloody 20th century.

Now, think about how the century is actually ending, with a powerful statement by our 19 democracies that we will stand up for the innocents in the face of evil; with our Alliance strong, united, working with partners all across the Continent to meet common objectives; with ethnic cleansing not only defeated but, as the Kosovars go home, reversed; with the remarkable sight of German troops marching with their democratic Allies through the towns and villages of a Balkan country, cheered as liberators by people grateful to be going home in peace and safety.

We may never have a world that is without hatred or tyranny or conflict, but at least instead of ending this century with helpless indignation in the face of it, we instead begin a new century and a new millennium with a hopeful affirmation of human rights and human dignity. The people of Kosovo have a future again. And there is no future in Europe for Mr. Milosevic and

his policy of manipulating normal human differences for inhuman ends.

Now, we find ourselves at that pivotal moment between winning a conflict and winning the peace. Today the last Serb forces are leaving Kosovo, in accordance with the deadline that has been set. Over 60,000 Kosovars have already gone home. I believe shortly we will formalize our agreement with the KLA to demilitarize their forces. Of course, there are still dangers ahead. But we also have a remarkable opportunity, and what we do now will determine the character of this continent, the shape of our Alliance, and the nature of our partnership with Russia for years and years to come.

Our biggest challenge perhaps will be to put in place a plan for lasting peace and stability in the Balkans. We cannot do this a province, a nation, a crisis at a time. All our G-8 partners have agreed it is time to help transform the entirety of southeastern Europe the way Western Europe was transformed after World War II and central Europe was after the cold war. We want to give the region's democracies a path to a prosperous and shared future, a unifying magnet that is more powerful than the pull of old hatreds and destruction which has threatened to tear them apart.

Some say this is a dream. Some still believe the people of the Balkans are somehow predestined to a never-ending struggle over land, faith, and power. But after all, that is what, in times past, people used to say about England and France, or France and Germany, or Germany and Poland, or Poland and Russia. If we had listened to all the people throughout human history who said that we couldn't get along, none of us would be here today.

Look around this crowd at the different faces, the different races, the different religious faiths. None of us would be here today if we had believed that any of those past conflicts was more powerful and more predestined than the innate goodness and potential and dignity of all human beings, without regard to their origin.

Henry Stimson once said, "The most deadly sin I know is cynicism." Today, we ought not to have much of that, for we have a lot to hope for. Most of central and eastern Europe is transforming itself through democracy and co-operation with neighbors. If the countries of southeastern Europe keep taking the same path, we have pledged to do our part to work with the World Bank, the IMF, and others to support

the economic development and the private investment necessary to grow the economy and the futures of the people of southeastern Europe. We ought to integrate them into the global economy and into our regional arrangements.

All of this, of course, will cost money, but how well spent that money will be. The costliest peace is cheaper than the cheapest war.

This summit was also the first meeting between the leaders of Russia and the West since our disagreement over the conflict in Kosovo. Of course, Russia opposed our use of force there, but it did work with us to achieve the peace, to fulfill our objectives. Now we have committed to implementing this peace together in a way that will strengthen our relationship, reassure the security of innocent civilians—both ethnic Serb and Albanian—in Kosovo, and preserve the unity of NATO.

The summit gave us a chance to work on what we have in common. President Yeltsin and I, for example, agreed to hold discussions later this year on START III, further reductions of our nuclear arsenals, and preserving the ABM Treaty, even as we work to get START II ratified.

Our G-8 partners agreed to increase support for our enhanced threat reduction initiative. That is what safeguards nuclear materials, technology, and expertise in Russia so that horrible weapons of mass destruction don't fall into the wrong hands. We also recognize that Russia's future depends upon the health of its economy. President Yeltsin affirmed today that Russia can thrive in the global marketplace only with a strong reform program. And the rest of us made it clear that we will move quickly, once Russia's IMF program is in place, to support a rescheduling of its debt.

Our final challenge in Cologne was to join forces to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks of the global economy to ordinary people the world over, whether in wealthy or poor countries. The rise of an open economy in the world represents one of the most hopeful developments in history. But to build public support for it, we must make sure that the benefits are widely shared, that when people are disrupted, as they inevitably will be, they are helped to get back to a good life, and that no one is left behind.

At this summit we took critical steps to make the economy of the world more resilient, to moderate the cycles of boom and bust that have

gripped Southeast Asia and the rest of Asia in the last couple of years, and to do more to protect the most vulnerable among us. We resolved to work with the International Labor Organization to eradicate abusive child labor and enforce good labor standards around the globe.

We pledged to launch a new global trade round at the WTO meeting in Seattle later this year to spread the benefits of trade more broadly. And we launched an historic effort to move the world's poorest nations onto a path of growth and independence, something I have been working on for most of my tenure as President. Our plan will more than triple the amount of money available for debt reduction, reducing up to 70 percent of the outstanding debt of the poorest nations of the world.

We also committed to increase the number of countries eligible for this aid and to deliver the relief faster, in ways that will free up the resources of the poor countries so they can spend that money on health care and education, on the fight against AIDS, on the alleviation of poverty, on future prosperity. It will help to ensure that no country committed to that kind of progress is too indebted to achieve it and to meet the basic needs of its people. It will help to reduce poverty and expand opportunity. It will help to turn debtor countries into good citizens of the world and good partners for Germany and the United States.

So I say to you, we left this summit grateful for our long partnership with our European allies and especially with Germany. We look forward to the movement of our Embassy to Berlin, because it is the fulfillment of the visions of those who came before us. We will always be grateful for what the people of Bonn have given us in partnership and support.

But as you think about the future—whenever you are tempted to believe that we cannot eradicate ethnic hatred from the Balkans; whenever you are tempted to believe that some people are destined to be chained in poverty and oppression; whenever you are tempted to believe that the world's problems, like the spread of AIDS, cannot be turned back—think about your native son. If anyone at any point in human history had ever said the greatest composer who ever lived would be stone deaf, they would have laughed and laughed and laughed. There is nothing we cannot do without the right vision.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:35 p.m. at the Stimson Memorial Chapel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Bärbel Dieckmann of Bonn, Germany; U.S. Ambassador to Germany John C. Kornblum; Rev. Donald R. Hubbard, outgoing Protestant chaplain, Rev. Douglas M. Satre, in-

coming Protestant chaplain, and Father Stephen McNally, Catholic chaplain, Stimson Memorial Chapel; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia.

Remarks Following Discussions With European Union Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Bonn

June 21, 1999

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. [*Inaudible*]—Hamburg, where we have had our European Union-U.S.A. Summit together, I have introduced the President and Madam Secretary to Mr. Adenauer's study, and both of them thought it was possibly lighter and brighter and possibly even nicer than what we've got over there. But as you might imagine, that wasn't the focus of our consultations.

I'm rather pleased, indeed, that for the second time by now, I have the opportunity of welcoming President Clinton here in the Chancellory on behalf of the European Union. And I am very pleased also to note that Mr. Santer has come here again, the last time wearing the hat he's presently wearing, and I think soon he's going to join the European Parliament, and he's going to try to narrow it down to certain specific things that he would like to see happening. He's going to do that with the same sense of humor as he has done it so far.

We have adopted some important documents regarding the transatlantic relationship. The Bonn Declaration, that you have already got or that will be handed out to you very soon, is very much going to deal with the spirit of the transatlantic partnership. And in the spirit of this, we also want to see to the individual trading problems that do exist but that we think can be overcome.

Of course, as you might imagine, the situation in Kosovo and on the Balkans played an important role during our discussions. I am very much of the opinion that what we have triggered, being the Presidents of the European Council in Europe, was to trigger the Stability Pact for the Balkans, and the contours of that agreement have been drafted by the meeting of the Foreign Ministers very recently. But that will have

to be promoted further with strong dynamism, and President Clinton and the European Union very much agree that this is worth promoting and developing further.

So we think that—still in July and in close cooperation with the Finnish Presidency, we call for a meeting of the heads of state and governments of all governments involved in the Stability Pact, and that meeting is meant to happen in Sarajevo. Ladies and gentlemen, in having it there, we want to set a clear signal that the region can very much rely on the fact that we are not just talking about providing assistance but that we really want to help and will help.

During the discussions, we also said we want to show rigidity and decidedness on the military side but diplomatic skill on the political level. And arms have now gone silent since yesterday; it is definite. And after we've won the dispute, we will now win peace for us, and we will only succeed in doing so if we go in and economically develop that region and we get in closer to Europe, in individual steps, in phases, but expeditiously, rather. I think this is certainly an interesting part of joint cooperation between the European Union and the U.S.A.

Dear Mr. President, I've very pleased to have you here yet again and actually even more pleased about this wonderful spirit, sir, of cooperation and friendship that has reigned over our talks here, and joint conviction. Thank you.

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Chancellor and President Santer. Let me just make a few brief comments on the issues that Chancellor Schroeder has mentioned.

First, on Kosovo. Yesterday the Serb security forces completed their withdrawal. Russia is now participating. The KLA is demilitarizing. I spoke

late last evening to Mr. Thaci after the agreement had been signed. KFOR is moving in, and the refugees are on their way home.

I congratulate Chancellor Schroeder on initiating this Stability Pact as a device for the long-term redevelopment of Kosovo and all of southeastern Europe. We will be full partners.

We are interested in bringing this reconstruction to life. Our experts are now assessing the needs. We will have a donors' conference in July to finance the immediate reconstruction projects and one later in the fall to deal with long-term development of the region.

We have also agreed, as the Chancellor said, to get the leaders together in Sarajevo—both the benefactors and the beneficiaries of the Stability Pact—to plan for the future of southeastern Europe and, after the pattern followed in the Marshall plan of World War II, to get the people of the region to work together to define their own future. We think this is very important.

I'd also like to thank the business leaders involved from Europe and the United States in our business dialog for their willingness to mobilize the private sector to help in the reconstruction of Kosovo.

Let me say just a word about one other subject that I think is worth some discussion because of the interest to the public opinion in Europe and increasingly in the United States. We discussed the need to have unresolved trade disputes not define our relationship at a time when we're working together so well on so many fronts. With a relationship that covers such a large spectrum of economic activity, it is inevitable that there will be occasional friction, some small, some large. We must not let them cloud the fundamental soundness of our relationship.

We've made a lot of progress in recent months on some irritants, but a lot of work remains. Let me just give you one example. I know there's deep concern in Europe on the question of food safety. It's also an important priority for me—I've done a lot of work on food safety as President in the United States—and it's important for our farmers because they have an enormous interest in providing safe and wholesome food to the world. We need to develop open and scientific regulatory processes in each country that actually command the full confidence of ordinary citizens.

This is an issue of enormous consequence on both sides of the Atlantic. We must approach

it constructively. We're already making progress under our Transatlantic Economic Partnership, establishing a pilot project for scientific review of new biotech projects. And I am pleased that the G-8, under Chancellor Schroeder's leadership, asked the OECD to undertake an analysis of international food safety.

So I want you to know that I am committed to this. All of us should have one standard only: What is the right thing? What is the right thing? That's the only thing that should matter. What is the truth? What does the science tell us? And that will be my commitment.

Finally, I think it is important that all of us honor the decisions of international tribunals when they are rendered on these trade matters.

Let me say in closing, Chancellor, I'd like to bid farewell to President Santer as he leaves his present position and goes to work in the European Parliament. I thank him for the work that he has done. This has been a remarkable period of European integration, with the European Monetary Union and common security and other policies. We welcome Romano Prodi as his successor.

I also thank Sir Leon Brittan for his work and wish him well. And I would like to acknowledge and greet the newly-confirmed American Ambassador to the European Union, Dick Morningstar, who was recently very quickly confirmed by the United States Senate.

So we are preserving this relationship as we change some of the personnel involved. It is a long-term commitment by both the Europeans and the Americans, and I'm looking forward to it. I think what we are about to do in Kosovo, in the Balkans, and what we have done there, is something that our people will be proud of for many decades to come.

Thank you.

President Jacques Santer. Mr. President, Mr. Chancellor, this summit takes place at a crucial moment in Europe's development and, therefore, in the development of the United States-European Union relations. I'll make only four points about our discussions this morning.

First, we have discussed Kosovo and the wider southeastern European region. The European Union nations shared equally with the U.S. in NATO action in the Kosovo crisis, and the EU has taken the lead in putting together the Stability Pact for the region, and the EU will play the leading role in financing the reconstruction. The European Commission will work with

the World Bank to coordinate the donor effort for the region, and the Commission will be overseeing the negotiation of the proposed EU association and stability agreements with the countries in that region. This all shows that the EU is capable of sharing these burdens equally with the United States and that it is a full and equal partner with the United States in pursuing our common goals.

We have discussed how the EU and U.S. interests can now jointly use their cooperation under the new transatlantic agenda to ensure that our partnership is at the heart of the rebuilding of a stable, democratic, and prosperous Balkan region.

Second, we have agreed the Bonn Declaration, which builds on the new transatlantic agenda, can strengthen it in a number of areas and affirms our joint commitment to a full and equal partnership. We are committed in particular to work together to prevent and deal with regional crises, and Europe's emerging common security and defense policy makes this much easier.

But too often in the past, President Clinton and I have had to spend time on damaging disputes, like Helms-Burton, bananas, and hormone-treated beef, even if 98 percent of our trade relations are trouble-free. By setting up an effective early warning system, we are seeking to resolve such problems before they become politically damaging.

And we have agreed that it would be a good thing to have our scientists work together on health and consumer safety issues. The details still need to be worked out in order to prevent publication.

To summarize, the transatlantic relationship, 4½ years after the signing of the new transatlantic agenda, is in fine shape. Kosovo has demonstrated, as clearly as anyone could wish, how important the relationship is, and it has put our occasional trade disputes into perspective. And we look forward, as we go into the new millennium, to continuing to deepen that relationship for the good of the whole transatlantic community.

Humanitarian Aid to Serbia

Q. Chancellor Schroeder and President Clinton, I wonder if you could be precise on the definition of humanitarian aid to Yugoslavia, to Serbia proper. The G-8 was unable to reach an agreement on this point, but would you consider providing, as part of your humanitarian

assistance to the Serbs, rebuilding their electrical power plants and rebuilding their bridges to enable people to go to work, as part of humanitarian assistance to the Serbs?

Chancellor Schroeder. Well, I think—I'm not as certain as what you're doing with your question—you have to differentiate between humanitarian assistance on one hand, side, and reconstruction on the other. You cannot let people starve just because they follow the wrong President or they have the wrong President. If they are in need of medical assistance to survive, we have to grant this medical assistance to them, even if they feel they want to support Mr. Milosevic as their President. And that applies for as long as they have him as a President. So humanitarian assistance, yes, but making a tangible contribution to reconstruction, that can only ever happen with a democratic Yugoslavia.

That is very much my conviction. Now, you cannot look at it in abstract terms, what is humanitarian and what is kind of more than humanitarian. So we have to know what is needed here to be able to take a proper decision. That is the line that I consider the right one.

President Clinton. First, I agree with everything he just said. But to take your specifics—I saw the interview that President Chirac did with you, and what he said about the electrical power I thought was pretty good, that it would depend. That is, for me, it is important that if the Serbs want to keep Mr. Milosevic and don't want to be part of southeastern Europe's future, that at least they not freeze to death this winter and that their hospitals not be forced to close. So they need some power.

In terms of rebuilding the bridges so people can go to work, I don't buy that. That's part of their economic reconstruction, and I don't think we should help, not a bit, not a penny. So that's—but on the other hand, I think their hospitals ought to be able to function. I think—babies will be born; people will get sick. I think so that—and people shouldn't be cold in the winter if we can help that. That's basically where I draw the line.

But we will—the reason the G-8—we didn't have a disagreement about it. We recognized that—the Chancellor read us through this—we recognized that we would have to have people in place in whom we had confidence, who could make most of these decisions on a day-to-day basis, and if they had a question, they could then kick it back to us. But I'll give you—

I'm just giving you my kind of feeling about it.

Lori [Lori Santos, United Press International].

Reconstruction of the Balkans

Q. In your discussions over the past few days, did you win specific commitments—in your talks over the past few days, did you win specific commitments from the European leaders for the billions that you'll need for the reconstruction effort? And are you confident that they will carry the lion's share, as you said you wanted?

President Clinton. I think that their commitments and mine are in good faith. Let me restate what I said in my opening remarks. There will be—let me back up. I expect, in the next several days, all of you will hear various things about how much the immediate reconstruction of Kosovo will cost, what we're looking at in terms of long-term development. Then you'll see both Europeans and Americans say we will or won't pay this or that amount of money.

I think that that—almost all of that is going to be rather fruitless in the end. What we have to do is have our people go in there and figure out, ballpark, what it's going to cost to get Kosovo up and going and whole again. And then we have to convene the leaders meeting as well as have people look at what it would take to have a long-term development strategy for southeastern Europe. And obviously, there will be greater flexibility there; in other words, the more money you have, the more you can do, but—there will be some flexibility there. And then we will—I will try to allocate our responsibilities.

But I am absolutely convinced—you heard what President Santer said—I think that all of us are committed to doing this. And let me just say to the American people and to—who will be listening to this and to our friends in Europe, it will probably cost more than most people think, but I promise you, it will be a lot cheaper than a continuation of the war would have been. It will be phenomenally less expensive than a land invasion of Kosovo and a protracted combat would have been.

So I want to say what I said again is, the most expensive peaceful reconstruction is still cheaper than the cheapest war. This is a responsibility we should assume, and it will pay for itself many times over in future conflicts avoided, in future trading partners, in future cooperation.

Bombing of Chinese Embassy in Belgrade

Q. Mr. President, China last week bluntly rejected Under Secretary Pickering's explanation of the bombing of its Embassy in Belgrade. What is your reaction to that; does it have any merit, their position? And have you given up—do you think you've lost any chance of reaching a WTO agreement with China before the end of this year?

President Clinton. Well, the answer to the second question is no. I have not given up. The answer to the first question is, I think—as they have time to review the information we gave them and reflect on it, I think they will conclude that it was a truly tragic accident, that a series of very bad mistakes were made and a tragic accident occurred.

I also, frankly, after Mr. Pickering made his important but difficult journey there, I noted that the reports, the contents of the report were highlighted in Chinese news for 2 or 3 days thereafter, which I took to be quite a positive sign, actually.

So this is a difficult, painful period for them and for our relationship, but I'm not—I haven't given up on the WTO. I'd still like to see it finished this year. And I think we'll work through this.

Chancellor Schroeder. Last question.

Congressional Support for Reconstruction Funds

Q. Mr. President, your ability to keep your commitments on aid to the region is dependent upon a Congress that has been very reluctant to come up with money. Do you anticipate difficulty there? And have you done anything to lay the groundwork with the Congress?

President Clinton. Well, yes and yes. Yes, I anticipate some difficulty; and yes, I've worked hard to lay the groundwork.

We have had lots of meetings on Kosovo, as you know, larger meetings with Congress. I have said all along that I thought that we had to participate in the long-term reconstruction, that I thought that we—just as in the peacekeeping—we can have a marginally more modest role in peacekeeping and reconstruction because we had a relatively larger role during the air campaign and paid a lot of the cost of that.

But we have—the Congress did give us funds, for example, in this supplemental, to help to pay for the relocation of the Kosovars' home and the attendant costs related to that. So I

think that if we can make the case, that they will be willing to support it. And it's part of our responsibility.

You know, I just want to urge you to give us some time to come up with a plan for the short run and then let the leaders in the region come up with a long-term plan and let us all sort of join together.

I think that our Congress and our taxpayers will be like most people. They want to know what is the big picture; what is the long-term objective here; how does it relate to the interests of ordinary families in Germany and the United States, throughout Europe? And I think these are questions we'll be able to answer, and I think we'll get the support we need.

Do you want to take a European journalist question? Equal time here. [Laughter] You guys owe me one. [Laughter]

President's Visit to Slovenia

Q. Mr. President, you are going now to Slovenia. What's the purpose for the visit and also the message of your visit in Slovenia?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I'm going to Slovenia to highlight our partnership, our shared values, and our shared future. But I want the American people and the rest of the world to see a successful country in southeastern Europe that has done a good job of promoting democracy, of advancing prosperity, of working for integration in the region and with the rest of Europe, that represents what I believe the whole region can become.

So the Slovenians have been, in my view, very good citizens and good partners with all of us, and I have to highlight that. But I also want the trip to spark the imagination of others, both within the Balkans and beyond it, about the kind of future, the kind of societies we can build in all those countries if we work at it.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, take one more? Mr. President?

Chancellor Schroeder. One question for a European journalist. [Laughter]

Administration of Kosovo/Duration of U.S. Troop Involvement

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. Chancellor. Thank you, Mr. Chancellor. Kosovo obviously now urgently needs an administration. How quickly do you think that can be facilitated via

the OSCE or the European Union, and can the U.S. Americans contribute to that?

And now, one thing regarding President Clinton: 6,000 soldiers on the ground; how long are they going to stay there for? How long will you want them to stay there? How long will your Congress, which has actually taken a bit of a negative attitude, be able to maintain that period?

Chancellor Schroeder. Well, the question as to who's going to chair the civilian administration is a decision that lies in the field of the United Nations Secretary-General, and I think it would not be appropriate to give him advice from here. But he knows that we need a highly qualified person who links two things: firstly, the kind of political degree of skill and sensitivity and, on the other hand, experience with administration, somebody with—a thinker in economic terms, as well. All of those, I think, are the job profile descriptions. And I think the Secretary-General will very, very speedily pick and choose that kind of person, who will then dominate the reorganization in the civilian sense.

President Clinton. One is, I agree entirely with what Chancellor Schroeder said about the person the United Nations should pick. I called the Secretary-General, and I said that I had no particular candidate and I did not care from what country the candidate came; that the most important thing was that we get someone who can do the job, someone with high energy, with organizing skills, with vision, with the ability to communicate.

It's a fascinating job; I'd give anything if I could do it. It's a wonderful job, if you think about it. It's a very interesting job. But it's very important that we pick the right person. There will be no politics in this, nothing. So I made it clear: I don't care where the person is from; I just want the right person picked.

The second question you asked me is, how long could we stay? I hope we will stay until the objectives of the mission are completed. And I went out of my way, since I thought and our military thought in Bosnia we knew how long it would take, and we were wrong. I went out of my way not to make the same mistake twice and not to put a timetable on our involvement, but to say, here are our objectives; when we've achieved our objectives, we'll get out.

Now, in Bosnia, we've gone way down, all of us have. You know, the military force in Bosnia is only about, I think, 30 percent, maybe 25 percent of what it was when we first went in. But we are still there. And I personally believe, again, having a modest force there, if it avoids war, promotes peace and prosperity, it is much, much less expensive than letting these conflicts occur. So I hope we will stay until our mission is complete.

Thank you.

Q. This is my last shot. Are you going to take—

President Clinton. Your last shot?

Q. My last shot.

President Clinton. Why? You're not leaving us, are you?

Q. Yes, sir.

President Clinton. Where are you going?

Q. I'm going to "60 Minutes."

President Clinton. All right, you guilt me into doing it. If you ask me a lousy question, I'll never speak to you again. [Laughter] Go ahead—[laughter]—which would make you happy—

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Clinton. Anything for the farewell.

Slobodan Milosevic

Q. That's right. Sir, the last administration left you Saddam Hussein, and you have spent billions of dollars trying to keep Saddam Hussein contained. I understand that there are many covert things that you can't discuss, but can you assure the American people that you did not send their sons and daughters into harm's way just to leave Milosevic in power?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I can assure the American people that we sent our soldiers, our airmen into harm's way to get the Kosovars home, to get the Serbs out of Kosovo, and to have—the Serbian forces, not the people, the Serbian forces out—and to have an international peacekeeping force. That's what I defined as our objectives, and we achieved them. And I thought they were worthy.

Now, I have furthermore said that I would be adamantly opposed to any reconstruction aid going to Serbia as long as Mr. Milosevic is in power. He has now been indicted by the Inter-

national War Crimes Tribunal, and every day we see fresh evidence of mass killing and oppression taken under his guidance and with his orders. So, I think that is clear. And I can assure the American people that I'm not going to change my position on that.

But you know, if we never did anything in the world until we could get everything done we wanted, we often would not do anything at all. What we have done here is to reverse genocide and ethnic cleansing, and it is very important. Would it also be good if we could have a new leader in Serbia? Of course it would. But the main beneficiaries would be the Serbian people.

And our ability to build the kind of future in southeastern Europe we want would be enhanced if we had new leadership and full participation in Serbia, but we can do an awful lot of good whatever happens there.

Let's don't mix apples and oranges, Mr. Pelley [Scott Pelley, CBS News]. I told the American people what the objectives are. We've achieved those objectives. Now we just have to win the peace. But would it be a good thing if Serbia had a democratic leader who didn't do things like what we've seen in Bosnia and Kosovo? Of course it would. And I can't wait for the day when that happens.

Thank you.

NOTE: The remarks began at approximately 11:50 a.m. on the lawn at Palais Schaumburg. The President met with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, in his capacity as President of the European Council, and President Jacques Santer of the European Commission. Chancellor Schroeder spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, the President referred to Hashim Thaci, leader, Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA); President Jacques Chirac of France; former Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy, President-elect, and European Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan, Vice President, European Commission; U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to OECD, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

United States-European Union Summit Statement on Ukraine *June 21, 1999*

Ukraine's successful transition to a democratic and market oriented country, secure within its borders, is crucial for long-term stability in Central and Eastern Europe and the continent as a whole. Helping Ukraine achieve these objectives is one of the top priorities for U.S.-EU cooperation. The EU and the U.S., as Ukraine's largest donors, share a strategic interest in the successful evolution of Ukraine toward a prosperous economy and stable democracy and in bringing Ukraine more fully into Euroatlantic structures. The EU and the U.S. welcome the progress made in the realization of their strategic partnerships with Ukraine and look forward to a further deepening of these relationships. We commend Ukraine for the important progress it has achieved in recent months, in particular the economic reform measures which have allowed Ukraine to return to compliance with its IMF program. We urge President Kuchma to seize the opportunity presented by the renewal of the IMF program to push forward his reform agenda, including privatization of large industries, agricultural and energy sector reform, restructuring of the financial sector, as well as improvements in public administration. We encourage Ukraine in its efforts to accede to the WTO and will support decisive action in establishing a favorable environment for foreign investments and in removing key obstacles to trade.

We note Ukraine's progress on democracy. However, we call on Ukraine's leaders to ensure a free and fairly contested presidential campaign leading up to the October 31 presidential election in compliance with OSCE and Council of Europe standards. A free and fair election will be an important step in the transition of democracy and demonstrate that it is taking firm root in Ukraine. We express our continued support for efforts to develop the rule of law and institute an effective presidential electoral process. In this context, we emphasize the need to protect the freedom of the media. These are fundamental underpinnings to democracy in Ukraine. In that regard, we consider Ukraine's recent decision to retain a continued OSCE presence in Ukraine another important signal of Ukraine's determination to meet its commitments to de-

mocratization and to Euroatlantic cooperation. We support the continued efforts of Ukraine to play a responsible role in relations with neighboring states and within the larger transatlantic relationship. We welcome Ukraine's commitment to regional cooperation as well as its contributions to find solutions to the conflicts in Transnistria and Kosovo.

As Ukraine continues its transition to democracy and a free market, we recognize the social problems arising from necessary social adjustment and remain committed to joint U.S.-EU efforts that bolster Ukraine. We strongly encourage Ukraine's efforts to implement additional power sector reforms, particularly increased cash collections and strategic privatization of energy distribution companies, as crucial components of the energy investment strategy embodied in the G-7/Ukraine Memorandum of Understanding on Chernobyl Closure. We reiterate our commitment to the closure of Chernobyl in the year 2000. We reaffirm our commitment to assist Ukraine in securing the financing necessary to strengthen its energy sector, facilitate Chernobyl closure and in securing the remaining financing of the necessary stabilization of the Chernobyl sarcophagus.

We applaud the initial project under the U.S.-EU civil society program to support Ukrainian non-governmental organizations working to build democracy in Ukraine, as well as the agreement to launch the Kiev Regional Environmental Center sponsored jointly by the EU and the U.S. We look forward to inaugurating our other joint projects. We are actively considering the possibility of launching a joint project on public health issues in Ukraine. We have illustrated our common view on the importance of economic reform, as well as our commitment to further Ukraine's economic transition, through our joint demarche to President Kuchma and Rada Speaker Tkachenko.

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

Videotaped Address to the People of Albania *June 21, 1999*

To the people of Albania, on behalf of all the American people, I want to express our gratitude for the courageous stand you have taken for peace, tolerance, and freedom in southeastern Europe. And I want to pledge my support for your own efforts to build a strong and prosperous democracy.

This spring, when Mr. Milosevic launched his bloody campaign of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, no country bore a greater burden than Albania, and no country did more to help humanity prevail. You opened your skies to the NATO aircraft that brought this nightmare to an end. You opened your ports and your airfields to the troops and aid workers who came here to help the refugees.

And most important, you opened your homes and your hearts to more than 300,000 victims of ethnic cleansing, giving them shelter and food and hope, even though your own country still faces enormous challenges. History will record that one of the greatest acts of barbarity Europe has seen in this century was defeated with the help of one of the greatest acts of compassion we have seen.

The whole world knows what you have done in the last several months. And we also know that you have done it while struggling to overcome perhaps the most cruel legacy of isolation and repression of any of Europe's formerly Communist states.

We still have much work to do. We have to work together to get the Kosovar refugees back to their homes safely. We'll have to keep helping those who must remain a while longer in Albania. We'll need to station more NATO troops in your country to support those keeping the peace in Kosovo. For the people of Albania,

there will be a continuing burden, but there will also be an opportunity to deepen your partnership with NATO and your integration with Europe and the future prosperity that will bring.

America will do all it can to help you recover from the economic and social upheaval caused by the war, to help you strengthen your democracy, to enshrine the rule of law, and to attract new investment to create new jobs and new opportunities. And we'll work with you to build a southeastern Europe that is coming together around the promise of freedom and prosperity, instead of being torn apart by hatred and bloodshed. We want you to be on the front lines of democracy and prosperous development in southeastern Europe, not on the front line of aggression and tyranny.

You have shown in this crisis that a nation's standing in the world is measured not just by its wealth, its power, or its size but also by the principles it upholds and the responsibilities it is willing to assume. The world's admiration for Albania has risen immeasurably in the last few months. If you stay on the path you have chosen, we will stay by your side.

I thank you for all you have done and for all we will do together in the months and years ahead.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 5:40 p.m. in the Bibliotek Room at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Cologne, Germany, on June 20 for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET. The transcript was embargoed for release until 4 p.m. on June 21. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia in Ljubljana *June 21, 1999*

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, I wonder if you could tell us what President Clinton's visit means to

your country, what you hope to get out of the visit?

Prime Minister Drnovsek. [Inaudible]—to visit, the first time we have the President of the United States in Slovenia, and I think it is confirmation of excellent relations that we established during the last year. And we cooperated in southeast situation; the Kosovo crisis was another crisis.

So I think this is a confirmation for Slovenia, for our partnership, because of our role in this part of the world.

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, yesterday you had a chance to sit down across the table from Boris Yeltsin. We saw him get off at the airport. He looked

very frail; at times his speech sounded slurred. You sat across the table, eyeball-to-eyeball. How would you assess Boris Yeltsin today?

President Clinton. Yesterday, I can say, his movements were halting, but his mind was quite clear. He was very precise, very strong, and very eager for us to resolve our past differences and go on into the future. I actually was reassured by the meeting. I thought he was quite strong and quite clear yesterday.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:55 p.m. in the Presidential Palace. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to the People of Ljubljana June 21, 1999

Thank you, Thank you. *Dober dan!* You have certainly provided for me a welcome to Slovenia I will never forget.

Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, Mayor Potocnik; to the young lady who introduced me, Irena Majcen; and to your famous Olympian Leon Stukelj; and to all the people of Slovenia, thank you very much.

I would also like to thank the Big Band of RTV for playing my national anthem and yours. Let's give the band a hand, there. [Applause]

I have wanted to visit your country for a long time. The whole world admires Slovenia's success in building freedom and prosperity, and now we look to you to play a crucial role as we build a better future for all of Europe. Your great Olympic champion Leon Stukelj has now lived 100 years. He has lived throughout this century, the bloodiest and most turbulent in history, from the collapse of Austria-Hungary to the first Yugoslav State, from fascist invaders to Soviet forces to Tito's Yugoslavia. Think how many armies have marched through this square, how many flags have been raised over your city.

Now, at last, the flag flying in this capital stands for independence and democracy and the better life you are building. Congratulations, and God bless you.

All over the world, people seek the same kind of freedom and justice and peace that you have brought here—from Northern Ireland to the Middle East, to southern Africa, and in central

and southeastern Europe. But we know these gains are fragile, for freedom's enemies hope for our failure. Therefore, we must keep moving forward to deepen democracy and widen opportunity, to build genuine communities and lasting peace.

To succeed, we must begin with a simple truth: Racial and religious hatred has no place in a civilized society. That is why free nations stood against Mr. Milosevic's ethnic cleansing and killing in Kosovo. Now the Serb forces have left, the international security forces are moving in, and the Kosovars are going home. This is a great day for freedom.

I thank Slovenia for standing with NATO and for providing vital aid to the refugees. For all you have done, I am very, very grateful. Thank you.

Eight years ago Mr. Milosevic triggered a military assault on your nation. But you resisted. You secured your freedom, and you proclaimed: It will never be the same again. Now, all the people—all the people of every part of Europe must be able to say the same thing. Democracy, tolerance, and human rights must prevail everywhere. For no nation is safe, no prosperity is stable if conflict and refugees and crime and terrorism can be pushed across borders.

We must build a Europe with no frontline states, a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. And Slovenia can lead the way. And America will help.

Today America and Slovenia have reached agreements to encourage more American companies to do business here, to expand trade, and to do other things which will help your economy. And let me say to people all over the world who will see this on television, do not be deterred by the rain. *[Laughter]* This a wonderful country. Come here and help them build a future.

We also want to build Slovenia's security. You have stood with us in Kosovo. You have made progress in creating a modern military. You have established a demining trust to remove landmines and aid their victims. You have been a good partner, and you are an excellent candidate for NATO.

Let me also say that we want Serbia to be a part of the new Europe. But Serbia must reject the murderous rule of Mr. Milosevic and choose the path that Slovenia has chosen, where people reach across the old divides and find strength in their differences and their common humanity.

A decade ago, just as Mr. Milosevic was launching his campaign of ethnic terror, Slovenia chose a new national anthem, with a verse from

your great poet and patriot France Preseren. Your anthem—your anthem tells what Europe's future should be. The anthem praises those who work for the day when all will be free; when nations live as neighbors, not enemies; when war is banished from the world.

Your vision is our vision. Let us pursue it together, for all of Europe, so that for all your peoples, it will never be the same again.

Thank you, and God bless you.

On behalf of our delegation, my wife, my daughter, all of us, thank you for making us feel welcome. We never will forget this. I hope you won't either.

God bless you, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:22 p.m. in Congress Square. In his remarks, he referred to President Milan Kucan and Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia; Mayor Viktorija Potocnik of Ljubljana; 1924 Olympic gymnastics gold medalist Leon Stukelj; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to RTV, Radio and Television of Slovenia.

Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by President Milan Kucan of Slovenia in Ljubljana *June 21, 1999*

Mr. President, Mrs. Kucan, Mr. Prime Minister, distinguished government officials, and citizens of Slovenia: It is a great honor for me, for Hillary, for Secretary Albright, indeed, for our entire American delegation to share this historic day with you.

Today we added a new chapter to the long story of our friendship. As you heard from the President, it is a friendship that goes back even before the history of the United States, when President Thomas Jefferson, the author of our Declaration of Independence, was looking for examples of democracy around the world, places where the people ruled.

The President gave you a—what I would call a delicate version of the example provided by the Corinthians to Thomas Jefferson. You see, Thomas Jefferson loved the fact that before assuming their titles, the old dukes of Corinthia

were ceremoniously slapped by a local present to symbolize the right of the people to rebuff their leaders. Thomas Jefferson liked that. So did all future generations of Americans. *[Laughter]* Except they wait until after you're in office to do it. *[Laughter]*

Well, democracy is going strong again in Slovenia, and still your efforts inspire Americans. We are grateful for the many contributions of Slovenians to the strength and texture of our country, and we are grateful for the partnership that unites us today.

This spring, as both the President and the Prime Minister have said, that partnership met a great test. For the fourth time in this decade, Mr. Milosevic and Serbia launched a brutal campaign of violence, threatening the progress the people of this region have worked so hard to achieve. As you know from the daily television

reports, the full horror of that campaign is only now becoming clear.

I would like to thank the President and the Prime Minister for all that you have done to protect democracy and the tolerance it needs to thrive. Now that ethnic cleansing has been defeated in Kosovo, we must build something better in its place throughout Europe, and especially in southeastern Europe.

You know, every leader likes to talk of the future, but today in your Congress Square I saw the future in the faces of the young people who braved the rains to express their support for our shared dreams. I saw those who will lead a free Slovenia into the new millennium.

Your history is enshrined in this magnificent castle we enjoy this evening, but your future

is in those young people. And it is in good hands.

So I ask you now to rededicate yourselves to the dreams which brought the people out in the rain today. We owe it to them, to our forebears, and to generations yet unborn.

Please join me in a toast to the President, to the Prime Minister, and the people of this wonderful country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 p.m. in the Dining Hall at Brdo Castle. In his remarks, he referred to Stefka Kucan, wife of President Kucan; and Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Kiro Gligorov of Macedonia in Skopje

June 22, 1999

President Gligorov. I wish to thank President Clinton for his personal contribution and for everything he has done for the Republic of Macedonia, supporting our independence and security, and especially now, during the course of the Kosovo crisis, which I wish to believe we will soon be leaving behind us.

President Clinton's visit to the Republic of Macedonia is a confirmation of this personal engagement. And I would not wish to miss this opportunity to express my appreciation also to Mrs. Hillary Clinton, the First Lady of the United States, for her readiness and understanding to help.

Our discussions were, in effect, a continuation of top level of the fruitful dialog that exists between our two countries and is particularly intensive in these past few months. We discussed the situation in the region. We reiterated our views that a democratized Yugoslavia is the key to stability and prosperity of the whole of the Balkans. Yugoslavia should preserve its territorial integrity and sovereignty, and with it, Kosovo should obtain broad autonomy and maximum possible guaranteed rights for its citizens and minority members, in accordance with European standards. The Macedonian model of

multiethnic democracy is proof that this is possible, even in the Balkans.

Today we also—the essential need for the presence of the United States of America in southeastern Europe. The war in Bosnia and now in Kosovo has confirmed this.

Now, the active engagement of the United States of America to the realization of the Stability Pact is enforced with the same necessity. It is time for active American economic presence in the region, which is also important for its stability, development, and prosperity.

We here in the Republic of Macedonia anticipate American support in the speeding up of the democratic processes in the whole region, integration into NATO and consequently the European Union.

Once again, my most sincere regards to our esteemed and high guest.

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, leaders of the Macedonian Government and political life, parties in Parliament who were freely elected last November.

I thank the President for his statement and would like to reply by saying that I came here for two reasons. First, I want to thank the leaders and the people of Macedonia for helping

a just cause to prevail in Kosovo, for giving shelter and hope to the Kosovar refugees, and for welcoming our NATO troops who came here to help those refugees.

NATO could not have achieved its mission without you; the people of Kosovo would not be going home to security and autonomy without you. I came here, as much as anything else, to say thank you.

Second, I came here because I believe the United States, our NATO Allies and, indeed, all nations of the world who support the reversal of ethnic cleansing and respect for human rights and minority rights have a responsibility to help Macedonia to overcome the economic hardships that the recent crisis has imposed and to return to a path to prosperity and even stronger democracy and freedom.

Already, our total aid to Macedonia has more than tripled over last year to \$72 million, and today we will provide another \$12 million in food commodities. In the months ahead, we will do more. But we are also committed to the restoration of economic opportunity and jobs in Macedonia. Today I am delighted that an executive of the American company Liz Claiborne came with the First Lady here to Macedonia to follow up on her trip and to announce that they would be reopening facilities and employing somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 of your people. We will encourage other American businesses now to look at Macedonia as a model of stability at the end of the conflict in Kosovo.

Finally, Mr. President, let me reaffirm once more our belief that in order to build a future

of freedom and prosperity, in which human rights and minority rights are everywhere respected, in which nations are not torn apart by yesterday's hatreds and violence, we must make this Stability Pact a success. We must create real opportunities for ordinary citizens throughout southeastern Europe. And the United States is committed to doing that.

But the thing that is even more important, Mr. President, is that the Macedonian people and leaders are committed to that kind of future. I think it is worth noting that this country is not ethnically homogeneous. It has its own challenges. And yet, in spite of that, you were willing to take these refugees, 300,000 of them; 50,000 have already gone home. You bore this burden at great cost and considerable risk so that we could together pursue a vision of southeastern Europe very different from what the horrible ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo represent.

We have stopped that. Now it is time to build that better future. And I pledge to you, sir, that the United States will work with you, and we will do this together.

Thank you.

NOTE: The remarks began at 1:43 p.m. in the President's Ceremonial Office at the Parliament Building. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski of Macedonia; and Paul R. Charron, chairman and chief executive officer, Liz Claiborne, Inc. President Gligorov's remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks to Kosovar Refugees at Stenkovic I Refugee Camp in Skopje *June 22, 1999*

Thank you. Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to thank all the people who have shared time with my family and me, all these children and their parents. And I would like to say a special word of appreciation to all the workers here who have come from all over the world to help you recover your lives. I thank them very much.

The second thing I would like to say is that I have brought with me a number of people who helped me make sure the United States

and NATO did the right thing by the people of Kosovo, and they are also very proud to be here. And I want to thank them, and I hope you will thank them—Mr. Berger and all the other people on our team—because we're proud of what we did because we think it's what America stands for, that no one ever—ever—should be punished and discriminated against or killed or uprooted because of their religion or their ethnic heritage. And we are honored to be here with you.

I just want to say a couple of more words before the rain comes down. The first thing is that we are committed not only to making Kosovo safe but to helping people rebuild their lives, rebuild their communities, and then to helping Kosovo and all the countries of the region build a brighter, more prosperous future based on respect for the human rights of all people.

Now, I promised all these wonderful people from all over the world who are here working for you that I would also say this: I know a lot of people are anxious to go home. Many have already left. But you know there are still a lot of landmines in the ground on the routes into Kosovo and in many of the communities. We are bringing in the best people in the world to take those mines up. Every year the United States does more than half that work all around the world. It is hard work; it is dangerous work.

You have suffered enough. I don't want any child hurt. I don't want anyone else to lose a leg or an arm or a child because of a land-

mine. So I ask you, please be patient with us. Give us a couple of more weeks to take the landmines up, if the people here ask you to do that, because you are going to be able to go back in safety and security. I want to make sure it is a happy return.

You have given my family and me a day we will remember for the rest of our lives. All we want is for you to be able to live your lives. But I ask you to remember that the United States did not act alone. All of our NATO Allies felt the same way, in Canada and Europe. And the President of the United States never acts alone; it is the American people who care about you, who believe in you, who want you to be free, who want you to be able to go home.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:20 p.m. on the grounds of the camp. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks to Kosovo International Security Force Troops in Skopje

June 22, 1999

Thank you very much, General Clark, General Jackson, General Craddock, Colonel Ingram, ladies and gentlemen of the United States military. And as nearly as I can tell, we've got a few of our British counterparts back there and at least two Spanish officers over here somewhere.

And I just want to say, first of all, I am proud to have the soldiers, the marines, the air men and women, the naval forces of the United States of America serving in NATO. I am proud that we're part of KFOR. I'm proud that we're serving under an able commander like General Jackson. I am proud of Wes Clark.

You know, General Clark and I went through the agony of Bosnia together. He lost three good friends, who fell off a mountain because Mr. Milosevic wouldn't let them take the safe road to try to negotiate a peace. And we watched for 4 years while reasoned diplomacy tried to save lives and a quarter of a million people died and 2½ million refugees were created before NATO and our friends on the ground in

Croatia and Bosnia forced a settlement there and ended the horror there.

This time we didn't wait. And it took 79 days, but that's a lot better than 4 years. And I hope the people of the world, when they see these horrible, horrible stories coming out, the mass graves and all of that, just imagine what it would have been like if we had stepped to the side and not done what we did for the last 3 months.

I hope, to the day you die, you will be proud of being a part of a nation and a democratic alliance that believes that people should not be killed, uprooted, or destroyed because of their race, their ethnic background, or the way they worship God. I am proud of that, and I hope you are.

Let me also say to you that I just came from one of our refugee camps, and there are a lot of grateful people there. But you and I know that there's a lot to be done yet, and General Jackson's got a big job. And the United States is proud to be doing our part to help our allied efforts succeed there. We must not have one

conflict and roll back ethnic cleansing and then lose the peace because we don't do every last thing just as we're supposed to do it.

So the whole credibility of the principle on which we have stood our ground and fought in this region for years and years now—that here, just like in America, just like in Great Britain, people who come from different racial and ethnic and religious backgrounds can live together and work together and do better together if they simply respect each other's God-given dignity—and we don't want our children to grow up in a 21st century world where innocent civilians can be hauled off to the slaughter, where children can die en masse, where young boys of military age can be burned alive, where young girls can be raped en masse, just to intimidate their families. We don't want our kids to grow up in a world like that.

Now, what it rides on is not the precision of our bombs, not in our power to destroy, but your power to build and to be safe while you're doing it and to protect the ethnic Kosovar Albanians and the ethnic Serbs alike—as long as they are innocent civilians doing nothing wrong, they're entitled to protection—and to try to show by the power of your example, day-in and day-out, those of you that are going into Kosovo, that people can lay down their hatreds.

You need to think about telling your family stories. You need to think about how we can help these people get over this awful, grievous thing. I saw a lot of little kids just a few minutes ago with a lot of hurt and terror and loss in their eyes. So you've got a big, big job left.

It is not free of danger; it will not be free of difficulty. There will be some days you wish

you were somewhere else. But never forget, if we can do this here and if we can then say to the people of the world, whether you live in Africa or central Europe or any other place, if somebody comes after innocent civilians and tries to kill them en masse because of their race, their ethnic background, or their religion, and it's within our power to stop it, we will stop it.

And by the way, look at central Europe. These people can live together and prosper together. That's what we're trying to do. It can make a huge difference to our children in the new century. It may mean that Americans will never have to fight again in a big land war because we just let things get out of hand and out of hand and out of hand until everything blew up and there was nothing else that could be done about it. This is very important.

And again I say, I hope you will always be proud of it. I hope you know how proud that I and the American people are of you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:43 p.m. on the tarmac at Skopje Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; Lt. Gen. Mike Jackson, British Royal Army, Commander, Kosovo International Security Force; Brig. Gen. John Craddock, USA, Commander, Task Force Falcon; Col. William E. Ingram, Jr., USA, Commander, Camp Able Sentry; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on the Americans with Disabilities Act

June 22, 1999

I am pleased that the Supreme Court decision in the *Olmstead* case upholds the purposes of the ADA by recognizing that unjustified isolation of institutionalized persons with disabilities is prohibited discrimination. This decision will increase access to home- and community-based long-term care services and support for these persons.

My administration is committed to finding affordable ways to enable people who need long-term services and support to remain in the community if they choose and are able to do so. The best way to continue progress toward this goal is for State governments, the Federal Government, and the affected communities to work

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together to develop cost-effective ways to provide these services. We must ensure that the quality of these services is excellent and that they are available to persons with disabilities of all ages.

Therefore, I am asking Secretary Shalala and Attorney General Reno to work with all interested parties to carry out today's decision in

a fair and effective manner. Although this may not be easy in some cases, we can do it by working together in order to advance the goals of the ADA. Our ultimate goal is a nation that integrates people with disabilities into the social mainstream, promotes equality of opportunity, and maximizes individual choice.

Statement on Senate Action on Steel Imports Limitation Legislation

June 22, 1999

Today's vote is a reaffirmation of America's commitment to open markets, to a strong U.S. economy, and to vigorous enforcement of our trade laws. The surge in steel imports has created significant hardship for many steelworkers and communities. But quota legislation was the wrong approach and would have weakened our economy and undermined our ability to tear

down unfair trade barriers in foreign countries that hurt our workers, farmers, and companies. We must and will continue vigorous enforcement of our trade laws. Our actions have already cut imports to pre-crisis levels. I will continue to work with workers, industry, and Members of Congress to attack unfair trade practices and subsidies around the world.

Remarks to Operation Allied Force Troops at Aviano Air Base in Italy

June 22, 1999

Thank you very much. Well, Captain Davis, you are a pretty tough act to follow—[*laughter*—and not short of self-confidence, either. That's good. [*Laughter*] I'd like to begin by saying that Hillary and I are delighted to be back in Aviano. We have been here several times to thank you, but never on an occasion more important than this.

I thank the Italian Minister of Defense, Mr. Scognamiglio, and his government and his Prime Minister for their leadership, their strength, and their support for NATO during this operation. They have been terrific, and I thank them.

I would like to also say a special word of appreciation to our NATO Commander, our SACEUR, General Wes Clark, who led this conflict to a successful conclusion. Thank you, General Clark.

I want to thank Colonel Durigon, the Italian Base Commander; Ambassador Tom Foglietta, our Ambassador to Italy; Ambassador Lindy Boggs, our Ambassador to the Holy See. And General Leaf, I want to thank you for your

leadership and your remarkable statement here today.

We have been on a long trip to Europe. I have been, at various times, with not only Hillary and Chelsea but with Secretary of State Albright and National Security Adviser Berger, a large number of other people, on a long, long week very important to America. But I did not want to leave without having the chance to thank those of you who protect our freedom every single day, who fought for human dignity and won its cause in Kosovo. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Since the beginning of Operation Allied Force, I have actually traveled to six other bases involved in this effort: in the United States—Norfolk, Barksdale, and Whiteman in America; Spangdahlem, Ramstein, Ingleheim in Germany. But I wanted to come here to say a special word of thanks to the 16th Air Force, the 31st Air Expeditionary Wing, because of what you have done in Kosovo, because of the role this base played in Bosnia. You have repeatedly put

your lives on the line to save the lives of innocent civilians and turn back the tide of ethnic cleansing. Thank you again for this noble endeavor.

In 79 days, you did prove that a sustained air campaign under the right conditions can stop an army on the ground. The Serb forces have withdrawn from Kosovo; 20,000 allied KFOR troops are already in. You also stopped a vicious campaign of ethnic cleansing and made it possible for us to reverse it. Protected by a peace-keeping force that includes NATO, Russia, and many other nations, the refugees are going back home. They have given new meaning, and you have given new meaning, to the motto of the 31st Fighter Wing. Thanks to you, they "Return With Honor."

Now that the conflict has been won, it is imperative that we and our NATO Allies and the others working with us win the peace. No one thinks it will take hold without difficulty. As more and more light is shed on those burned villages and even more mass graves than we dared to imagine, we become more and more appalled by the dark vision of Mr. Milosevic and more and more certain we were right to stop it.

We have to win the peace with the same qualities with which you won the conflict, with determination and patience, with discipline and precision. We learned yesterday again that this, too, is a dangerous mission, as we mourn the loss of two British soldiers who gave their lives trying to clear mines out of a house where they were placed solely to kill the returning refugees.

But thanks to you, the worst is already over in Kosovo. And tomorrow's dictators in other places will have to now take a harder look before they try to destroy or expel an entire people simply because of their race or religion.

General Leaf called you a championship team. Those are words well chosen. As he said, over 30,000 sorties flown, about 9,000 from here at Aviano, with zero combat fatalities; 2 planes down, both from here; in each case, the pilot recovered, first in 6 hours, the second in an hour and a half. That is a truly astonishing record.

And of course, we remember our two Army airmen who died in a training exercise in Albania. But I know, and I want the American people to know, that we could have had many more losses but for your skill and courage, because I know that there were many occasions when

our pilots avoided firing back at those who were firing on them because they were firing from heavily populated civilian areas. And I am grateful for that, as well.

So many of you deserve acknowledgement. I wish I could name you all. I probably will miss someone, but I'm going to do this anyway, because I love to hear you cheer when your names are called. [Laughter] It does me a lot of good—you know, we've been up for a week, and we're a little tired, and you get my adrenaline flowing.

So thank you to the Buzzards of the 510th Fighter Squadron—[applause]—the Bushmasters of the 78th—[applause]—the Black Panthers of the 494th—[applause]—the Triple Nickle—[applause]—the Star Warriors and Patriots and Yellowjackets from the Navy—[applause]—Playboys and Seahawks from the Marines—[applause]—the men and women deployed to Aviano from about 90 bases around America and Europe—[applause]—and the crews here from Spain, Canada, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. [Applause] You have to teach them to scream with the same fervor with which you scream. [Laughter]

I want to thank the people on the ground, the maintenance personnel, the weaponeers, the air traffic controllers, and the Italian citizens who work on this base and make its success possible.

I do want the American press to note that some of you have demonstrated abilities that will serve you well when you return to civilian life. The 31st Civil Engineers—[applause]—built a tent city here in just 4 days. And it is the envy of all the urban planners back home in America. There's no crime—[laughter]—decent sanitation, and extremely low unemployment—congratulations. [Laughter] Thank you.

I want to again, in front of all of you, express my profound gratitude for our remarkable NATO Alliance of 19 nations. This was a difficult, difficult struggle for many of our countries. It is a tribute to their people and to their leaders. When I visited Spangdahlem in Germany in May, I spoke with pilots who told me how good it felt to look out of their cockpits and see aircrafts from the other NATO nations flying beside them.

Now, under the leadership of General Jackson, with all 19 NATO nations working with the Russians and with many other countries, we are there in Kosovo to guarantee security,

self-government, and a chance for all the people to rebuild.

Again, I want to say I am particularly grateful to Prime Minister D'Alema and the Italian people for giving us the chance to call Aviano home and for their solidarity throughout this operation. All of you know that Kosovo was not a distant crisis for the people of Italy; it was an immediate threat and a difficult one, indeed. The threat is now receding before a new vision of southeastern Europe, one in which the pull of our common humanity and the promise of shared prosperity are more powerful than the old forces of hatred and division.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to all of you in our Armed Forces for just being here. If you think about—I want you to really think about it—you think about what Kosovo was all about. People were taught to hate people who were from a different ethnic group than they were, who worshiped God in a different way. They started out by being afraid of them and misunderstanding them. Then, they came to hate them. And then after hating them for a good while, they came to dehumanize them. And once you decide that someone you're looking at is no longer a human being, it's not so hard to justify killing them, or burning them out of house and home, or torturing their children, or doing all the other things you have heard. It all starts—it all starts with the inability to recognize the inherent dignity and equality of someone who is different from ourselves.

The composition of our Armed Forces, with people from every race, every ethnic group, every religious persuasion, from all walks of life, that make up American society—the fact that our military has all of you in it is the most stunning rebuke to the claims of ethnic cleansing.

Now, we're going home. *[Applause]* I hope it's home you're cheering for and not the fact that I'm about to quit speaking. *[Laughter]* But I just want to say to you, you make possible, by defending our interests and advancing them, the work of the United States at the end of the cold war, at the dawn of a new century and a new millennium. That is profoundly important.

Just think of what your country has been doing in the last week. I went to Cologne, Germany, to meet with the other large industrial powers of the world to plan for the new century; to change the financial rules so that we don't

have other financial crises like the one we've had in Asia which causes big problems back in America, as well as for the people who are caught up in it; to provide dramatic increases in debt relief to the poorest countries of the world, to lift the burden of debt off their backs they can't pay anyway, as long as they'll put the savings into keeping their children alive and educating them and giving them good health care and ending the scourge of poverty in their country; to planning for the future of Kosovo and all of southeastern Europe.

Yesterday I went to Slovenia, where I saw what we can build here, a thriving nation which embraces democracy, rejects bigotry, and looks toward the future together. That's what we can do for all the Balkans, for all of southeastern Europe.

And I have just come from Macedonia, from the refugee camps, from the children singing and chanting "U.S.A! U.S.A! U.S.A!," knowing they are going to go home, knowing they don't have to go to bed at night afraid, knowing you have given them a chance to reclaim their lives in their native land.

And I met with our KFOR forces from the United States and Spain and France and Great Britain and Portugal. And they are very proud to be succeeding you to make sure that this mission is finally won.

Now, I know this has been difficult for many of you—to sleep 10 to a tent, work 12-hour shifts, 6 days a week; hard for a young pilot to leave a wife and two young children, going off into uncertain skies; hard for some of you to spend last Father's Day alone, waiting to hear your child's small voice a long way away on a telephone.

I want you to know that I am absolutely certain that you are building a better world for your children and that they will come to know that—if not now, then someday—they will understand what their fathers and their mothers who wore our uniform have done in the last year of the 20th century to save the people of Kosovo, to defeat ethnic cleansing, to start the new millennium in the right way, as a time of human rights and human dignity and allied confidence that together we can build a future worthy of our dreams for our children.

You have done that. I want you to know that your children will know it. And I, personally, am profoundly grateful.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:26 p.m. in Hangar 1A. In his remarks, he referred to Capt. Charles E. (Digger) Davis, USAF, 510th Fighter Squadron; Minister of Defense Carlo Scognamiglio and Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR); Col. Orfeo Durigon, Italian Air Force, Italian Base Commander; Brig. Gen. Daniel P. Leaf, USAF, Commander, 31st

Air Expeditionary Wing; U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See Corinne Claiborne (Lindy) Boggs; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Lt. Gareth Evans and Sgt. Balaram Rai, British Royal Army personnel who were killed in an explosion in Negrovce, Kosovo, on June 21; Apache helicopter pilots CW3 David A. Gibbs, USA, and CW2 Kevin L. Reichert, USA, who were killed in a training accident in Albania on May 5; and Lt. Gen. Mike Jackson, British Royal Army, Commander, Kosovo International Security Force.

Statement on the 27th Anniversary of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

June 23, 1999

On this 27th anniversary of the enactment of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, we celebrate what can be accomplished when we allow all Americans—men and women—equal opportunity to be their best. By opening doors previously closed, Title IX provides women and girls with quality opportunities for achievement in education—in academics as well as athletics.

Today we reflect on the profound changes this legislation has helped bring about in American education, including changing expectations of women's achievements, lowering the dropout rate for women, and increasing opportunities in math and science. Since 1971, dramatically greater numbers of women have completed postsecondary, graduate, and professional degrees. Employment opportunities in many non-traditional professions for women have also opened up. The U.S. athletes in the Women's World Cup, currently being watched by millions

of fans across the country, are shining examples of the value of increased participation in athletics by women.

While we have come a long way, there is still further progress to be made in undoing barriers to equal opportunity for women. We must continue to work to close the pay gap and ensure equal pay, enable men and women to meet their responsibilities at work and home, and end discrimination in the workplace. Too many women are paid less than men, and too many still experience discrimination in the workplace.

As we move forward towards the eradication of discrimination based on gender, we celebrate Title IX and our Nation's commitment to equality.

NOTE: The statement referred to Title IX—Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, part of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Public Law 92–318).

Statement on Federal Reserve Board Action on Collection of Information Concerning Loan Applicants

June 23, 1999

I am pleased that the Federal Reserve Board has acted on my administration's request by voting this morning to propose, under the Equal

Credit Opportunity Act, that lenders may choose to collect information about the race and gender of individuals applying for loans beyond home

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mortgages. This action is an important step to expand access to capital for all Americans. Allowing creditors to collect data for business and consumer loans will create greater innovation and increased access to credit, a higher level of voluntary compliance, and more effective fair lending enforcement.

Along with my administration's reform of the Community Reinvestment Act regulations, enactment of the community development financial institutions legislation, and the proposed

new markets initiative, today's historic action by the Federal Reserve Board will ensure that more Americans have access to capital. The record has shown that the administration's community empowerment strategy is working in helping to revitalize our distressed inner-city neighborhoods and rural communities by spurring more private investment, igniting the spark of entrepreneurship, and providing opportunity for more Americans.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

June 23, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 307(c) of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5877(c)), I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission,

which covers activities that occurred in fiscal year 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 23, 1999.

Statement on Proposed Employment Non-Discrimination Legislation

June 24, 1999

Today Members of the House and Senate will reintroduce, on a bipartisan basis, the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" ("ENDA"). This important civil rights legislation would extend basic employment discrimination protections to gay and lesbian Americans. I strongly support this bill, and we will work hard for its passage.

Americans instinctively believe in fairness. They believe that individuals should not be denied a job on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work. Yet most Americans don't know that men and women in 39 States of this Nation may be fired from their jobs solely because of their sexual orientation, even when it has no bearing on their job performance. Sadly, as congressional hearings have documented, this kind of job discrimination is not rare.

Those who face job discrimination based on sexual orientation usually have no legal recourse, in either our State or Federal courts. This is

wrong. Last year I issued an Executive order making permanent a long-standing Federal policy against discrimination based on sexual orientation in the civilian Federal workplace. I hope that Congress will make that policy a national one by passing this important legislation.

I applaud the bipartisan efforts of Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, and Lieberman and Congressmen Shays and Frank to make the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" the law. "ENDA" failed to win passage by only one vote when the Senate last considered it. My administration will continue to work for its passage until it becomes law.

NOTE: The statement referred to Executive Order 13087 of May 28, 1998 (63 FR 30097).

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979

June 24, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 204 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12924 of August 19, 1994, to deal with

the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 24, 1999.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Protocol to the Canada-United States Atomic Energy Agreement With Documentation

June 24, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b) and (d)), the text of a proposed Protocol Amending the Agreement for Cooperation Concerning Civil Uses of Atomic Energy Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada signed at Washington on June 15, 1955, as amended. I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the Protocol, and an unclassified Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement (NPAS) concerning the Protocol. (In accordance with section 123 of the Act, as amended by Title XII of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), I have submitted to the Congress under separate cover a classified annex to the NPAS, prepared in consultation with the Director of Central Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information.) The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy and a letter from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission stating the views of the Commission are also enclosed.

The proposed Protocol has been negotiated in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of

1954, as amended, and other applicable law. In my judgment, it meets all statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States.

The Protocol amends the Agreement for Cooperation Concerning Civil Uses of Atomic Energy Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada in two respects:

1. It extends the Agreement, which would otherwise expire by its terms on January 1, 2000, for an additional period of 30 years, with the provision for automatic extensions thereafter in increments of 5 years each unless either Party gives timely notice to terminate the Agreement; and

2. It updates certain provisions of the Agreement relating to the physical protection of materials subject to the Agreement.

The Agreement itself was last amended on April 23, 1980, to bring it into conformity with all requirements of the Atomic Energy Act and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978. As amended by the proposed Protocol, it will continue to meet all requirements of U.S. law.

Canada ranks among the closest and most important U.S. partners in civil nuclear cooperation, with ties dating back to the early days of the Atoms for Peace program. Canada is also

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in the forefront of countries supporting international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. It is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and has an agreement with the IAEA for the application of full-scope safeguards to its nuclear program. It also subscribes to the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) Guidelines, which set forth standards for the responsible export of nuclear commodities for peaceful use, and to the Zangger (NPT Exporters) Committee Guidelines, which oblige members to require the application of IAEA safeguards on nuclear exports to nonnuclear weapon states. It is a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, whereby it has agreed to apply international standards of physical protection to the storage and transport of nuclear material under its jurisdiction or control.

Continued close cooperation with Canada in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, under the long-term extension of the U.S.-Canada Agreement for Cooperation provided for in the proposed Protocol, will serve important U.S. na-

tional security, foreign policy, and commercial interests.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed Protocol and have determined that its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the Protocol and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act. My Administration is prepared to begin immediate consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations Committees as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 b., the 60-day continuous session period provided for in 123 d. shall commence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 24, 1999.

Remarks to the Presidential Scholars *June 25, 1999*

Thank you very much. Danielle, you did a fine job. Didn't she do a good job? I thought she was great. Thank you.

I'd also like to thank my good friend Father O'Donovan, for allowing me to come back to my alma mater to make this speech and to be with you; and Bruce Reed, for the superb use he has made of the Presidential scholarship he got. He does a wonderful job in our office. I hope you got the joke he made about how he looks younger than you. We all rag him about how young he looks. Actually, when I was his age, I looked young, too. And then it just overcame me. *[Laughter]*

I want to congratulate the Presidential scholars, the teachers, parents who are here. I am delighted to have this chance to be with you. Because I have been on an extended trip to Europe, I actually want to take a few moments to give a serious talk about where we are in Washington today and where we are in America

and to talk to you a little bit about the whole nature of our public life and politics.

Nearly 8 years ago, as Bruce said, I came to this hall, where I sat many times as a student, to ask America to join me on a journey, to go beyond what were then the competing ideas of the old political establishment in Washington that dominated the entire decade of the 1980's. People, on the one hand, said Government was bad, and we should get it out of everybody's life and leave people alone to fend for themselves, or on the other hand, said Government was good and could solve most of our problems if it were just free to do so.

I asked the American people instead to embrace a new way, something I called a New Covenant between America and its Government, an agreement with the citizens and their Government that we would jointly pursue opportunity for all Americans, responsibility from all Americans, and a community of all Americans.

I believed it would bring America back to prosperity.

Over the years since I became President, I have come back to this hall several times to discuss in more specific terms the progress we have made in building that New Covenant and the opportunities still to be seized, the responsibilities still to be shouldered, the pillars of community still to be built.

Washington is pretty far away from most American's lives most of the time. It is tempting for people in public life here, who are so far away from you, to fall into easy rhetoric in positioning themselves against their opponents. But politics at its best is about values, ideas, and action. When it is that, it becomes public service, and it is a noble endeavor.

Let me give you some examples of the ideas we've had here. When I came here, our administration believed we could balance the budget and increase our investment in education, in technology, in research, in training people for the future. Those ideas, turned into action, have given us 18.6 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the highest homeownership ever, the longest peacetime expansion in history. And along the way we have virtually opened the doors of college to all Americans with the HOPE scholarship, the other tuition tax credit, improvements in the student loan program, a million work-study positions. We're well on our way to connecting every classroom in the country to the Internet by the year 2000.

We believed that we could reform welfare and make it good for work and for families. That idea, turned into action, has cut the welfare rolls in half, while maintaining health and nutrition benefits for poor children and increasing our investment in child care for lower income workers.

We believed we could make our streets safer by putting more police on the streets and taking guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them. Those ideas, put into action, have given us a 25-year low in the crime rate.

We believed we could grow the economy and improve the environment. That idea, put into action, has given us cleaner air, cleaner water, millions of acres of land set aside from the California redwoods to the Florida Everglades. It has allowed us in the field of public health to have safer food and, for the first time in history, 90 percent of our children immunized against serious childhood diseases. And the economy has

gotten better, not worse, as we have taken steps to advance the environment and public health.

We believed that young people in our country, if given the chance, would serve in their communities and that they ought to be given a chance to earn some education credit. That idea, put into practice, produced AmeriCorps, our national service program, which in just 5 years has already had over 100,000 young people working in communities all across America, a milestone it took the Peace Corps 20 years to reach.

And we believed America could be the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity and security. Those ideas, turned into action, have given us over 250 trade agreements, new partnerships for America with Latin America and Africa, new initiatives against terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, progress on peace in Northern Ireland and the Middle East, a stand against ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and now in Kosovo, where with our allies we have said that when innocent civilians are uprooted or slaughtered because of their race or their religion, if we can stop it, we will do so.

We still have a lot of work to finish the job in Kosovo. We still have many challenges abroad, from peace in Northern Ireland and the Middle East, to our continuing efforts to help relieve the debt burdens of poor nations, to our efforts to stabilize the global economy. But I came back to Washington after my trip to Europe with a renewed energy for the domestic agenda. And I'd like to talk to you about it today, about the things we can do here today that will affect your communities today and very much affect your futures tomorrow.

With our present prosperity, we actually have a rare opportunity to meet the remaining large challenges facing our country on the brink of a new century. But to do it, both parties must work together. There will be plenty of time for politics in the year and a half ahead, but this summer must be a season of progress.

Just think how far we've come in the last decade. When I came here to speak in 1991, America was drifting toward a new century without direction. Now, our people, working with common purpose, have brought the Nation back to a position of unprecedented strength, with greater prosperity, greater safety, more social healing, more national leadership for the United States around the world.

Our economy is perhaps the strongest in our history, and something you may know more about than I do, it is increasingly clear that it is being powered in large measure by a once-in-a-lifetime technological revolution. For example, the high-tech sector accounts for only 8 percent of our economy but for fully one-third of the growth we've had over the last 6½ years.

We are now seeing an explosion of technology, and productivity along with it, from the Internet that links offices around the world to computers used to track warehouse inventories. You will have a chance, thanks to technology, to work in jobs that have not been created yet, in industries that have not yet been imagined. But right now we are benefiting immensely for it. Just this morning we learned that in the last quarter, our economy grew at the brisk rate of 4.3 percent, with virtually no inflation. If we can keep that going, that's very good for your future.

I think that those of us who work here now will be judged, however, primarily by whether we choose to seize this opportunity to ensure your future, not just the short term but the long term, or will it be squandered with petty arguments and animosities and special interest politics.

I regret to say that the atmosphere in Washington has become increasingly poisoned by bitter partisanship. I don't understand exactly why, since we keep doing better and better and better in America. It may be that some people believe they have the luxury of engaging in shortsighted partisanship because the country is doing so well. I think that is a bad misreading of reality.

Moreover, it is clear to me that in the last few weeks our Nation has come together in an unprecedented consensus of conscience and common sense on issues like gun violence, where the Congress unfortunately buckled under to special interest pressure. Partisanship has even paralyzed the basic work of writing our spending bills, something we have to do here every year. Let me give you an example.

Not very long ago, I issued an order saying that the United States Government would cut our greenhouse gas emissions coming out of our buildings by 30 percent over the next few years to meet our responsibility to deal with the challenge of global warming. Now, you have to understand, this doesn't cost you anything. This saves you money. We're going to reduce our

energy use so that we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions coming out of our facilities by 30 percent. It's a no-brainer. It's no money, nothing. The only people that lose are the people that won't be pumping electricity to us.

Unbelievably enough, just yesterday a Senate committee voted to largely block my executive action to cut the Government's emissions by 30 percent, an action that would save you \$750 million a year.

Now, I think I can stop that. But it's an example of what happens when adults with responsibility fall into small-time wrangling and even want to stop things that are 100 percent good and not controversial.

I say again, the interesting thing to me is if you look at all the surveys or just go out and talk to people, or if we would sit down and talk, you would see that across party lines, across regional lines, across income lines there is actually quite a remarkable consensus emerging in America on a number of issues—outside Washington. But the American people have to depend on those of us who work in Washington to take the consensus ideas they have embraced and turn those ideas into action.

Remember what I said at the beginning: Politics at its best involves values, ideas, and action, and the balancing of all those things in ways that change lives.

Now, some other people here really believe that because the Presidential election season has already started, the battle for Congress has already started, even though it's a year and however many months away, that the best politics is just to run out the clock and wait until the next election and hope that the country is doing so well and we enjoy the lazy days of summer so much, nobody will notice. I don't agree with that, either.

And I would like to say to you, as young people, there are an awful lot of very good people in public life who don't think that way, who want to get things done. And I hope someday many of you will be among them. But you will find that all of your life one of the greatest struggles you have to embrace is against being small, against being defensive or angry or combative for the sake of it, or thinking about some slight that someone imposed on you yesterday, instead of some good thing you can do today and tomorrow.

And we have to break out of that now. This country has not had an opportunity like this,

with this level of prosperity and this level of progress on social problems, in decades. And there actually is quite a lot we can do.

For example, there are things, believe it or not, that both parties agree on here. We should certainly act on them. [Laughter] And then there are things on which we have honest disagreements. On those, we should seek to find honorable compromise. The American people give us these jobs to get things done. In the weeks and months ahead, I will do all I can, working with Congress, taking executive action, summoning citizens to deal with these challenges. But first let's start with what we agree on. You might be surprised by the list.

To make sure that Americans should never have to choose between going to work and paying their medical bills, we must pass the proposal to let disabled Americans keep their Medicaid health insurance when they take a job. Believe it or not, people who normally who get Medicaid lose their insurance if they take a job. The problem is a lot of disabled people can't get any other insurance. Their bills may be \$40,000, \$50,000 a year. But all of us are better off if those folks can go to work. They are more fulfilled. They are living their lives better. They also become tax-paying citizens. And whatever their medical bills are, they would be paid, regardless, by Medicaid.

So we now have a bill that solves a huge problem. And believe it or not, almost everybody agrees on it, Republicans and Democrats alike. So let's start with that, the easy one and a very good one, that will help untold numbers of Americans and their families. Congress should pass it, and I will sign it.

To honor work and strengthen our families, we should raise the minimum wage. There are still too many people who work 40 hours a week whose children are in poverty. Democrats and many, many Republicans agree that we should do this. So Congress should pass it, and I will sign it.

To renew our elections and stem the rising tide of campaign spending, we must pass strong campaign finance reform. Finally, after years, it appears that a majority of lawmakers in both parties, in both the Senate and House, agree. But the leaders of the Republican majority are blocking the bill. Instead, they ought to let the Congress vote—everybody votes his or her conscience. But if it passes—and I believe it would—I would certainly sign it.

To protect the interest of 160 million Americans who use managed care, we should pass a strong, enforceable, and bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights. Now, you all probably know what the problems are here: More and more Americans are going into managed care, and managed care has done a lot of good in our country to slow the rise in health care costs. But we should not ask people to sacrifice quality of care.

Our Patients' Bill of Rights would simply say that if you're in an HMO or any other kind of health care plan, you wouldn't lose a right to see your specialist, if you needed. You wouldn't give up the right to go to the nearest emergency room if you were hurt in an accident; believe it or not, some people do in their plan. You couldn't be forced to give up your doctor in the middle of a treatment; for example, if you were 6 months pregnant and your employer changed health care providers, you couldn't be required to change doctors, or if you were in the middle of a chemotherapy treatment and your employer changed health care providers, you wouldn't give it up. And you would have a right to protect yourself to make sure these rights were enforceable.

Now, these problems have been evident now for the last few years. Yesterday we learned that it had gotten so bad, that doctors are so angry that the doctor-patient relationship is being breached by insurance company accountants' meddling, that they're even organizing a union to bargain with the HMO's.

Now, again, I've seen survey after survey after survey. There is no partisan issue here. Republicans and Democrats and independents all get sick. [Laughter] Right? I mean, they do. There's not a partisan issue here. Most doctors are Republicans; most nurses are Democrats. [Laughter] So what? This is not a big deal. This is not a partisan issue anywhere in the whole country but Washington, DC.

Over 200 medical and consumer organizations have endorsed this Patients' Bill of Rights, and one has opposed it, the health insurance companies. Now, if we get a vote on this—because out in America, doctors, nurses, and patients agree, and Democrats and Republicans will agree—it will fly like a hot knife through butter. But again, the leadership of the Congress is trying to find a way to block the bill. It's not right. So I say again, just let everybody vote his or her conscience. And if they send it to me—and they will—I will sign it.

Now, these are measures awaiting action that could be enacted quickly. And if America will send a signal to Congress that they want action, we can pass them.

There are some, however, broader, more fundamental and, frankly, more difficult issues that I hope we can resolve this year. First, I believe, as I said in my State of the Union Address, that we have a duty to you to use the bulk of this surplus over the next 15 years to solve the long-term challenges of Social Security and Medicare and to do it in a way that pays down our national debt.

Now, why? Because that means that future generations will have guaranteed income and health care in their retirement years. And it means as we pay down the debt, we will keep interest rates low, investment high, and guarantee when you get out of college there will be lots of good jobs available because we'll have a stronger and stronger and stronger economy. We can actually get rid of America's debt over the next 18 years if we will do this.

So I hope, even though we have honest, here, honest philosophical differences about what the best way to reform Medicare is, what the best way to reform Social Security is, the point is we ought to be able to proceed in a spirit of honorable compromise because the goals are so important and the stakes are so high and because, frankly, the choices are a lot easier when you have a surplus than when you have a big deficit.

Next week I will propose a detailed plan to strengthen Medicare, to cut its costs, to modernize its operations, to use competition and innovation, to strengthen the core guarantee of quality care for all Americans who are elderly and eligible. I will also, for the first time, propose a way to help senior citizens with their greatest growing need, affordable prescription drugs. It is a huge issue out there for seniors.

Now, finding agreement on Social Security and Medicare will be hard. Finding agreement on tax cuts will be hard, although I hope the Congress will at least adopt targeted tax credits for long-term care and child care that I proposed. But we can do it. Now, regardless, Congress has to pass a budget this year. We must decide on how to use the surplus. So I hope we can work together to make progress on these goals.

Second, we ought to continue to advance our economy by doing more for the education of

our people. As we have balanced the budget and cut the size of the Federal Government—listen to this—we have cut the size of the Federal Government to the same size it was when I was your age. The Federal Government now is the same size it was in 1962. That was a long time ago. [Laughter] Anyway, as we have done that, we have nearly doubled our investment in education and training. Why? Because, as was said in my introduction, the information age will be the education age.

Last year, at my urging, with school populations in our country at record highs, Congress passed a budget that began to hire 100,000 new teachers to reduce class size in the early years. Unbelievably to me, in the budget the majority is now writing, they repeal their pledge to finish the job of hiring those teachers. I just want Congress to keep its word. I think when you tell people something in an election year, you ought to still be for it the next year when there is no election.

I have also sent Congress an ambitious education reform plan because this is a year, as we do every 5 years, we have to reauthorize the general program under which we give money to schools all over America. And I believe we should dramatically change it to hold schools and school districts and States more accountable for results and to give them more funds for after-school, summer school programs and to target and turn around failing schools.

It is controversial. But it is based on what is working in the States that are having success in lifting all their schools in student achievement. Again I say, there may be those who disagree with me philosophically; we ought to have an open debate about this and come to an honorable compromise. We do not have to continue to spend money in the same old way when we know we can spend it more effectively based on what we have seen in our schools.

Third, let me say something that I hope will be important to all of you and has doubtless been experienced by some of you. We've got the strongest economy on record, all right, but there are still too many poor neighborhoods and rural communities where prosperity is something you read about, not experience. And I believe we should be committed to going into this new century leaving no one behind. This is not only a good thing to do ethically; it is also good economics.

I keep thinking every day, now, how can we continue to grow this economy? How can we drive unemployment even lower, create even more jobs, without having inflation? One way is to find new investment in America. So I say to you, we've spent a lot of time seeking new markets abroad, but our most important new markets are right here at home.

Two weeks from now, for 4 days, I will lead an unprecedented trip across America so our country can see the places I'm talking about. I'll go to the hills and hollows of Kentucky, to the Mississippi Delta, to a poor community in the Midwest, to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, to Phoenix, to inner-city Los Angeles. I'll be joined by distinguished corporate leaders and political leaders of both parties. Again, this is something that should not be a political issue at all. We want to shine a spotlight on the pockets of poverty that remain in America and on the potential they have for new investment, new jobs, new hope, new opportunity.

I will ask Congress to do its part by passing my new markets initiative. It provides for tax incentives and loan guarantees for people to invest in these areas, the same kind of incentives we give people today to invest in emerging economies abroad. I think that whatever we encourage people to do abroad, we ought to give the same encouragement to do at home, to give our people those kinds of chances.

Finally, I think we ought to do more to protect our young people from violence, to redeem the awful sacrifice of the children of Littleton, of the other school shootings, of the 13 American children we lose every single day to gun violence.

After Littleton, our whole Nation came together in grief and determination. We know there are many causes of youth violence, and therefore, there must be many solutions. Hillary and I are launching a national campaign against youth violence to bring all kinds of people from all sectors of our communities together. We have done this before, like Mothers and Students Against Drunk Driving dramatically reduced drunk driving in America, just for one example. And we can do that.

Of course, more must be done at home. Young people can have a greater influence on each other. Schools, houses of worship, other places where children gather can do better. The entertainment community must do more to stop

marketing violence to children. I'm proud that theater owners have agreed—[*applause*—]—I wonder if that's coming more from the adults or the young people. [*Laughter*]

I feel very strongly about this. I'm proud that theater owners agreed that from now on, young people will be carded for R and PG-13 movies. I'm glad, thanks to the Vice President and Mrs. Gore, that next year TV's will have the V-chip in half of all new TV's sold and that Internet and video game companies are helping with ratings and blocking technologies. We have our differences with various sectors of the entertainment community from time to time, but they have actually done quite a lot with the TV rating systems, the video game rating systems, the blocking technologies in the last few years, and they deserve credit for what they have done, as well as urging to do more.

But we have to face the fact that if you have more children spending more time alone—and let me say that one big difference between the time when I was your age, or even Bruce was your age, and today, in America as a whole, the average—average—average young person spends 22 hours per week less with his or her parents than 30 years ago. From birth through age 18, that's over 2 years less time that the average young person spends with his or her parents—over 2 years. You don't notice it so much; it's just a few hours a day.

Why is that? More single parents, more working parents, more people living in suburbs spending more time going to and from work. Everybody is busy, busy, busy. And most of you are turning out just fine, and most of your parents are doing the best they can and doing a fine job. But we shouldn't minimize the fact that when this happens, the most vulnerable children among us will be even more vulnerable.

And that is why this whole entertainment culture counts, not because of you but because there are among us always vulnerable people. And there will be more of them, and they will be more vulnerable. And that's why the access to guns matters.

I've heard this—I got a letter the other day from a really nice person that I admire, saying, "Mr. President, we've got all these laws on the books, and if somebody wants a gun they can get it." Now, if you say that, it seems self-evident, since there's way over 220 million guns in the country. It seems self-evident. But let's look at the facts here.

Since we passed the Brady law, over the strenuous objections of the gun lobby, who then said that no criminal ever gets a gun from a gun store—just since we passed the Brady law in 1993, we have put a stop to some 400,000 illegal gun sales, without stopping one legitimate sports man or woman from buying a gun. And you cannot convince any reasonable person in law enforcement that those 400,000 stops didn't have something to do with the fact that we have a 25-year low in the crime rate and an even bigger plummet in many areas of gun-related violent crime.

Now, in the wake of the shootings after Littleton, I asked the Senate to pass a commonsense measure to help prevent youth violence by doing more in this vein to keep guns out the hands of criminals and children. For one thing, we should close the loophole that lets a criminal turned away from a gun dealer go to a gun show or a flea market in a city and buy a gun without a background check. The technology is there now for these background checks to be done without great burden to people who run gun shows and flea markets. But today they can buy a gun there, no questions asked.

Now, the same people who said in 1993 that no criminals buy their guns at gun stores, they buy them other places, say that we should not have background checks at the other places. I think we should. I think we should require that safety locks be sold with every handgun. We should ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. We should say violent juveniles should not own guns when they become adults.

It took a pivotal vote by Vice President Gore to break a tie in the Senate so that the Senate did the right thing in closing the gun show loophole. Unfortunately, as most of you probably know, 2 weeks ago, the Republicans in the House of Representatives, with some Democrats but not many, shot down America's best hope for commonsense gun control—in the face of strong public demand, clear public need, and again I say, out in the country, no partisanship.

The House filled the proposal full of high-caliber loopholes. And now they say they want to watch it die. The majority even pushed measures to weaken current law, for example, letting criminals store their guns at pawnshops, even if the reason they need to store it is because they're taking a sabbatical in prison. [Laughter] They say if they come back to get the gun, there shouldn't be a background check. [Laugh-

ter] We've had a pawnshop background check for a good while now. They want to get rid of that, as if that is somehow terribly burdensome to people.

Well, I think we can do better than that. But I don't know how we can expect you to stand up to youth violence if the Congress won't stand up to the gun lobby. We have got to—[applause].

So again, I say, it's not too late. The House and the Senate will now appoint conferees on this bill, because they have passed two different bills. Those people can put the provisions the Senate passed into the bill, send it to the House and the Senate, pass it, and I'll sign it. It's important that we strengthen, not weaken, our laws that make it easier for criminals to get and keep guns.

Okay, so let's go back and review the bidding here. We have a raft of bipartisan bills: health care for the disabled; the minimum wage; campaign finance reform; the Patients' Bill of Rights. We have big issues on which there are disagreements but where honorable compromise is possible: long-term reform of Social Security and Medicare; paying down the debt. We have a clear case where Republicans and Democrats should join together to mobilize private capital to give new life to our poorest communities; legislation to hire more teachers and to raise educational standards; sensible but vital steps to protect our children from violence.

These are big things. These are things worthy of a great nation and its elected representatives. I will work day and night to achieve this agenda. I hope you will support it, again, without regard to party. And I hope you will believe that good citizenship and public service are worth your time and effort.

Many times when I have come here, and many times around the country, I have referred to a professor I had here, who I talked about in 1991, who taught Western Civilization. He said our civilization was unique in the belief of what he called "future preference," that is, the idea that the future can be better than the past and that every individual has a duty to make it so.

Now, you obviously believe that, or you wouldn't be here. I'm about to give you all your medal, and we're going to take pictures. And it's a whole monument to years and years and years of your effort believing in tomorrow, right? It is. You wouldn't be here if you didn't.

And that belief has had a lot to do with your Nation's success over the last 220-plus years. It has driven my public life. And it was validated again a few days ago by the pain and the hope I saw in the faces of the children of Kosovo.

The more we think about tomorrow, the more energy, determination, and wisdom we have for the challenges of today.

I believe in your future. I believe America's best days lie in the new millennium. I ask Congress to help me make it so.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:58 a.m. in Gaston Hall at Georgetown University. In his remarks, he referred to Presidential scholar Danielle Huff, who introduced the President; and Father Leo J. O'Donovan, president, Georgetown University.

The President's News Conference

June 25, 1999

The President. Earlier today, in a speech at Georgetown University, I discussed the opportunities now before our Nation. Before I take your questions, let me just take a moment to recap what I believe is America's agenda in the coming months.

Our trip to Europe advanced America's ideals and interests. Working with our partners, we won an agreement to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world, took new steps to strengthen the global economy, agreed to triple the debt relief provided for many of the poorest nations, and to strengthen democracy and reform in Russia.

We also worked to put together, to put in place the building blocks of peace in Kosovo and to put the Balkans on a shared path to a prosperous, united future. I will meet with the region's leaders later this summer to give the process further momentum.

I met with Kosovar refugees in Macedonia who are planning to return home. They thanked America and our Allies for giving them a chance to reclaim their lives on their native lands. I also met with and thanked some of the American air men and women who achieved the success and with some of our and other NATO troops who are going into Kosovo now to make sure we win the peace. They know that they're doing the right thing, and I am very proud of all of them.

While America is enjoying success abroad, it is important that we keep pushing forward on our challenges here at home. This is a time of great hope for our Nation. Just today we

learned that the American economy grew at a 4.3 percent in the first 3 months of this year. America plainly is on the right track.

But we will be judged by what we do with this opportunity, whether we seize it or squander it in petty bickering and partisan animosity. There will be plenty of time for politics in the months to come. This summer should be a season of progress.

We should start by acting quickly on issues where most lawmakers, Democratic and Republican, agree: legislation to let disabled Americans keep their Medicaid health insurance when they go to work; an increase in the minimum wage; campaign finance reform; a strong and enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights.

I was heartened that earlier today the House overwhelmingly passed legislation making sure that foster children are not cast out in the cold when their time in foster care ends. This is a vital issue, one that Hillary has championed for many years. And I am very pleased by the House action.

Then we must turn to broader ways and, in some ways, more difficult challenges facing our Nation. First, we have a duty to maintain the fiscal discipline that has produced our prosperity and use it to strengthen Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century and to pay down our national debt.

On Tuesday I will propose the detailed plan to modernize Medicare, cutting costs, improving service, and helping senior citizens with their greatest growing need, affordable prescription drugs.

Second, we must widen the circle of opportunity by investing in education while demanding accountability and insisting that the Congress keep our commitment of last year to finish hiring 100,000 more teachers to lower class size in the early grades.

Third, in 2 weeks I will be joined by corporate, civic, and political leaders of both parties on a 4-day tour of America's new markets, the places in our country which have not yet felt the surge of our prosperity, to mobilize the private sector to bring jobs and growth to our poorest neighborhoods and to build support for our new markets initiative to give tax credits and loan guarantees to those who invest in America on the same terms we give to those who invest in developing economies overseas.

And fourth, in the wake of the tragedy at Littleton, we must continue to meet the challenge of youth violence. Hillary and I are developing a national campaign on youth violence, working with parents, educators, the entertainment industry, and others. But we also must take sensible steps to take guns out of the hands of criminals and away from children. We can't expect young people to stand up to violence if Congress won't stand up to the gun lobby.

I proposed and, with a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Gore, the Senate passed the measure to close the gun show loophole. The Senate also passed legislation to require child safety locks, to ban large ammunition clips for assault weapons, to ban violent juveniles from owning handguns as adults.

Two weeks ago the Republicans in the House blocked that measure. They would even weaken the current law by letting criminals store their guns at pawnshops. Now, there is still time for Congress to act. Republican leaders could appoint legislators as negotiators to craft a bill that includes the tough Senate provisions. I hope they will do that and send me a strong bill. Plainly, the country wants that.

Again I say, this is sort of like the Patients' Bill of Rights; it's really not a partisan issue anywhere but Washington, DC. I hope they will send me a strong bill. If they send me one that weakens current law, I will send it back to them and keep working until we get the job done right.

Now, this is, admittedly, an ambitious agenda, but it can all be done in the coming months. I will use all the powers available to me as President, working with Congress and with my

executive authority. I will summon the citizens of our country to help us to solve these problems.

This is a good time for America, but we will be judged by whether we make the most of it. I look forward to making the effort.

Thank you very much.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Kosovo

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, despite the end of the war, there is still a new wave of violence and terror in Kosovo, only this time it's Serb homes that are being burned, Serb stores that are being looted, and Serb civilians who are being killed. Are you alarmed by what's going on there? And why is NATO letting this happen? Can't NATO do more to stop it?

The President. Well, first of all, NATO is not letting it happen. We're doing what we can to stop it. And I am concerned about it. I'm not particularly surprised after what they've been through. But we signed an agreement with the KLA in which they agreed to demilitarize. The leader even asked the Serbs to come home. And we are deploying our people as quickly as we can. Obviously, if we can get all of our people in completely and then get them properly dispersed around the country, we'll be able to provide a far higher level of protection. And I think it's very important. And for those people who lose their homes, they're entitled to have them rebuilt, along with everybody else, and I intend to do that.

President's Initiative on Race

Q. Mr. President, you covered the waterfront on domestic issues you think are very important. But there is a question of racism. And I understand there's a report in the White House, already in second draft, and it's supposed to be a political hot potato, and therefore you're hesitant to make it public.

The President. Oh, no, that's not what's going on. There is a draft of a book that I wanted to produce and asked for help on from Chris Edley and from others on our staff and not on our staff several months ago. And Chris gave me his draft; then the staff looked at it and talked about where it was and wasn't consistent with present policies we were pursuing. They gave it all to me.

I was involved for the last 3 months with the conflict in Kosovo. And what has really happened is that I want to do this right. I think all of you know how important this whole race issue is to me, and it's been amplified in its potential future importance because of the problems that we see involving race and ethnic and religious problems around the world.

So I want to make sure that when we put this document out, it is in the form of a book which can be useful and have something to say and move the conversation and the efforts beyond where we were in the Presidential initiative on race. So you shouldn't draw any conclusions other than that I want to be personally involved in it and I simply haven't had the time to give it the effort that it deserves.

Q. Is it based on the panel's hearings and so forth?

The President. Oh, yes, to some extent. It's based on the panel's hearings; it's based on very long conversations I had with the people that worked on the draft for me, with Mr. Edley and Terry Edmonds and others. We had some long, long sessions. I went through everything I wanted in the book. I went through some things I wanted to emphasize more than were emphasized in the year that the panel was publicly meeting—we were having the race dialogs.

But I think it's very important, but it's got to be, first of all, mine. It's got to reflect what I believe and where I think we need to go. And secondly, it needs to move the ball forward a little bit.

There's still a great deal of interest in this. Those of you who covered the speech this morning at Georgetown will remember that the young woman from Alabama who introduced me talked about how the initiative on race got her involved in something in her local community. Another one of the Presidential scholars, when she walked by me this morning, said, "I want to know how I can get involved. I'm still interested in this." So I think there's still a great deal of interest in this in the country and maybe especially among our younger people. And I just want this book to be very good.

So you shouldn't—yes, there are some differences of opinion among the people who had input in it, but that's not what's caused us not to put it out. What's caused us not to put it out is that I have not had the time to give to it, to be very careful and relaxed and thought-

ful about how I say what it is I want to say to the country about this.

Larry [Larry McQuillan, Reuters].

Legislative Agenda

Q. Mr. President, this morning and again just now, you made references to a summer of progress, and you were calling for bipartisanship to try to accomplish things in the next few months. I'm just wondering, with the 2000 campaign obviously heating up and growing in intensity, do you feel there's more of an urgency to act right away, within the coming months?

The President. Well, for one thing, I think it would be to everyone's advantage to continue to make progress. As I always tell the Republicans and Democrats, no matter how much we do, there will still be plenty of things on which there is honest disagreement, over which the next election can be fought. That is just in the nature of things. That's healthy; that's good; that's a two-party system in America.

But we are all hired by the American people to work here day-in and day-out, week-in and week-out, and we make a grave mistake—and it's almost never good politics to do the wrong thing, that is, to take a pass on making progress when you can do it.

This is a very unusual moment where we have sustained prosperity, the longest peacetime expansion in our history. We've gone from having the biggest deficits in history to having the biggest surpluses in history. And yet, we have these looming demographic challenges of Social Security and Medicare. And we have these big issues that are right before us now, the ones I mentioned on which there is basically broad agreement.

So I think that it would be good for America and, therefore, good for everyone involved if we go ahead and do this. I think, obviously, the closer you get to the election, perhaps the more difficult it will be. But I expect—I'll make you a prediction here—I expect that we'll get some good things done in the year 2000, before the Congress recesses finally for the election then. I expect to keep working right up to the very end, and I think that we will continue to make progress.

But the most important thing is the attitude of the main players in Congress, insofar as Congress has to play a role in this.

Yes, go ahead.

Cox Committee Report on Chinese Nuclear Espionage

Q. Mr. President, in the wake of California Congressman Christopher Cox's study of spying in the U.S. and, specifically, Chinese attempts to spy, you asked your Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board to look into this, and it came back with a central recommendation that you separate the Nation's nuclear labs from the Energy Department.

Your Energy Secretary seems to be resisting that. Ask me, sir—tell me, sir, how you feel about it—[laughter]—and let me ask you once again: Do you still maintain that you were not told anything about these Chinese efforts to spy at the Nation's nuclear labs during your administration, sir?

The President. Let's go back to the first question—there are two separate questions. I read Senator Rudman's report. I thought it was quite interesting and had a lot of very helpful analyses of how this problem developed. And there were actually two separate organizational recommendations that he made in the alternative: either that the labs could be put under an independent board, or that the labs should be taken out of the present hierarchy of organization because of the culture—the committee—the Rudman group talked a lot about the culture of the labs and its resistance to oversight. He said another alternative might be to take it out from under the present organizational structure and make it directly answerable—the labs—directly answerable to the Secretary's Office. And he posed those things in the alternative.

I have asked our people to look at it. I have talked to Secretary Richardson about it. I think everyone recognizes that he has worked very hard to deal with the underlying security issues, which are the most important things. And I think we all just ought to try to get together and work out what the best organizational structure is, and I expect that we will be—I expect to have a chance to talk to him about that and to work on it.

But I think the Rudman report was a service to the country, and I think that Bill Richardson is doing a good job on trying to implement the security measures that are necessary. He's being very, very aggressive.

Now, on the second question, I went back—I've been interested in this question, and I went back and looked at exactly what I said. Let

me go back to what the facts are. First of all, there's been a 20-year problem with lax security at the labs. And what I said was that I didn't suspect that any actual breaches of security had occurred during my tenure. Since then, we have learned of the offloading of the computer by Mr. Lee, from the secured computers into his personal computers. That's something we know now that I didn't know then.

But I think my choice of wording was poor. What I should have said was I did not know of any specific instance of espionage, because I think that we've been suspicious all along. And I have to acknowledge, I think, I used a poor word there. I think suspicion is—we have been suspicious all along, generally. We did not have any specific instance, as we now do, of the offloading of the computer.

But I also want to emphasize that I took no particular comfort in that, because what we have here is—what I learned in 1997 was that there was a general problem of very long standing with the security at the labs, and I issued the Executive order in early '98 to clean it up. And Secretary Richardson has been working on it since then. And I think we've made a lot of progress since then.

Yes.

Medicare

Q. Sir, I'd like to ask you about Medicare and your plans that you're going to be announcing next week. This is a program that tens of millions of Americans depend on, and yet in 15 years it will be effectively bankrupt. And you're about to propose what could be a very costly additional benefit in the prescription benefit. Why are you going to do that, sir? Isn't that going to make the problem worse, not better?

The President. No. For one thing—let me remind you that we have taken a lot of very tough positions to reform Medicare since 1993. When I took office, Medicare was supposed to go broke this year. And now it's out to—what is it—2015 or something. So we have taken a lot of important positions already. And as a matter of fact, as I'm sure you're all aware, a lot of the health care providers, particularly rural hospitals, nursing homes, home health providers, a disproportionate share of hospitals—for the folks listening to us, that's basically inner-city hospitals and teaching hospitals that have a whole lot of poor folks they take care of who

aren't reimbursed—a lot of those people believe that our savings are too great. But we've taken some very tough actions to try to lengthen the life of the Medicare Trust Fund.

When I make my proposals on Tuesday, there will be more to lengthen the life further, to make sure that we get through the first quarter century and maybe more of the new century with Medicare alive and well.

But if you look at the long run, I think it's important that we propose a prescription drug benefit because life expectancy is going up. Drugs are being constantly developed which help to improve the quality as well as the length of life, and if they are properly taken, they can actually reduce long-term hospitalization and other medical costs.

Now, it is absolutely true that if we design this wrong, it could wind up being a lot more expensive than rosy scenario suggests. But if you look at my record here over the last 6½ years, I've tried to be quite conservative in my budget projections and quite responsible in handling the budget of the country. And you will see that, I think, reflected in the way I make this proposal, including the prescription drugs.

But I don't really think there's any alternative here. You've got 15 million Americans, seniors, out there without any kind of coverage for their medicine. You've got millions and millions of others with inadequate or highly expensive coverage. And I just—I really believe that this is the most significant health care need that senior citizens have today. And I believe that over the long run, the proper availability, properly priced, of prescription medicine will actually not only lengthen lives and improve the quality of life of our seniors and improve their security, their state of mind, but it will also, long, long-term, save medical costs because it will keep people out of hospitals and out of more expensive treatments.

Ellen [Ellen Ratner, Talk Radio News Service].

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. What is your strategy now, Mr. President, for a comprehensive campaign finance reform, to really make it pass?

The President. Well, I think the best strategy is to get a clear majority of the House of Representatives to demand that it come up and then try to put enough pressure on to get the Senate leaders to let it come up.

Basically, the Republican leadership in the Senate has said that they're just not going to permit it to come up, because they don't want their people who would vote against it to have a recorded vote on it and they don't want to run the risk that they've got enough for their folks that would vote with all of ours. See, all of our people are for it. We've got 100 percent of the Democrats in the Senate for it.

And so, what I think we have to do is to keep it on the front burner enough so that the discomfort level rises high enough that an actual vote is allowed. All I've really asked for here is a vote. If we'd just get a vote on the bill, I will be very well satisfied, and I think it will come out just fine.

Yes, Ann [Ann Compton, ABC News].

Candidacy Announcements for 2000 Elections

Q. Can I ask a political question? When Vice President Gore announced officially for President, he chose a date when you were going to be out of the country. And according to Mrs. Clinton's supporters, if she announces her exploratory committee in the next couple of weeks, it would be at a time when you've got a commitment to go out to South Dakota. Do you think your personal behavior has made you something of a liability to those who are running? And did you take it personally when Vice President Gore made his announcement and seemed to set himself so clearly separate from you when it came to issues of family?

The President. Well, first of all, I thought, as I have said repeatedly, I thought the Vice President had a great announcement. And what he really said in his announcement—I actually heard it, so I don't have to have it characterized for me. What he said in his announcement was that he had had more experience than anybody running, which is true; that he would put forward more specific ideas about what he would do if he were elected President than anyone has to date, by far, which is true; and that the choice before the American people was whether we would build on the progress that we've made for the last 6 years or turn around and go backwards, which is what I think the real choice will be before the American people. So I approved of that.

And as far as his doing it when I was out of the country, I thought that was a good thing. Very often, you'd be amazed how many times over the last 6½ years we have planned for

certain announcements to be made by the Vice President when I was out of the country, because that way it gets—I mean, far be it for us to try to maneuver the press—[laughter]—but he gets better coverage, and I get better coverage—I'm out of the country, so he gets better coverage. So I thought that was a good thing.

And I think on the general point, what I have noticed over now more than 30 years, since I first began to volunteer as a young man in politics, all politics, all elections are about the future, and all candidates are judged on their own merits. And I believe that is the case here.

But I think that the American people know that the country's in good shape and that not only our economic policies, our crime policies, and our welfare policies, but our family policies are good for their efforts to raise their children. And the best thing that I can do, it seems to me, is to do the right thing by my country, to just keep working at being a good President, and they'll do fine.

Q. Not be with Mrs. Clinton when she campaigns?

The President. Well, first of all, she hasn't made a decision to announce to run for the Senate. This is not what's going on here. And as a practical matter, logistically and legally—as a practical matter, she has to have an exploratory committee to continue to talk to people in New York about this. That's all this is. She has not made a final decision to run yet. So I think that's a whole different issue. And I think that you should look at it in that context.

Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio].

Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, considering what's going on in Kosovo now, and now that you've had a chance to meet with the refugees in Macedonia on Tuesday and you've heard the depth of the hatred that they feel for the Serbs and you've heard of the brutality to which they were subjected, is it not asking the impossible for the Serbs and the ethnic Albanians to live in peace in Kosovo?

The President. Well, I don't think they could do it without a lot of help in the short run. And I think—I was asked this question earlier in a slightly different question—I think that the first and most important thing is for us to get the whole KFOR force in there, all 50,000, as quickly as possible, properly deployed to maxi-

mize security. Then I think we've got to get people busy doing positive things, rebuilding their homes, reestablishing their property records, reestablishing their schools. We've got to give them something to think about on a daily basis that is positive. Then I strongly believe we need to give them the help they need to try to work through this emotionally, psychologically, spiritually, morally. I think a lot of these children are going to need mental health services, and I hope we can get them. I think that we need to bring people in who have been through similar things.

I had a long talk with Elie Wiesel about this after he came back. He went over and toured the camps for me and talked to the people. I think that there are people who've been through the Holocaust who can help a lot. I think there are people who have been through South Africa and the peace and reconciliation commission and 300 years of what those people went through there who can help a lot.

I think we need to be quite imaginative about—once we get the building blocks of security and the building blocks of reconstruction in place and the building blocks of civil society in place, then I think we need to be quite imaginative about the human, spiritual dimension of this. And I will do my best to be supportive. I've talked to Reverend Jackson about this, about the importance of bringing in religious leaders from all the—not only from the Muslim and the Orthodox faiths to come and work together and work people through this but perhaps others as well. So there are lots of things that we need to do.

Can it be done? I believe it can be done. It's going to take a lot of courage, and it's going to take some time.

Go ahead, Sarah [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News Service].

American Families

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]—the future of this country, it seems to me that one of our big issues is parenting—that causes divorces—[inaudible]—having children and breaking up the families. Isn't there any way that we can design a national program to educate people—[inaudible]?

The President. Well, you know, it's interesting. On the—to go to your point—when Hillary and I decided that we ought to have this grassroots

campaign to try to protect children against violence and we began to talk to Pam Eakes, who started the Mothers Against Violence movement in Washington State, and others, one of the things that we learned, obviously, is that a lot of young people wind up being—especially really troubled young people—can often be almost strangers in their own homes. And we assume that people ought to just know how to do the most important jobs in life, and they're very often reluctant to ask for help.

But I think one of the things that we have to try to do is to develop the kind of supports parents need to do a better job. And it's a much harder job now than it used to be, especially since the average parent is away from his or her children for 22 hours a week more than was the case 30 years ago.

So I do think that we need to do some more. Most parents, however, want to do a good job, really, really want to do a good job. And I think when you start with that, one of the things that I hope very much will come out of this whole movement against teen violence is more efforts in that regard. Of course, that's one of the reasons that Hillary wrote her book a few years ago—she knows more about that than I do—and, of course, one of the reasons the Vice President and Mrs. Gore had those family conferences every year, starting before he joined the ticket with me back in '92.

The short answer to your question is, yes, we should do more to help parents do a good job.

Go ahead, Susan [Susan Page, USA Today], and then John [John King, Cable News Network].

Medicare

Q. Mr. President, a lot of Medicare beneficiaries are enthusiastic about the idea of a new prescription drug benefit but perhaps less enthusiastic about paying higher premiums to pay for it. Should Medicare beneficiaries, themselves, be prepared to endure some pain to get some gain? Should they be prepared to pay higher premiums? And especially, should higher income Medicare beneficiaries pay means-tested premiums that are higher?

The President. Well, let me just—if I give you all the details of my program Tuesday, you won't cover me Tuesday, and then I'll be bereft. [Laughter]

What we should do is, first of all, make sure that the integrity of the basic system is strengthened, because there are a lot of seniors who depend upon it. And from my point of view, that means making sure that it's good for at least another quarter century. So that's the first thing we need to do. And to do that, we're going to have to bring in more pressures from competition and other things to modernize it.

Then we should offer a drug benefit, but we should do it—to go back to the former question I was asked, your question—we should do it in a way that we're quite clear that it won't and can't break the bank, that we'll be able to monitor its cost and see how it's going.

And as to the other, as you know, I've been publicly open to that option since 1992. But I think that I want to ask you to wait until Tuesday for the details of the program.

Go ahead, John.

Tax Cuts

Q. Sir, we're told that next week, the administration will announce that the Federal budget surplus is even larger than you had previously projected. Given that, and given your words today about bipartisanship, do you think now it might be possible to tackle Medicare and Social Security reform and perhaps reach out to Republicans and open the door to a larger tax cut than you have discussed previously?

The President. First, I'm not against tax cuts. I'm not against giving the American people some of this money back from our present prosperity right now. The question is, what kind of tax cut? Who benefits from it? How should it be designed? And how should it be handled to guarantee that we're going to take care of first things first—strengthen Social Security and Medicare, paying down the debt, continuing to secure the health of the American economy?

Keep in mind, what produced the surplus was the strength of the American economy, the fact that we had the will to do the very tough things in 1993 and that we followed it up with a Balanced Budget Act in 1997.

So my plan has tax cuts. The USA accounts are worth literally hundreds and hundreds of dollars to most families every year. They could be worth a quarter of a million dollars to a family over their lifetime. It's most progressive inducement to save in the history of the country. We have tax cuts fully paid for already, for long-term care, for child care, for school construction,

for investing in the inner city. So I'm not against tax cuts.

We have had tax cuts in the past, big tax cuts, for tuition tax credits for college, the HOPE scholarship tax cuts, tax cuts for workers and families with modest incomes, the child care tax credit, \$500 per child. We've had lots of tax cuts. I am not opposed to that.

What I want to do is to make sure that before we go off and start cutting taxes by some arbitrary large amount, we take care of first things first. We need to know that we're going to modernize and strengthen Social Security for the 21st century, that we're going to modernize and strengthen Medicare for the 21st century, and that we're going to do it in a way that will enable us to continue to pay the debt down.

There will still be money for a tax cut, and a sizable one. Will I work with the Congress on that? Of course, I will. If I want to pass it, I have to work with them; they're in the majority. Of course, I will. But first things first. We've got to get our priorities in order here. The American people plainly expect us, first of all, to keep the economy going. And the best way to do that is to send a signal to the markets that we've resolved Social Security; we've resolved Medicare; and we're paying the debt down. That is the most important thing we could do to guarantee long-term, economic growth.

Secondly—the only other point I want to make is, I do not believe that it is responsible to have a tax cut if the impact of the tax cut—plus the defense increases that we have had to adopt, plus the highway expenditures that the Congress wants to adopt—is to cut education or cut health care or cut our investments in the environment. There is enough money to do all these things and to do it really well, with great discipline. But we have to have our priorities in order.

Go ahead.

Efforts at Bipartisanship

Q. Mr. President, 2½ years ago, in your Inaugural, you said you wanted to help the Nation repair the breach. And this morning, again, you called for greater cooperation in Washington. But it seems apparent that, for many people, you, personally, remain a polarizing and divisive figure in national politics. I was wondering if you've ever reflected on why, as Mrs. Clinton, I think, has sometimes noted, throughout your

career, you've always seemed to generate such antagonism from your opponents. And do you assign any responsibility to yourself for what this morning you described as the rancorous mood in Washington today?

The President. Since I have been here, I have tried to work as well as I could in an open fashion with Members of both parties. I actually have developed quite good personal relationships with some Republican Members of Congress. But as you know, from the beginning, from 1991, and especially after I was elected, particularly the right wing—I've been accused of murder and all kinds of things. And it seems almost that the better the country did, the madder some of them got.

Now what I think is, we have a new Speaker, and I think he wants to work with me to get things done. And I've had a very cordial relationship with him. I had a nice talk with Senator Lott just last week. And all I can tell you is, I don't think much about yesterday. I keep telling everybody that works for me that we have no right to harbor anger, to keep—that people in positions of public responsibilities are not permitted to have personal feelings that interfere with their obligations to the public. And I would start tomorrow with any Member of Congress who wanted to work with me on anything, to do something that I thought was good. And that's all I can tell you. There's not a single Member of Congress that I wouldn't be willing to work with to do something that I felt was good for America.

And I think that's what the American people want us to do. And all I can tell you is—but it is true, I think, generally in our country's history, that people who are progressive, people who try to change things, people who keep pushing the envelope, have generally elicited very strong, sometimes personally hostile, negative reaction. You read some of the things people said about President Roosevelt. In retrospect, because of the magnificent job he did and because of the historic consequences of the time in which he served and what he did for America, we tend to think that everybody was for him. That's not true.

So people say these things. I think you just have to dismiss them and go on. And all I can tell you is that we in the White House, we try—and I hammer this home all the time—we don't have to like everything people say about us, but it can't affect, in any way, shape,

or form, what we're prepared to do in working with people. That's the way I feel. People in positions of responsibility owe the public—owe the public—their best efforts every day. And they have no right to let their personal feelings get in the way. I try not to do it, and I would hope others would do the same.

Yes, go ahead.

President's Approval Ratings After Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, normally when the United States wins a war, that victory is accompanied by a surge of approval for the Commander in Chief. The war in Kosovo has not produced that sort of bounce for you. As a student of the polls, what do you think they're trying to tell you here?

The President. First of all, I don't know that we know that yet. I just don't know that we know that. And the important thing for you to know is that I did what I thought was right for the United States and for the children of the United States and for the future of the world. And I'm not responsible for anything but that, including the reaction of some after it was over, and we turned out to be right about what would and wouldn't work. It's totally irrelevant.

Abraham Lincoln once said, in a much graver time, that if the end brought him out all right, it wouldn't matter what everybody said against him. And if it didn't, 10,000 angels swearing he was right wouldn't make any difference.

So I have tried to do what I think is right for my country here. I believe that the young people of America are likely to live in a world where the biggest threats are not from other countries but from horrible racial, ethnic, and religious fighting, making people very vulnerable to exploitation from organized criminals, drug runners, terrorists, who themselves are more and more likely to have weapons of mass destruction no matter how hard we work against it.

So I think anything I can do to reduce terrorism, to reduce the ability of terrorists to have weapons of mass destruction, or to stand against racial and ethnic genocide and cleansing is a good thing for our future.

You know, that's all I can tell you. I did what I thought was right. I still believe it was right. And I'll keep working to make it work out. And the public and the members of the other party and others, people can react however they like. I just have to do what I think is right, and that's what I'll do.

Yes, go ahead.

Congressional Democrats

Q. Sir, in advancing your agenda you talked about the need for bipartisanship, but don't you have a problem with congressional Democrats? They say, "Bill Clinton doesn't have to face another election; we do." And they want to run against a do-nothing Congress. As an experienced political pro, don't you have some sympathy for them?

The President. I do, except—I have a lot of sympathy for them. But first of all, not all Democrats believe that. You see a number in the House, and I think probably a majority in the Senate, do not agree with that. But I think you—you have to, first of all, say, what is our obligation here to the American people? Our obligation is to work for the welfare of the country.

Secondly, I think that nowhere near half the responsibility so far rests on them for the current atmosphere. I mean, they tried—we tried on the guns. We tried on a lot of other things—on campaign finance reform. We're trying on many other issues. I think that—I wouldn't overestimate the extent of that.

But secondly, just as a—you know, if you look at 1996, where we got a lot done for America that year—we didn't just beat the contract on America; we actually did a lot of good things for America. The Democrats made gains in the Congress in 1998, against all the odds, against all the weight of history. We got—we passed a big education budget at the end of 1998—100,000 new teachers—and had a program to run on, and the Democrats were rewarded, against all the odds.

So my view is that if you believe that Government has a role to play in our national life and you accept the fact that there will be honest and legitimate differences between the two parties on outstanding issues, no matter how much we get done, you're better off doing what you can, that you believe in, so you can go tell the people you did that. And then say, but look what still needs to be done; look what still needs to be done.

Elections are always about tomorrow. So I think that—I can only tell you that I think both in terms of what is right for the American people and what is the best politics, we should keep trying to move forward.

Yes.

Justice Department Tobacco Litigation

Q. I want to talk to you a little bit about tobacco litigation. You had said in your State of the Union Address that the Justice Department was going to bring a Federal case against the tobacco companies. But what we're hearing is that the Justice Department had serious reservations about that case. Are they close to being resolved, those reservations, and when do you expect the case to be brought?

The President. Well, I hope so. Let me say just this, I would not have announced it in the State of the Union Address if I hadn't had a clear signal from the Justice Department that they thought there was a legal basis to proceed. We knew if we needed statutory authority to sue under Medicare—a further act of Congress to sue under Medicare, on exactly the same grounds all the States have already sued to recover under Medicaid, that in this Congress, given the power of the big tobacco in this Congress, it would be hard to get.

So we worked for a year or more with the Justice Department on this, arguing back and forth about whether it could be done. We—I and my administration—we were prepared to do this way over a year before I announced what I did in 1998. Maybe as many as 2 years. I just don't remember exactly what the time frame was, but it was quite a long while that we wanted to do this.

So I did not make the announcement in the State of the Union Address until I believed, at least, that the Justice Department felt that while it would be complicated, big, and difficult, that we did, in fact, have a cause of action and we could bring it. So that's all I can tell you. I don't know any more.

Yes.

Support for President's Agenda

Q. Mr. President, a question about polling statistics on your domestic issues. Recently, or quite frankly, your numbers have been tracked on certain issues showing that core groups, people who have supported you in the past, have now fallen off. Do you fear, sir, that perhaps you are beginning a disconnect with the American people? And how can you possibly lead in Congress on the legislative agenda that you've outlined if you don't have the backing of your core groups?

The President. Well, for one thing, the only polls I've seen show overwhelming public support for the Patients' Bill of Rights, for closing the gun show loophole, for the other common-sense gun initiatives—overwhelming support. There is public—strong public support for campaign finance reform. There's overwhelming public support for the gun legislation and some of these issues, like the Patients' Bill of Rights, for example, the support is almost uniform among Republicans, Democrats, and independents.

So I don't know what issues we're pushing, as it happens, that the public agrees with the Republicans and disagrees with us on. I recognize that the public was ambivalent about Kosovo, but they were ambivalent about Bosnia and Haiti and a lot of the other things that I've done in foreign policy—helping Mexico when they were in trouble. But I think the President hires on to make the tough decisions and controversial decisions, too.

You know, the Democrats stayed—when we were in much worse shape in '93 and '94, the Democrats stayed because they believed we were right. We knew that when we cut the deficit \$500 billion and we were all by ourselves—we didn't have any Republican votes—it wasn't going to be popular. And you could characterize it, but it was the right thing for America. And look at where our economy is today.

So I think, no matter what the polls say, you just have to get up every day and do what you think is right. And that's what we're doing, and I think we'll be borne out.

Yes, go ahead.

Moral Decline

Q. I've got a follow to that. The polls are also showing that although people do acknowledge that they're doing better in the economy and that they're doing well personally, they show a deep concern for the Nation's moral fabric, and actually that concern seems to be growing. What responsibility do you, personally, take for that, and what can you in the White House do to address these moral problems that seem to be cropping up more and more in the polls?

The President. Well, I think people are worried about—I think the most important thing on that is what happened, the shattering effect that Littleton had. In terms of what happened to me in the impeachment issue, I did what

I could be telling the American people what I was going to do, that I was going to go back to work being the best President I could be, and I was going to go back to work to try to repair my family life. I have worked very hard for a year to do that, and the public, at the time, had a strong response to that. That's all I can do, and that's what I have done. I've done that very faithfully.

So I don't think that's what's going on. I think people are worried when they see the fabric of life still under great strain in spite of the fact that we have quite a large amount of prosperity. And I think what we all have to do is to ask ourselves: What can we do to reinforce the ability of families to raise their children, to teach them right from wrong, to increase the chances that they'll be able to live strong, whole lives? And I believe, therefore, that there is, in that sense, a moral component to the debate we're having over guns.

I mean, basically, we know—let me just give you one example. We know from the experience of the Brady bill that if we do background checks, thousands of people—at gun shows—thousands of people who shouldn't buy guns won't get them. Now we know that. I think that's a positive moral value. The people on the other side essentially say, "Yeah, but we don't want to be inconvenienced." And when people see inconvenienced elevated over the life of a child in this context, I think that causes them problems.

We know that in the case of the Patients' Bill of Rights, that people think it's a moral issue if they need to see a specialist or they need—if they get hurt in an accident and they can't go to the nearest emergency room. They know that. And when they see, in effect, someone else's convenience elevated over that, I think that's a problem for them.

So I think that there are lots—this is a complicated thing. But my own view of that is, what we have to do is not pretend that the Government can solve all the moral questions, not evade what people have to do personally in their own lives with their own families, but neither can we take the dodge that the Government has no responsibility.

That's why I tried so hard after that Littleton incident. That's why I'm so disappointed in what Congress did in the House on this gun issue, because I tried so hard after that Littleton incident not to play politics, not to point the finger

at anybody, not to say, "Oh well, it's this, that, or the other thing." You know, I went to Hollywood, I challenged the entertainment community, even though they had done far more to try to move the ball forward than anybody in the gun community until the gun manufacturers started helping, and they've done a good job, too, a lot of them.

I still believe that people think that there is too much "everybody for himself," and if people can get away with what they do because of their position, they'll do it. And I think what I tried to do was to acknowledge it to whatever extent I had done, that it was dead wrong, and I was going to spend the rest of my life trying to rectify that, which is all anybody can do. And I think most people accept that. They'd rather have somebody do that than go around trying to give a lot of speeches about how good they are and then open the door for the gun lobby to run the Congress.

So you'll just have to make up your own mind about that. But I think that—what I think is important is that we stop trying to figure out how to make points against one another by saying, "I'm better than you are." You know, I was raised in a family that would have given me a whipping if I had done that as a boy. I was raised to believe that we were supposed to try to be humble in our personal search but aggressive in trying to help our neighbors. That's the religious tradition I was raised in.

Now, I get the feeling that people say, "Well, what we should do is be arrogant about how good we are, and the heck with our neighbors." I don't agree with that. I think we'd be better off with the former tradition, and I think it has deeper roots in American life and is more consistent with what we should be doing.

George [George Condon, Copley News Service].

Lessons From Kosovo and Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, wartime Presidents, even the great ones, Lincoln, Wilson, or Roosevelt, all discovered that wars never went exactly the way they planned it. In Kosovo, what surprised you or went a way that you didn't expect, and what lessons did you learn in Kosovo?

The President. The bombing went on—I had two models in my mind on what would happen with the bombing campaign. I thought it would either be over within a couple of days, because Mr. Milosevic would see we were united, or

if he decided to sustain the damage to his country, that it would take quite a long while for the damage to actually reach the point where it was unsustainable. It took only a little longer than I thought it would once we got into the second model.

But I was surprised about some of the things. I was surprised that it took—I was surprised, on the one hand, that we lost no pilots. I was surprised by that. I was surprised that we'd lost only two planes and no pilots.

I know that from your point of view, there were a lot of civilian casualties, but that's because you got to cover them as opposed to covering the civilian casualties of the Gulf war. If you talked to any military person that was involved in both conflicts, they will tell you that there were far, far more civilian casualties in Iraq. I mean, many more by several times as many.

I was a little surprised that we had no more problems than we did in maintaining our allied unity, given the enormous pressures that were on some of our allies. And I think that gives you some indication about the depth of conviction people had that this was right.

Let me just say this, I think one way to understand this—I almost never see this, but let me just—one way to understand this about why we all did what we did even when a lot of folks thought we were crazy or at least thought we couldn't prevail, is I don't think I can even begin—I am very surprised—I was surprised and heartbroken that the Chinese Embassy was hit because of the mapping accidents. That did surprise me. I had no earthly idea that our system would permit that kind of mistake. That was the biggest surprise of all.

But let me just say one other thing. I think that when you look at this conflict and you seek to understand, well, why did President Clinton do this, why did Tony Blair do this, why did Jacques Chirac go along, why did the Germans get in there with both feet so early, given their history and all this—I think you have to see this through the lens of Bosnia. And keep in mind, in Bosnia, we had the U.N. in there first in a peacekeeping mission. Then we tried for 4 years, 50 different diplomatic solutions, all those different maps, all that different argument. And the end of it all, from 1991 to 1995, we still had Srebrenica. We still had—and when it was all said and done, we had a quarter of a million people dead and 2½ million refugees.

And I think what you have to understand is that we saw this through the lens of Bosnia. And we said we are not going to wait a day—not a day—if we can stop it. Once we knew there was a military plan, they had all those soldiers deployed, they had all those tanks deployed, we knew what was coming, and we decided to move.

So yes, there were surprises along the way. I'm terribly sorry about the Embassy. We made our report—I've gotten a report and the Chinese got—I made sure the Chinese got essentially the same report I did. We didn't put any varnish on it. And I'm sorry about it. But our pilots on the whole did a superb job, and we did the right thing. And I hope that the American people, as time goes on, will feel more and more strongly that we did.

Yes.

Aid to Farmers

Q. There's one issue that you didn't raise in your list of domestic priorities, and that's agriculture. As you know, the agricultural economy is not doing well. Some say it's in a death spiral. Senate Democrats have tried to add a \$6 billion aid package to agricultural appropriations. Now the Senate Republicans have written you a letter asking you to acknowledge the crisis and set a dollar amount for what you think might be needed to keep those farmers on the land this year.

The President. Well, we're working on that. Last year, at the end, we got about that much money—about \$6 billion in emergency appropriations last year for the farmers. And it is quite bad this year, and we are going to have to give them more support. And I intend to do it.

I just want to point out, when this Congress passed the freedom to farm act, I warned them that there was no safety net in there and that it would only work as long as farm prices stay at an acceptable level. And I think what we have to face now is whether or not this is another emergency.

From the point of view of the farmers, it's a terrible emergency; it's a crisis. We have to deal with it. But from the point of view of the Congress, what they have to face is, is this a second year of an emergency, or do they have a fundamentally flawed bill? And if the answer is the latter, can we handle this with emergency legislation, or do we need to change the law?

But if you're asking me, am I going to recommend more help for America's farmers? The answer is, yes. There is no other alternative. This was—there were a lot of good things in the freedom to farm bill. It gave more freedom to farmers; it gave more opportunity for conservation reserve; it had more for rural development. But it had no safety net, and it was obvious to anybody that ever fooled with agriculture for several years that sooner or later this was going to happen. And it happened. And it was as predictable as the Sun coming up in the morning. And I think it would be terrible to let thousands of more farmers go under, under these circumstances.

Yes, go ahead.

Q. Which one?

The President. You.

First Lady's Travel

Q. Thank you. As the First Lady considers a possible Senate bid in New York, she's made an unusual number of campaign-style appearances in the Empire State using Government jets at taxpayer expense. I wanted to ask you if you thought that was an appropriate expenditure of taxpayer money and if you think the privilege should continue once—or if—she finally does announce her candidacy.

The President. Well, part of how she travels is determined by the Secret Service. She is willing to do—first of all, in the exploratory phase and if she should become a candidate, she will fully comply with all the Federal rules and regulations that govern her. But part of how she travels is determined by what the Secret Service says. And you'd be amazed how many times in the last few years we've wanted to take the train to New York, for example, and haven't been able to do it.

So these are legitimate questions that we take quite seriously, she takes seriously, and we're trying to work through them as best as possible.

Yes sir, in the back.

Action Against Serbia

Q. Thank you, sir. How do you want to be remembered abroad, as a leader who wanted to shape America's face among other nations? How do you want to be remembered in the Balkans, in Eastern Europe, where people have strong feelings about America, different kinds of feelings? And pardon me for asking that, do you expect if someone, somewhere, wants to

put a price tag on your head, just as the State Department offered \$5 million to get Mr. Milosevic, given the controversy that NATO leaders might also have committed war crimes by bombing vital infrastructure in the region? Thank you.

The President. Well, first of all, we have not put a price on Mr. Milosevic's head for someone to kill him. We have offered a reward for people who can arrest and help bring to justice war criminals, because of the absence of honoring the international extradition rules in Serbia. So let's get that clear. No one is interested in that. The United States policy is opposed to assassination, has been since Gerald Ford was President, officially, and I have rigorously maintained it. So we don't try to do that to heads of state. So that's the first thing.

Secondly, NATO did not commit war crimes. NATO stopped war crimes. NATO stopped deliberate, systematic efforts at ethnic cleansing and genocide. And we did it in a way to minimize civilian casualties. Our pilots were up there—I'm telling you, there were days when they were consistently risking their lives because the Serbs were firing at them with shoulder-fired missiles in the midst of highly populated villages, and the pilots did not fire back and take them out because they knew if they missed, they would kill civilians.

Yes, there were civilians killed. But I will say again, if you compare the civilian losses here with the losses in Desert Storm, it's not even close. They did a magnificent job. They were brave. We tried to minimize casualties. Every target we hit was relevant to the, essentially, the state machine of terrorism that Mr. Milosevic was running.

And finally, I'm not concerned right now about how I'm being remembered; I'll be remembered when I'm gone. Right now, I'm not gone, and I've got lots to do.

Yes, go ahead.

Okinawa

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You're just back from the G-8 summit meeting in Cologne, Germany, and next year you're going to Okinawa, Japan, for another summit meeting. Okinawa is the home of a huge U.S. military presence in Japan and the Far East. And I'm wondering if you will try hard and resolve all the major issues pending between the U.S. and Japanese Governments about the U.S. bases in Okinawa,

most importantly, the relocation of the Futenma Air Base, before you go there next year. Thank you.

The President. Absolutely. I don't want to go over there and have all these things hanging out. I hope they'll all be resolved. Let me say, I think it's a very exciting thing, and I congratulate Prime Minister Obuchi on wanting to host this conference in Okinawa. It's very unusual, in a way, for a leader to do that, to take the conference so far away from the capital city. And I think it's very farsighted. I hope it will be good for the people and the economy of Okinawa, and I hope to goodness we'll have all the outstanding issues resolved by the time we get there.

Jane [Jane Fullerton, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette], go ahead.

Post-Presidency Plans

Q. Both you and the First Lady have indicated that you plan to live in New York once you leave the White House. I'm just curious what you would say to the people of Arkansas, the people who have supported you and who helped you run for President. Should they feel used or abandoned in any way? [Laughter]

The President. No. Now, let me say this: I have made it clear what I intend to do and what I intend to do from the beginning. What I intend to do is to divide my time between, as I said in my interview with CNN from Europe, I intend to divide my time between Arkansas and New York. I intend to spend at least half my time at home, when I'm not traveling and doing other things, because I've got a library and a public policy center to build, and I want it to be great, and I want it to be a great gift to my State. I've worked quite hard on it and thought a lot about it.

And I think that—I think the people at home will be quite excited about it when they see what we're going to do and will be thrilled by it. And I won't be home so much, I'll be underfoot, you know, I'll just be—but I'll be there quite a lot.

Yes.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, on Northern Ireland. Sir, on Wednesday the deadline looms, and I was wondering whether or not if the IRA does not sign up for disarmament in time for Wednesday's deadline, whether or not—or a timeline

is established for disarmament—will Gerry Adams still be allowed to come to the United States and raise funds?

And secondly, do you have any personal words that you'd like to express to the people who are about to undergo another marching season, where it's been a very volatile and very bloody situation at times?

The President. I'd like to answer the second question first. The people of Northern Ireland, a majority of both communities, voted for the Good Friday accords. They voted for peace, for decommissioning, for universal acceptance of the principle of consent. And in American terms, that's majority rule. They voted for new partnerships with the Irish Republic, and they voted for self-government.

They were right when they voted for that agreement. It's still the right thing for the future of Northern Ireland. So I would ask those who march and those who are angry at the march to remember that.

I don't want to answer your first question for a simple reason—I have been in intense contact with Prime Minister Blair and with Prime Minister, the *Taoiseach*, Bertie Ahern. As you know, I have invested a great deal in the process of peace. And I don't think we have a great deal of time to resolve this complicated issue. It's politically and emotionally complicated.

But I just would ask all the parties—the only thing I want to say about it publicly now—if it doesn't work out, there will be plenty of time for you to ask me all the other questions, but I'm still banking that we'll get it to work out. But I think everybody needs to think about how far we've come, all the things that are in the Good Friday accords, the fact that the public, Catholic and the Protestant public, voted for them, and ask, no matter how difficult these issues are, how in goodness' name we could ever let this peace process fall apart?

This is a very serious, serious period. And I do not want to say anything that would make it worse. And in the days ahead, I intend to do whatever anybody thinks I can do to save it. But I hope and pray it will be saved, because the Good Friday accords were good when the people voted for them, they're good today, and the differences, though they are profound, are as nothing compared to the cost of losing it.

Go ahead.

Books on the Clinton Presidency

Q. Mr. President, in the wake of the books by George Stephanopoulos and Bob Woodward, I was wondering if you think that you can have anything close to a candid or a frank conversation with aides or, for that matter, lawyers these days, and whether you believe that this makes you a more isolated President as a result of this trend?

The President. Well, I don't feel isolated. I mean, you all are having at me pretty good here today. [Laughter] And that's one of the reasons I'm still here, because I haven't been isolated, either from the American people at large or from a wide and large network of friends.

I haven't read either book, and I haven't read the excerpts of the book, Mr. Woodward's book in the Washington Post, so I can't comment because I don't know exactly what was said. And I think it's better for me not to comment on something that I haven't read.

Yes, sir. The gentleman in the back.

Reconstruction of the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, you've been very much involved in the last few weeks in an attempt to create a Balkan reconstruction program. Many people, including yourself, have referred to the Marshall plan after World War II as kind of a comparison to what you want to accomplish. And yet, you and your administration officials have insisted that Serbia cannot be involved in this until Milosevic is out.

Given the nature of the Balkan economy, which is a very integrated area with the electricity networks, the transportation networks, the Danube River, which is a unifying force which unites the entire region, isn't it a folly to try and conduct a program of this nature by excluding Serbia? And really economically impossible without Serbia as a part of the picture you cannot really get the whole economy moving.

And secondly, is there not a danger—I realize that you have said that the reason for excluding Serbia was to try and get the Serb people to reject Milosevic. But isn't there a danger that they may indeed coalesce around Milosevic, feeling themselves as victims, and support him in spite of his own personal character, simply because of the bitterness towards the West after the bombing and the sanctions and now what

they feel is disappointment over the reconstruction?

The President. To answer your question, first of all, I don't think it's folly or impossible to think we can have a Balkan reconstruction plan—a southeastern Europe reconstruction plan without Serbia, but it would be terribly unfortunate and more difficult. What will happen is that new networks will be formed, and the relative importance of Serbia will be diminished if they're not a part of it. But it will be much more difficult, and it will be very unfortunate.

Now, having said that, what the Serbian people decide to do, of course, is their own affair. But they're going to have to come to grips with what Mr. Milosevic ordered in Kosovo. They're just going to have to come to grips with it, and they're going to have to get out of denial. They're going to have to come to grips with it. And then they're going to have to decide whether they support his leadership or not, whether they think it's okay that all those tens of thousands of people were killed and all those hundreds of thousands of people were run out of their homes and all those little girls were raped and all those little boys were murdered. They're going to have to decide if they think that is okay.

And if they think it's okay, they can make that decision. But I wouldn't give them one red cent for reconstruction if they think it's okay, because I don't think it's okay, and I don't think that's the world we're trying to build for our children. So I think it's simple.

And I'm—look, I met with Mr. Milosevic in Paris; I shook hands with him; I had lunch across the table from him. It was a delightful and interesting lunch. And I thought, well, maybe he had some distance between the extreme activities of the Serbs in Bosnia. And then he went right out and did it all over again, and I mean with people directly under his control. And I do not believe we should give them any money for reconstruction if they believe that is the person who should lead them into the new century. I do not, and I will not support it.

Yes, go ahead.

Taxes

Q. You said earlier that you would not be averse to cutting taxes. And yet, your budget, according to the Congressional Budget Office,

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actually raises taxes overall by some \$50 billion over 5 years. Why is this, in an era of surpluses?

The President. Well, now, what are they counting? They're counting all the money from the tobacco tax that we used to pay for the—

Q. All of it.

The President. I believe that you have to have a very generous interpretation to reach that conclusion. You look, we're giving 11 percent of the surplus on the USA accounts as a whole—11 percent. We have, in addition to that, you've got the long-term care tax credit; you've got the child care tax credit; you've got the continuing funding of all the education and child tax credits that we had in the previous budgets. And my guess is to get to that, they have to not count the continuing funding of the tax cuts but count the continued extension of tax increases that have to have extenders as new revenues. I can't imagine how they got it otherwise.

We did have a large cigarette tax increase in there because we were trying to depress teen smoking, and we were trying to get funds to use to deal with the health consequences of what is a virtual epidemic among young people.

But I am for the tax cuts, and I will go back to the answer before. I've got new tax cuts in this budget, and I will work with the Republicans on it. But we should not—we should not—pass up this chance to save Social Security, to save Medicare, to give the prescription drug benefits, to pay the debt down, which will keep the economy stronger and keep people with more jobs and higher incomes. Then we

can talk about the tax cuts. And if Mr. King is right and we have some more money, then we can talk about that. But let's deal with first things first. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 176th news conference began at 3:47 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Hashim Thaci, leader, Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA); Christopher Edley, consultant, One America; the President's Advisory Board on Race; Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Speechwriting James (Terry) Edmonds; Presidential scholar Danielle Huff, who introduced the President at Georgetown University earlier in the day; former Senator Warren B. Rudman, Chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board; dismissed Los Alamos National Laboratory scientist Wen Ho Lee; Holocaust survivor, author, and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jacques Chirac of France; Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Kosovo International Security Force (KFOR) and the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-127). A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Radio Remarks on House Action on Foster Care Independence Legislation June 25, 1999

I am very pleased the House of Representatives has just approved, by an overwhelming bipartisan margin, the "Foster Care Independence Act." This legislation would expand access to health care, education, housing, and counseling for young people who leave foster care upon their 18th birthday. I am very grateful to the bill's sponsors, Nancy Johnson and Ben Cardin. I also want to thank my wife for her early, early alert about the importance of this issue. I look forward to working with members of both parties to pass similar legislation in the Senate.

Together, we must help all our foster children make the transition to independence. We can't leave them out there alone. Instead, we must support them in living up to their full, God-given potential.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 6:10 p.m. on June 25 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Statement on House Action on Foster Care Independence Legislation *June 25, 1999*

Hillary and I are pleased that the House of Representatives, by an overwhelming bipartisan margin, today approved H.R. 1802, the "Foster Care Independence Act of 1999." This legislation recognizes that we have a responsibility to ensure that youth in foster care have the tools they need to make the most of their lives. I am pleased that the measure builds on the proposals in my budget request to provide those leaving foster care with access to health care and to expand and improve educational opportunities, training, housing assistance, counseling, and other support and services.

Each year, approximately 20,000 young people leave our Nation's foster care system at age 18 without an adoptive family or other permanent family relationship, but Federal financial support ends just as they are making the critical transition to independence. Without the emotional, social, and financial support that families pro-

vide, many of these young people are not adequately prepared for life on their own.

For our Nation's foster youth, their 18th birthday can be the start of a very tough road alone. This bill is an important step forward to help them in their struggle to become successful, independent adults. The end of foster care should not be the end of caring for these young people.

I'd like to thank Representatives Nancy Johnson and Ben Cardin, the sponsors of the "Foster Care Independence Act of 1999," for their hard work and dedication to this issue. I look forward to working with them and with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle in the months ahead to enact meaningful and fiscally responsible legislation to enable these young people to live up to their God-given potential.

Statement on Accepting the Invitation To Serve as Honorary Chairman of the Presidents Cup *June 25, 1999*

I am pleased to accept the invitation to serve as honorary chairman of the Presidents Cup, one of the premier international events in golf. I thank Commissioner Tim Finchem and the PGA Tour as well as the participating international golf tours for this invitation. It is an honor to succeed Presidents George Bush and Gerald Ford, as well as Australian Prime Minister John Howard, as honorary chairman of this event.

I know that, more and more, people around the world share America's enthusiasm for golf. The Presidents Cup helps bring our countries together in spirited and good-natured competition. In 1996 I was glad to attend the Presidents Cup at Robert Trent Jones Golf Club, and I am looking forward to another display of skill and sportsmanship by the United States and international teams in October 2000.

Message to the Congress on Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act *June 25, 1999*

To the Congress of the United States:

On November 14, 1994, in light of the danger of the proliferation of nuclear, biological, and

chemical weapons (weapons of mass destruction) and of the means of delivering such weapons, using my authority under the International

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Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), I issued Executive Order 12938, declaring a national emergency to deal with this danger. Because the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, I have renewed the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12938 annually, most recently on November 12, 1998. Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(b)), I hereby report to the Congress that I have exercised my statutory authority to further amend Executive Order 12938 in order to more effectively respond to the worldwide threat of weapons of mass destruction proliferation activities.

The new Executive order, which implements the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act of 1998, strengthens Executive Order

12938 by amending section 3 to authorize the United States to implement important provisions of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, a multilateral agreement that serves to reduce the threat posed by chemical weapons. Specifically, the amendment enables the United States Government to ensure that imports into the United States of certain chemicals from any source are permitted in a manner consistent with the relevant provisions of the Convention.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 25, 1999.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address

June 26, 1999

Good morning. This month schools across America are letting out for the summer and beginning to plan for the fall. Today I'd like to talk about what we must do to help our schools prepare for the school year ahead and prepare our children for the future, by reducing class size in the early grades.

For 6½ years, our administration has made improving our children's education one of our highest priorities. This year, in my State of the Union Address, I outlined a plan to help our schools, our teachers, and our students meet high standards. The plan would hold States and school systems accountable for fixing failing schools. It would require teachers to be qualified in the classroom in the courses they teach. It would insist that we put an end to social promotion but to do it in the right way, by investing in our children and in our schools, from funding after-school and summer school programs to modernizing and rebuilding 6,000 schools across our country to finishing up our commitment to hook all of our classrooms up to the Internet by next year.

Reducing class size is one of the most important investments we can make in our children's future. Recent research confirms what parents have always known: Children learn better in small classes with good teachers, and kids who start out in smaller classes do better right through their high school graduation.

But in far too many of our schools, 30 or more students are pressed desk to desk in a single classroom. Too many teachers have to spend more time maintaining order than maintaining high academic standards. And with the largest school enrollments in our history still to come, the problem is only going to get worse.

Now, if we're serious about preparing our Nation to succeed in the 21st century, we must do more to help all our children succeed in school. That's why last year I asked Congress to commit to reducing class size to 18 in the early grades. And with bipartisan support, Congress approved a big downpayment on my plan to put 100,000 well-prepared teachers in the classroom.

I'm pleased to announce that later this week we'll deliver on our promise with \$1.2 billion

in grants to help States and local school districts begin hiring the first 30,000 well-trained teachers for the new school year. That means by the time children go back to school this fall, communities in all 50 States will have more good teachers and smaller classes in the early grades, where it matters most.

Now we must finish the job. Unfortunately, there are some in Congress who are backing away from their commitment to reduce class size. Last year Congress came together across party lines to make this promise to the American people. They should come together again this year to keep it. I think a promise made in an election year should be kept in the years when there are no elections.

So today, again, I call on Congress to put politics aside and put our children's future first and finish the job of hiring 100,000 highly trained teachers. We know smaller classes will

help them succeed in school. We know higher quality teaching will help them succeed. We already have the plan to make it happen if Congress keeps its word.

We've got a chance to use this time of prosperity to improve our children's education and to help them make the most of their lives. This isn't a partisan issue anywhere in America; it shouldn't be in Washington. Schoolchildren get the summer off, but we should make this summer a season of progress for our children, our schools, and our future in the new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:07 p.m. on June 25 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 25 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks on the Federal Budget Surplus and an Exchange With Reporters *June 28, 1999*

The President. Good morning. Six years ago we put in place a new economic strategy for the information age. We put our fiscal house in order; we invested in our people; we expanded trade in American goods and services. By making tough decisions, America has reaped rich rewards. We built the longest peacetime expansion in our history.

Last week we learned that in the first 3 months of 1999, the economy grew at a 4.3 percent rate, with very low inflation. With record numbers of new homes being built, paychecks increasing, hundreds of thousands of young people getting new help to go to college, new businesses opening their doors, a surging market on Wall Street, we are truly widening the circle of opportunity in America.

I'm here to report to the American people on more good news about our budget. As required by law, my administration is releasing the midsession review of the budget. Here is what we have found.

When I took office, the National Government had a record deficit of \$290 billion, projected to increase indefinitely. Last year, for the first time in 29 years, we balanced the budget. In

January this year, we projected a surplus for this year of \$79 billion. Today I am pleased to report that, in fact, the budget surplus for 1999 will be \$99 billion, the largest as a share of our economy since 1951. For next year, we now project a budget surplus of \$142 billion, a surplus of \$5 billion not counting the receipts from Social Security. In fact, improvements in the outlook since February have added \$179 billion to the projected budget surplus over 5 years, half a trillion over 10 years, and a trillion over 15 years.

Fiscal discipline does bring real results. I want to thank my economic team for all the work that they have done. Lower interest rates have led to a boom in business investment, to lower mortgage rates, to lower credit card rates, to lower student loan rates. Fiscal discipline has widened opportunity and created hope for all working people in our country. Now we have a chance to do even more, to use the fruits of our prosperity today to strengthen our prospects for tomorrow, indeed, for tomorrows well into the 21st century.

In my State of the Union Address, I set out a plan for how to use the budget surplus. Today,

in light of the unexpectedly large surplus, I am proposing to build on that budget framework with a new approach that honors our values, meets our commitments, and makes it possible to reach bipartisan agreement on a budget for America.

First, we can strengthen our commitment to use the bulk of the surplus to save Social Security and Medicare and to pay down the national debt. The new budget numbers mean that we will run a surplus in the non-Social Security part of the budget, starting next year, much earlier than previously expected. I am pleased that Republicans and Democrats in Congress have agreed to use the Social Security surpluses to reduce the national debt. But we must go forward and achieve an even stronger lockbox than one proposed by Congress. Social Security taxes should be saved for Social Security, period. Let's finish the job and work to extend the solvency of Social Security. I'm encouraged that Republicans and Democrats on the House Ways and Means Committee are meeting together to try to accomplish this goal.

Second, our new large surplus will help us to strengthen and modernize Medicare while providing a prescription drug benefit. Tomorrow I will reveal the details of my plan to modernize Medicare. The steps I will propose to use the surplus will increase Medicare's solvency for at least 25 years. By taking additional measures to increase competition, combat fraud, and reduce costs, we can provide a new prescription drug benefit and still pay down our national debt.

Third, our new budget framework will use part of the surplus to provide substantial tax relief. It will maintain USA accounts, the largest and most progressive tax incentive ever offered to encourage savings. USA accounts will allow every American to begin saving from the first day in the work force, providing more help for those who need it, giving every American a stake in our shared prosperity.

In addition to the USA accounts, I have proposed tax cuts, targeted and paid for, for child care, for stay-at-home mothers, for long-term care, to encourage businesses to invest in poor communities, and to modernize 6,000 schools. But first things first.

Fourth, we can use this surplus to meet other vital national needs, such as maintaining military readiness, honoring our veterans, protecting the environment, promoting health research, farm

security, and other core functions of our Government.

Beyond this, we have a chance to use the surplus not only to care for our parents through Social Security and Medicare but to give a greater chance in life to our young children. So today I am proposing a new \$156 billion children's and education trust fund. This commitment can enable us to offer Head Start preschool to a million children, to hire those 100,000 teachers, to provide extra help for a million children in our poorest communities, to pay for dramatic improvements in children's health.

And finally, by investing to save Social Security and strengthen Medicare, my plan now will entirely pay off our national debt. In the 12 years before I took office, reckless fiscal policies quadrupled our debt, bringing us higher interest rates, higher unemployment, higher inflation. By balancing the budget we have begun to reduce the debt. But today our national debt still totals \$13,400 for every man, woman, and child. If we maintain our fiscal discipline, using the surplus to pay down the debt and using the savings to strengthen Social Security, America will entirely pay off the national debt by 2015.

If you look at this chart, you will see that we have now cut up Washington's credit card. Now we can pay off the debt; by 2015, this country can be entirely out of debt. This is a remarkable milestone, but it is clearly within reach, if we do not squander the surplus by choosing short-term gain over long-term national goals.

The surplus is the hard-earned product of our fiscal discipline. We should use it to prepare for the great challenges facing our country, caring for our parents, caring for our children, freeing our Nation from the shackles of debt so that we can have long-term, sustained economic prosperity.

Keep in mind what this means to ordinary people. If you pay this debt off, it means interest rates will be lower. It means there will be more business investment. It means there will be more new jobs. It means there will be more money left over for higher wages. It means the cost to families of homes and cars and college educations will be lower. That's what being out of debt means.

It means the next time there is an international financial crisis, we will be relatively less vulnerable because we won't have to borrow so much money, and the poorer countries will

be able to borrow more money at lower interest rates, bringing greater global prosperity and stability. This is a very significant achievement for our country and for a more stable and peaceful and prosperous world.

So I hope, very much, to work with Congress in the weeks ahead to pay off the debt, to finish the work of strengthening Social Security and Medicare, and to make a real commitment to our children and our future.

Again, let me thank the national economic team and all others who have supported these initiatives over the last 6 years. Thank you very much.

Tax Cuts

Q. Are you open to tax cuts beyond those that you mentioned, Mr. President?

The President. I think we should achieve these objectives. Within the framework of achieving these objectives, obviously, I'll be working with the Congress to achieve them. Thank you.

Arkansas Senate Seat

Q. Do you want to run for Senate from Arkansas? [Laughter]

The President. I think Rubin should run for the Senate from Arkansas. [Laughter] He's got the best timing of anybody alive.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:59 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Westport, CT. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin.

Interview With Mark Devenport of the British Broadcasting Corporation in Westport, Connecticut June 28, 1999

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Mr. Devenport. Mr. President, it's 2 days to go until the deadline in Northern Ireland—obviously a crucial week, the politicians still at loggerheads apparently. What is it that you want them to do now in this make-or-break time?

The President. I want them to remember how strongly the people voted for peace and for the Good Friday accords and to find an honorable resolution of the admittedly thorny problems. Because whatever the difficulties of going forward, they are very small compared to the difficulties of letting the peace process fall apart.

Mr. Devenport. Now, you say there are thorny problems, and that is the difficulty—and especially the problem of decommissioning. Would you be urging the Sinn Fein to do what Ulster Unionists are urging Sinn Fein to do, to namely sign up to a timetable for disarmament and give a categorical assurance that the IRA will have disarmed completely by May 2000?

The President. I think that all the parties should fully comply with the terms of the Good Friday accords, and that's what I would say. I think that they all have to find a way—we know what the problems, the legitimate problems the Sinn Fein have with the decommis-

sioning issue. But it's an important part of the Good Friday accords, so there has to be a resolution of it that enables the leadership of the Unionists, Mr. Trimble and the others who have fought for peace, to survive, to sustain their position, and to go forward and get everybody on their side to honor the Good Friday accords, too.

They can find a way to do this if they decide that the price of failure is far higher than the price of compromise. And I think there's a good chance they'll do it; even if it's 11th hour, I do.

Mr. Devenport. Well, what about the Ulster Unionists? Their position has been that there has to be guns handed over, actual hardware, before Sinn Fein can go into government. Do you think they should be considering moving ahead on the basis of pledges rather than actually looking for the armaments?

The President. Well, I believe that on that score, Mr. Trimble is satisfied in these talks with whatever commitment is made, and I think they should give it a chance to work.

One thing I would say to the Unionists is that they can always walk away from this if the commitments aren't made at a later date.

And they should keep in mind—they can bring this down at any time by simply walking out if the commitments aren't kept. So I think that if Mr. Trimble can be satisfied and they can work it through, then I would hope the Unionists would support him and give him a chance—give this thing a chance to work.

Mr. Devenport. Now, this political deadline is also coinciding with the annual deadline that there is in Northern Ireland of the Drumcree march. As we speak, an announcement on the Drumcree march is imminent. There are extremely strong indications that the Orangemen won't be allowed to go down the Catholic section of the Garvaghy Road. How concerned are you about what the impact of a refusal to let the Orangemen go down Garvaghy Road could be, both on the streets and on the political process?

The President. Well, as an outsider, you know, to me this looks like the most difficult of decisions because it is—there's enormous emotional content on both sides. It's not just a matter of a lot of people walking on a certain road. And I think however it is resolved this year, the most important thing is that the parties themselves try to find a larger, omnibus resolution for this that reflects the spirit of the Good Friday accords.

Keep in mind, I mean, the spirit of the Good Friday accords is that both sides should have respect for and get respect from one another, and that no one should have to give up his or her heritage or traditions, but they should be pursued with some sensitivity to how others feel as well.

So I think that they're in a terrible bind now because the Drumcree deadline is coming up against the negotiation deadline. And so, however it's resolved, I think that what the leaders should be thinking about is, what is the long-run resolution of this? How can we show one another the necessary respect and sensitivity that will put this marching issue in the context of the commitment of the Good Friday accords, which is to push toward reconciliation and equality within the principle of consent?

Mr. Devenport. At the time of the Good Friday agreement, you waited up through the night in Washington, inside the White House, seeing how the negotiations were working out. You went on the phone personally and spoke to the main parties and tried to coax them forward.

This week, with a new deadline, are you willing to do the same, to intervene personally?

The President. Oh, absolutely. I'll do what ever I can to help. You know, this means a lot to me. It means a lot to the American people. We have tens of millions of Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants who are deeply invested emotionally, and many of them financially, in Northern Ireland, and would like to be more involved.

And I also believe, as I have said many times, that if this can be resolved—if we can get over this next hurdle and go forward—I think it will give courage to the advocates of peace in the face of religious and ethnic problems in other parts of the world. You know, we're just getting off the ground with our efforts in Kosovo. There are many difficulties there, and the accumulated grievances there, from mass killing and mass uprooting, are deeper, if you will, just in terms of human loss than all the things that have happened in Ireland.

But people have this sense that the divisions in Ireland go back such a long time, that if they can be overcome, I think it would give great heart to the proponents of peace in the Balkans and Africa and the Middle East, because—the new Prime Minister is about to announce a government there; we have a chance again to make progress and peace in the Middle East.

And I think that from my point of view, as someone who's interested in not only the country of my roots but the rest of the world, I think that it's hard to overstate; it's hard to overstate the impact a positive or a negative outcome could have on such actions in the rest of the world.

Mr. Devenport. Finally, Mr. President, there's only so much that you or, indeed, the British and Irish Prime Ministers can do to coax people along. Is this the time when Northern Ireland's political leaders have to stand on their own two feet?

The President. Well, I think they can know that we can coax them, and we can stand with them, and we can support them, and we can bring them benefits in all kinds of ways after this is resolved. But in the end, the leaders have to decide.

Their people have voted for peace. But that's a general principle; the particulars are always difficult. And again, I would say, I think the

important thing is to keep this going. Somebody—if there is the necessary commitment given by all sides, and then, later, any of those commitments are not kept, this thing can always be brought down because the commitments were not kept. But I think it would be terrible to let it come apart now, before we get to see and feel how it really works.

Mr. Devenport. Mr. President, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 11:50 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, the President referred to David Trimble, Northern Ireland Ulster Unionist Party leader; Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak of Israel; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Westport June 28, 1999

Thank you very much. Diane, you can give a speech for me anytime. *[Laughter]* That was really wonderful, congratulations, thank you.

I want to thank all of you for being here. Let me also join Joe and Beth in thanking Fran and Sandra for being so wonderful to us. I thank Martha and Ronni and the others who helped to make this a success. I also want to say a special word of thanks to Fran and Sandra for being so wonderful to Hillary as well. It really means a lot to me, and I thank you for that.

You know, I always love to come back to Connecticut, and only a fool would not love to come to Westport. *[Laughter]* I'm very happy to see Barbara Kennelly; and my old classmate Dick Blumenthal, who has been so good to me; and Denise, we're very pleased for your success, congratulations. And Congressman Gejdenson, thank you for being so brave in tough election after tough election. You're always there to do the right thing any way, and I admire you so much.

And Senator Dodd, congratulations on having the good sense to marry Jackie; we're proud of you. No matter how much you may like Chris Dodd, if you have not gotten to know his wife, your estimation will go way up when you do—*[laughter]*—and we're really happy for you. And Jessye, thank you for coming; Cicely, thank you for coming.

And I would like to say a special thank you to Connecticut for being so good to me and to Al Gore through two elections now. I don't feel that I'm on a victory lap or a final lap or—you know, I expect people to—they're be-

ginning to talk to me as if I'm—there is a sort of ring of eulogy about all of this. *[Laughter]*

As far as I can tell, I'm reasonably healthy; I still show up. I told Fran when—you've got to watch Joe Andrew, you know, as being a party chair. He hasn't been a party chair as long as Ed Marcus, but he's learned to stretch the truth creatively. He said that I got up earlier and went to bed later than anybody else. And I told Fran, I said, "Now, the second half of that statement is true." *[Laughter]* I do work late. I don't always beat everybody to the office.

I'd like to tell you, first of all, why I'm here and, secondly, why I hope you're here. If anybody wants me to show up at one of these events 5 years from now or 10 years from now and my party is still doing what I believe is right for America, I'll be there then, too. The fact that I was given the opportunity at a pivotal point in our country's history to serve as President is important to me, but it is incidental to my prior and enduring commitment to the ideas and values that I think are necessary to make this country all it ought to be.

You know, when you think back to the condition the country was in in 1991 and 1992 when I was running, it's almost unimaginable that we are where we are today. This morning, before I left to fly up here, I was able to make an announcement that at what is called the midsession review, which is when we recalibrate our economic assumptions, we now know that our surplus this year will be \$20 billion higher than we thought; it will be \$142 billion next year. It will be \$500 billion more than we thought it was going to be over 10 years, and

\$1 trillion more over the next 15 years. That's an amazing thing.

This year—you know, we have something called a unified budget, which means that we show a surplus even if we're spending more—like income and sales taxes and things—than we're taking in because of the Social Security taxes, because we're still taking in more than we're paying out. This year we will have a surplus without the Social Security revenues.

What this means is, among other things, is that we really can save Social Security by investing a modest amount of it in something other than Government bonds. We can do something about elderly women, who are more poor than the rest of the elderly population. We can take the earnings limit off, because we need elderly people to work more, if they choose to do so—not if they're required to but if they choose to do so—as we have relatively fewer young people and relatively more older people. And now we can actually pay the debt of the country off and be entirely debt free by 2015—in 15 years this country can be out of debt. That's unbelievable.

The debt of the country quadrupled in the 12 years before I took office—just 12 years. And there was no end in sight. The deficit was \$290 billion when I took office. We'll have \$142 billion surplus in the last year of my Presidency.

Why should that matter to people? To those of you who are liberals and want the Government to spend money, why should you care if we're out of debt? Because if we get out of debt in a global economy, it means lower interest rates, lower home mortgages, lower business loans, lower college loans, lower car payment loans. It means more business investment. It means more money for wage increases. It means a more stable economy. It means the next time there is a world financial crisis like we had in Asia a couple of years ago, we'll be less affected by it, and it means there will be more money out there for poor countries to borrow at lower interest rates or be given, because we won't be taking any of it.

In the global society, it is the socially responsible thing for the wealthy countries to be financially responsible. It is good for our people, but it is good for people around the world. And it is good for all income groups within our society. So I hope very much that we will be able to persuade the Republican majority in Congress to work with us to save Social Security, to re-

form Medicare, and to pay this debt off. It is something that no one could have thought imaginable just a few years ago.

Tomorrow I'm going to reveal the details of our plan to strengthen Medicare and preserve it for at least another quarter century and add a prescription drug benefit which will be affordable, which can be managed. But this is a big problem. I told those of you who came to the airport to meet me that one of the most stunning facts of life, if you're over 65 today and you're on Medicare, is that the average senior citizen is now spending a higher percentage of his or her income, out of pocket, for health care than they were spending in 1965, before Medicare went in. Why? Overwhelmingly, because of prescription drugs.

So if we can do something that is financially responsible to help our seniors deal with this burden, we ought to do so. We can now, and we should.

Because of the size of the surplus, we'll be able to pay the debt off over the next 15 years, and at the same time create a trust fund for children and education of over \$150 billion that we can use for after-school programs, to make sure all our kids have health insurance—for a whole host of other things that need to be done.

Now, let me come back to the general point. I'm here not as a candidate, because I think it matters that the ideas and the values that we fought for be continued; because it's important to me that Sam and Chris and people like them are in the Congress. And it's important to me that—we know the Republicans will always have more money than we do. Today they'll be saying, "Well, who cares if we pay the debt off. Let's have a bigger tax cut that will be skewed to most of you." Most of you would be better off, in the short run, being at a Republican fundraiser. *[Laughter]* You would be, and you know it. *[Laughter]*

But on the other hand, if you look at the performance of the stock market, if you look at the fact that we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the longest peacetime expansion in history, the highest surplus as a percentage of our economy since 1951, there's something to be said for moving us all forward together. And there's something to be said for looking to the long run, as well as the short run. Everyone has to balance doing what is most pleasing to everyone today and thinking about what is best for the country over the long run.

I've tried to take this country into the 21st century with certain basic ideas: that we could balance the budget and increase our investment in children and education, health care, and the environment; that we could grow the economy and continue to improve the environment—and we have. The air is cleaner. The water is cleaner. The food is safer. We've got 90 percent of our children immunized for the first time in history. We've set aside more land in preservation than any administration in the history of America, except those of the two Roosevelts.

So because we had good ideas—not because Bill Clinton was President but because our ideas were right—I am glad I was given the chance to serve now. If my ability to speak, communicate, work hard, and take incoming fire had anything to do with those successes, I'm grateful.

But the most important thing is that what we stand for now, as a party, is a new direction, a departure from where either party was in the seventies and eighties, and the kind of thing that we ought to embrace going into the 21st century. And we have evidence that it works.

There are lots of issues up there in Washington that we're fighting for now. Sometimes we have agreement. We're going to agree on two things that I think are great. I'll give the Republicans a little pat on the back here. The Congress is going to overwhelmingly vote, apparently, to renew the disability on disabled Americans who go in the work force and lose their Medicaid coverage. And that can enable us to get hundreds of thousands of more workers to grow without inflation.

There are a lot of disabled people who want to work, but their medical bills are \$20,000, \$30,000 a year, sometimes more, and they're paid by the Government. If they make X salary, anything much above poverty, they lose that Government health insurance. And that's bad for you, because they won't take the job, and we're still going to pay for their health care, as we should. So this way we pay for their health care just like we were, but they take a job. They earn money. They pay taxes just like you do. And it helps the economy go. It's a good thing.

The other thing that there is apparently unanimous support on, at least in the House—and I'm thrilled about it; this is something that Hillary cares very much about—is continuing support for children who come out of foster

care at the age of 18 and today are cut off all support—and even though they have no place to go, they have no adopted families, they have nothing. This is a huge problem in New York, a bigger problem in New York than anywhere else because New York has the largest number. But I told someone the other day, the first person besides my wife who ever mentioned this to me was my cousin who runs the HUD office in the little town in Arkansas where I was born, population 11,000 now. So this is a national problem.

And here are two things where we agree. I'm hoping that we can get more of them to agree with us on some other things that are important. If you look at the Patients' Bill of Rights—the Republicans, on Medicare, want me to, in effect, force more people on Medicare into managed care, but they're against guaranteeing people in managed care the guarantees of the Patients' Bill of Rights.

I'm not against managed care. I've always thought that we ought to manage the health system like every other system, as well as we possibly can. But every system should be managed to deliver its mission at the lowest possible cost, not to compromise the mission. The mission is to give people quality health care at the lowest possible cost.

And if you need to see a specialist and you can't, that's bad. If you get hit in an accident in a big city and you have to pass three hospitals to get to the hospital with the emergency room that's in the plan, that's bad. If you work for a small business and they change their health care provider and your husband is in chemotherapy and it's a 6-month treatment and you're supposed to change providers in the middle of the treatment, that's bad. If the same thing happens and your wife is 6 months pregnant and you're supposed to change your ob-gyn because there's a different one in your new health care plan, that's bad. All these things happen today. Why? If it takes you forever and a day to get a decision because of the layers and layers of appeals, so that finally you get the right decision but it's too late to save your life, that's bad.

And that's why 200—200 organizations—the doctors, the nurses, health consumer groups, everybody, endorsed our Patients' Bill of Rights. There's one organization against it, the health insurers. And we have the votes to pass this, if the Republican leadership will give us a clean vote on it.

But it's a classic example of the difference in the two parties. We're not against managed care. If we said we're against change and they were for change and they didn't care what happened to people, that would be like an old-time debate—old-time. We say, okay, we're for managed care; we'd just like to have people protected.

Same thing on this gun issue. This is a huge issue. Thirteen kids a day get shot and killed—13. That's a lot of kids. You say it's a big country—pretty small country if it's one of yours. And we had this horrible carnage at Littleton—the whole country up in arms. The Senate passes this range of modest gun restraint measures: getting rid of the big ammunition clips on assault weapons that come in from other countries; saying that if a juvenile commits a serious crime, they shouldn't be able to own a handgun when they turn 18; closing the gun show loophole; putting the child trigger locks on there. And on the gun show loophole, which was the most controversial, the Vice President broke the tie in the Senate.

And we roll into the House, and there is this angst. So what happens? The NRA wants the vote put off, so they put off the vote until after the recess. And during the recess they wear everybody out, and they come back and deep-six stuff that is very modest. And their answer is, well, we should punish these boys because they broke the law, these dead boys.

You know, how would you feel if I gave the following speech: "I've served as President for 6½ years. I've done a searching inventory of my record, and I have decided that I have been deficient in standing up for the constitutional rights of America. In particular, we all have a constitutional right to travel, and I think it's absolutely terrible that you have to license your cars and have a drivers license and that we regulate travel in any way, shape, or form. It is an unconscionable burden, and we're going to get rid of all of it. We have 8-year-olds out there driving cars at 100 miles an hour, that's good. It's their constitutional right to do it." [Laughter]

You're laughing. That's their position, isn't it? I mean, you would think—if a politician stood up and said that, you would think they had a screw loose. [Laughter] But this is a huge issue. Now, we're not talking about confiscating anybody's guns. We're not talking about inter-

fering with anybody's hunting rights or sporting rights.

When we passed the Brady bill—Chris and Sam will remember this—their argument against the Brady bill was, "This won't do you any good, because no criminal ever goes to a gun store to buy a gun." You remember that? That was their big argument: "They're not dumb enough to do that." Okay? Five years and 400,000 rejected sales later, with a 25-year low in the crime rate and violent crime down even more than nonviolent crime, they no longer can make that argument.

But now we say, "Okay, there are more and more people, since we're checking on them, who are buying guns at the gun shows and the flea markets. We'll give you that much, so let's go check them." They say, "Oh, no, goodness, no, we couldn't do that." Or if the—"It's okay if it's over the counter at a gun show, but not if it's in the parking lot."

Now, you may have this image that there's a sort of a—maybe a convention center in Hartford where there's a gun show, and it's two blocks out to the parking lot, and you don't want to make the guy take the automatic check. That's not what goes on. Most of these gun shows, they're down little country roads, and you turn right, and you're in a little field. You know, you back up on both sides of the lane, and you open your trunk, and you get down your pickup. So if you're out in the parking lot, it means you're walking around to the front of the car. This is—this is just—it just doesn't make any sense.

But what I want to tell you is, we have—I think the defining difference between the two parties today is no longer what they used to say about us. We proved we're more fiscally responsible than they are. We've got a more fiscally responsible program right here. We have proved that we can grow the economy. We've proved that we're for sensible defense spending. We've proved that we can do the things that we're supposed to do in foreign policy that—it's really almost, the most important thing is how we define community and what our mutual responsibilities are to one another.

That's what the Patients' Bill of Rights is about. It's true. We'll have to pay out—you know, it'll be a buck or two a month. Our estimate is that the Federal health insurance program costs less than a dollar a month more, now that we have the protections of the Patients'

Bill of Rights. So that means that everybody that doesn't ever need the Patients' Bill of Rights—who's a Federal employee—is getting socked for about \$10 a year. I think it's worth it. I think it's worth it as a part of our shared responsibility to protect people.

So if you close this gun show loophole, 90-plus—95 percent, maybe more, of those people are honest as the day is long, and they'll have to hang around and wait for their background checks to be done. And sometimes it'll be a little bit of a pain—to increase the chances of saving 13 kids a day? I think it's worth it.

This is really what's going on. It's no longer—it's not a question even about tax cuts. We're for tax cuts. The questions is, how big should they be; what are our other responsibilities; how should they be structured? And what I want you to understand is that these ideas matter.

It matters whether we give out all this Federal money in education and tell the locals of the States, "Just do whatever you want to with it," or whether we say, "We think you ought to end social promotion but have mandatory summer schools for kids who fail. We shouldn't declare them fit. And we think we ought to have every school district that needs an after-school program ought to have one, and we're going to give you money to help you. It's our definition of community." It's not us telling them how to run the schools. This is what local research shows works.

So when you leave here, I hope you will be able to tell people why you came today. And I hope you will be able to tell them why I'm doing this, even though I'm not running for reelection. I've spent my whole life believing that ideas matter. It really matters what America does collectively.

And I have tried to get my party to change. We now have the smallest Federal Government since John Kennedy was President. We are not the party of defending every big Government program that was done yesterday. We are not the party that believes Government can do everything. We are the party that believes the Government has the responsibility to give people

the tools and to create the conditions so that as a community we can go forward and everybody has a fair chance. And every one of these issues embodies that.

So I thank you for being here. And I hope you'll come to more, and I hope you will stay with us. I'm grateful that I've had the chance to be President. And I'm nowhere near through. I've got a more ambitious agenda today than I did in my first year.

But the most important thing is to keep this going. The next elections matter. The people matter. The ideas matter. This is a better country than it was in 1992. We tried it their way. This is a stronger, better country. And every time we've had a fight about whose ideas were right and whose were wrong—if you measure up to what was the impact of our economic plan, our crime bill, the insistence we made in welfare that we not get rid of the guarantees of health care and nutrition for our children, all of these things—our approach turned out to be right for America. And I want you to go out and tell people that. When they ask you why you came, tell them I gave a pretty good talk, but the most important thing was we are right for our children and the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to First Selectman Diane Goss Farrell of Westport; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; luncheon hosts Francine Goldstein and Sandra Wagenfeld; event cochairs Martha Aasen, delegate, State Democratic Central Committee, and Ronni Ginott, State chair, Women's Leadership Forum; former Representative Barbara B. Kennelly; State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal; State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier; Senator Christopher J. Dodd's wife, Jackie Marie Clegg; soprano Jessye Norman; actress Cicely Tyson; Edward L. Marcus, chair, Connecticut State Democratic Party; and Myra J. Irvin, section 8 rental assistance program manager, Hope, AR, Housing Authority.

Remarks at a Production of “The Iceman Cometh” in New York City June 28, 1999

Thank you. Wow! I would like to thank Bill Haber and Kevin and all this magnificent cast for giving us too much to think about. [Laughter] Here we are, all reliving our entire family histories—[laughter]—trying to come to grips with some little common element. And now you’re supposed to think about being good citizens. [Laughter]

I want to thank Senator Torricelli and Senator Lautenberg and Senator Schumer; Congressman Gephardt, I know is here, and I think Congressman Kennedy is. There are a lot of people here from the New York and New Jersey and Connecticut delegations. I saw Congressman Rangel, Congressman Payne, Congresswoman Lowey.

Let me just say to all of you, these people have made a great sacrifice to give us this gift and to give the DSCC and the DCCC this gift. You know, Monday is their day off, and they couldn’t even wait until the normal time to start; they did it in the middle of the afternoon. We took a day out of their lives, and they have given us something immeasurably more valuable. So I think we should give them another—[ap-
plause].

I hope that as you leave here you know how grateful we all are for the work you have done to help us do well in the coming elections, in the Senate and the House elections. I hope that you saw this morning the announcement that—we did our annual review, our so-called midsession review, and it turns out our surplus will be \$20 billion more than we thought this year. And tomorrow I’m going to announce our Medicare reform program, which our Democrats support, that will include for the first time a prescription drug benefit for seniors, which I’m very proud of and which I think is important.

If we can prevail upon our friends on the other side in the Congress to go along with us just generally with the budget and Social Security, we’ll have another \$155 billion to spend on children, and we’ll be out of debt as a nation for the first time in forever. In 15 years, we’ll be totally out of debt. So I’m happy about that. And I feel very good about the fact that all of this is benefiting all kinds of ordinary citizens.

But I’d like to just mention one other thing. We saw in this magnificent opus of Eugene O’Neill’s something about the fragility of life, the frailty, the brittleness, the tenderness, the weakness that makes life more interesting than politics sometimes—nearly always. [Laughter]

One of the reasons that I became and stayed a Democrat is that I always felt that our party was more interested in people, in their individual struggles, and we always thought everyone should have a chance. And I’d like to just, before you leave, ask you to remember one or two things of which I am especially proud for our party, as we have tried to deepen the meaning of freedom and responsibility and bring more people into our national family and our sense of global community.

The first is that it was 30 years ago today, not very far from here, that the Stonewall riot occurred, which sparked the gay and lesbian civil rights movement. I’m proud of the fact that the Democratic Party has been clearly and unambiguously for the elimination of all forms of discrimination, for the “Employment Non-Discrimination Act,” for the “Hate Crimes Prevention Act,” for the proposition that every law-abiding person in this country ought to be treated with equal dignity.

Today, we are struggling in Kosovo, a very small place, a very long way away, for the proposition that people ought not to be slaughtered because of the way they worship God or their racial or ethnic heritage, as we have done in Bosnia. Today, we’re working, along with our friends in Ireland and Great Britain, in the 11th hour of an Irish peace process. Today, we hold our breath with anticipation as the new government is about to take hold in Israel, in the hope and prayer that we will see a culmination of the peace process there.

And I’m proud of the fact that our party has stood for the proposition that people ought to be able to get along based on their common humanity, across all the things that divide them, and that that’s a—[inaudible]—we’re striving for.

Let me say one other thing. We’ve been through a lot as a country in the last several weeks: the difficulties of the conflict in Kosovo; also the difficulties we face at home, especially

after the horrible loss of those children's lives at Littleton. I am still hoping that the members of the other party will decide that they really are the candidates of law and order and will join us in our attempts not only to support community policing, which means that we stand against abuses and for building bridges in the community, but that we ought to give the police a chance and the children a chance by having sensible restrictions to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

Finally, let me just say I'm profoundly grateful to the people of New York and this wonderful city for being so good to Hillary and me and to the Vice President and Mrs. Gore, for the Broadway night we had in '92 in the campaign, for the magnificent convention, for two great electoral victories, for a 50th birthday party I had here which I will never forget. I can still remember when that happened.

I hope you will continue to stand for these things, which deepen the meaning of the word,

"America." We have a lot to think about in this play. We have a lot to be grateful to these gifted people for. You have a lot to be proud of in supporting our party and our ideas and our values. And you have done a good thing here today by giving us a chance to reflect the views of most Americans in the United States Congress.

I thank the Members of the House and the Senate who are here. Again, I thank you. Good evening.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:42 p.m. in the Brooks Atkinson Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to producer Bill Haber and actor Kevin Spacey. The President also referred to DSCC, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and DCCC, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Remarks at a Majority 2000 Dinner in New York City

June 28, 1999

Hello, everyone. I really came over here just to have a chance to shake hands and say hello, because you were all in the theater, so you heard me speak, and I don't think you should have to endure two speeches.

I would like to say again how much I appreciate the leadership role that you assumed in making this evening a great success. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. And again, I want to thank the cast and all the people who put the production on. I thought it was magnificent.

But mostly, I came here to thank you for making this a success and for helping Mr. Gep-

hardt and the other members of our congressional leadership—you're very happy. We're giving them a chance to have a good November next year.

Thank you, Congressman Engel, Congressman Kennedy, Congressman Rangel, Congresswoman Lowey. Thank you all very much. Congressman Payne, thank you.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. at the Supper Club restaurant.

Remarks Announcing a Medicare Modernization Plan

June 29, 1999

Thank you very much, and good afternoon. I would like to welcome all of you to the White House. I appreciate the presence here of Secretary Shalala, Secretary Rubin, Deputy Sec-

retary Summers, Social Security Commissioner Apfel, OPM Director Janice Lachance. I thank all the people on the White House staff who are here who worked so hard on this proposal,

including our OMB Director Jack Lew; and Gene Sperling, Bruce Reed, Chris Jennings, and of course, John Podesta.

I welcome the leaders of groups representing seniors, the disability community, and the health care industry. I would especially like to welcome the very large delegation of Members of Congress who are here today. Four of them were here at the inception of Medicare, Senator Kennedy, Congressman Dingell, Congresswoman Mink, and Congressman Conyers. This must be a particularly happy day for them.

I thank the Senators who are here, Senator Daschle, Senator Roth, Senator Kennedy, Senator Conrad, Senator Baucus, Senator Dorgan, Senator Rockefeller, and Senator Breaux.

I thank the Members of the House here. There are a large number of Democrats here, and I think virtually all the members of the leadership, Mr. Gephardt, Mr. Bonior, Congresswoman DeLauro, Mr. Frost, Congressman Rangel, Congressman Lewis. I would like to thank the Republican House Members who have come, Mr. McCrery, Mr. Whitfield, and Mr. Thomas, especially.

When Senator Breaux and Congressman Thomas issued their commission report, I said that I would do my best to build on it, that I had some concerns about it, but that I thought that there were elements in it which deserved support and serious consideration. Their presence here today indicates that we can all raise concerns about each other's ideas without raising our voices and that if we're really committed to putting our people first, we can reach across party lines and other lines to work together.

And I am very grateful for their presence here and for the presence of all the Members of Congress here from both parties. It augers well for this announcement today and for the welfare of our Republic. *[Applause]* Thank you.

In just a few days we will celebrate the last Fourth of July of the 20th century—223 of them. Our Government, our country was created based on the ideal that we are all created equal, that we should work together to do those things that we cannot do on our own, and that we would have a permanent mission to form a more perfect Union.

The people who got us started understood that each generation of Americans would be called upon to fortify and renew our Nation's most fundamental commitments, to always look to the future. I believe our generation has begun

to meet that sacred duty, for at the dawn of a new century, America is clearly a nation in renewal.

Our economy is the strongest in decades, perhaps in our history. Our Nation is the world's leading force for freedom and human rights, for peace and security—with our Armed Forces showing once again in Kosovo their skill, their strength, and their courage. Our social fabric, so recently strained, is on the mend, with declining rates of welfare, crime, teen pregnancy, and drug abuse, and 90 percent of our children immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in our history.

Our cities, once in decline, are again vibrant with economic and cultural life. Even our rutted and congested interstate highways, thanks to the commitments of this Congress, are being radically repaired and expanded all across America—I must say, probably to the exasperation of some of our summer travelers.

This renewal is basically the consequence of the hard work of tens of millions of our fellow citizens. It is also, however, clearly the result of new ideas and good decisions made here in this city, beginning with the fiscal discipline pursued since 1993, the reduction in the size of Government, and controlling spending while dramatically increasing investments in education, health care, biomedical research, the environment, and other critical areas. The vast budget deficits have been transformed into growing budget surpluses, and America is better prepared for the new century.

But we have to use this same approach of fiscal discipline plus greater investment to deal with the great challenge that we and all other advanced societies face, the aging of our Nation, and in particular, to deal with the challenge of Medicare, to strengthen and renew it.

Today I asked you here so that I could announce the details of our plan to secure and modernize Medicare for the 21st century. My plan will use competition and the best private sector practices to secure Medicare in order to control costs and improve quality. And it will devote a significant portion of the budget surplus to keep Medicare solvent.

But securing Medicare is not enough. To modernize Medicare, my plan will also create a much better match between the benefits of modern science and the benefits offered by Medicare. It will provide for more preventive care and help our seniors afford prescription

drugs. The plan is credible, sensible, and fiscally responsible. It will secure the health of Medicare while improving the health of our seniors. And we can achieve it.

The stakes are high. In the 34 years since it was created, Medicare has eased the suffering and extended the lives of tens of millions of older and disabled Americans. It has given young families the peace of mind of knowing they will not have to mortgage their homes or their children's futures to pay for the health care of their parents and grandparents. It has become so much a part of America, it is almost impossible to imagine American life without it. Yet, life without Medicare is what we actually could get unless we act soon to strengthen this vital program.

With Americans living longer, the number of Medicare beneficiaries is growing faster, much faster than the number of workers paying into the system. By the year 2015, the Medicare Trust Fund will be insolvent, just as the baby boom generation begins to retire and enter the system and eventually doubling the number of Americans who are over 65.

I've often said that this is a high-class problem. It is the result of something wonderful, the fact that we Americans are living a lot longer. All Americans are living longer, in no small measure because of better health care, much of it received through the Medicare program. President Johnson said when he signed the Medicare bill in 1965, "The benefits of this law are as varied and broad as the marvels of modern medicine itself." Yet modern medicine has changed tremendously since 1965, while Medicare has not fully kept pace.

The original Medicare law was written at a time when patients' lives were more often saved by scalpels than by pharmaceuticals. Many of the drugs we now routinely use to treat heart disease, cancer, arthritis, did not even exist in 1965. Yet Medicare still does not cover prescription drugs.

Many of the procedures we now have to detect diseases early, or prevent them from occurring in the first place, did not exist in 1965. Yet Medicare has not fully adapted itself to these new procedures.

Many of the systems and organizations that the private sector uses to deliver services, contain costs, and improve quality, such as preferred provider organizations and pharmacy benefit managers, did not exist in 1965. Yet, under

current law, Medicare cannot make the best use of these private sector innovations.

Over the last 6½ years, we have taken important steps to improve Medicare. When I took office, Medicare was scheduled to go broke this year. But we took tough actions to contain costs, first in '93 and then with a bipartisan balanced budget agreement in 1997. We have fought hard against waste, fraud, and abuse in the system, saving tens of billions of dollars.

These measures have helped to extend the life of the Trust Fund to 2015. But with the elderly population set to double in three decades, with the pace of medical science quickening, we must do more to fully secure and modernize Medicare for the 21st century.

The plan I release today secures the fiscal health of Medicare, first, by providing what every objective expert has said Medicare must have if it is to survive, more resources to shore up its solvency. As I promised in the State of the Union Address, the plan devotes 15 percent of the Federal budget, over 15 years, to Medicare—Federal budget surplus. That is the right way to use this portion of the surplus.

There are a thousand ways to spend the surplus, all of them arguably attractive, but none more important than first guaranteeing our existing obligation to secure quality health care for our seniors. First things, first. *[Applause]* Thank you.

In addition to these new resources, we must use the most modern and innovative means to keep Medicare spending in line while rigorously maintaining, indeed, improving quality. So the second part of the plan will bring to the traditional Medicare program the best practices from the private sector. For instance, doctors who do a superior job of caring for heart patients with complex medical conditions will be able to offer patients lower copayments, thus attracting more patients, improving more lives, saving their patients and the system money.

Third, the plan will use the forces of competition to keep costs in line, by empowering seniors with more and better choices. Seniors can choose to save money by choosing lower cost Medicare managed care plans under our plan, without being forced out of the traditional Medicare program by larger than normal premium increases. And we will make it easier for seniors to shop for coverage based on price and quality, because all private plans that choose to participate in Medicare will have to offer the same

core benefits. Consumers shouldn't be forced to compare apples and oranges when shopping for their family's health care.

Fourth, we will take action to make sure that Medicare costs do not shoot up after 2003, when most of the cost containment measures put in place in 1997 are set to expire. And to make sure that health care quality does not suffer, my plan includes, among other things, a quality assurance fund, to be used if cost containment measures threaten to erode quality. And given the debates we're having now on the consequences of the decisions we made in 1997, I think that is a very important thing to put in this plan. *[Applause]* Thank you.

These steps will secure Medicare for a generation. But we should also modernize benefits as well. Over the years, as I said earlier, Medicare has advanced—medical care has advanced in ways that Medicare has not. We have a duty to see that Medicare offers seniors the best and the wisest health care available.

One such rapidly advancing area of treatment is preventive screening for cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, and other conditions, screenings which if done in time can save lives, improve the quality of life, and cut health care costs. Therefore, my plan will eliminate the deductible in all copayments for all preventive care under Medicare. It makes no sense for Medicare to put up roadblocks to these screenings and then turn around and pick up the hospital bills that screenings might have avoided. No senior should ever have to hesitate, as many do today, to get the preventive care they need.

To help cover the cost of these and other crucial benefits and strengthen the Medicare part B program, we will ask beneficiaries to pay a small part of the cost of other lab tests that are prone to overuse, and we will index the part B deductible to inflation.

Nobody would devise a Medicare program today, if we were starting all over, without including a prescription drug benefit. There's a good reason for this: We all know that these prescription drugs both save lives and improve the quality of life. Yet, Medicare currently lacks a drug benefit. That is a major problem for millions and millions of seniors, and not just those with low incomes. Of the 15 million Medicare beneficiaries who lack prescription drug benefits today, nearly half are middle class Americans. And with prescription drug prices rising, fewer and fewer retirees are getting drug

coverage through their former employers' health programs.

My plan will offer an affordable prescription drug benefit to all Medicare recipients, with additional help to those with lower incomes, paid for largely through the cost savings I have outlined. It will cover half of all prescription drug costs, up to \$5,000 a year, when fully phased in, with no deductible—all for a modest premium that will be less than half the price of the average private Medigap policy. It's simple: If you choose to pay a modest premium, Medicare will pay half of your drug prescription costs, up to \$5,000. This is a drug benefit our seniors can afford at a price America can afford.

Seniors and the disabled will save even more on their prescription drugs under my plan because Medicare's private contractors will get volume discounts that they could never get on their own. By relying on private sector managers, I believe that my plan will help Medicare beneficiaries and ensure that America continues to have the most innovative research and development-oriented pharmaceutical industry in the world.

With the steps I have outlined today, we can make a real difference in our people's lives. And I believe the good fortune we now enjoy obliges us to do so. In a nation bursting with prosperity, no senior should have to choose between buying food and buying medicine. But we know that happens. I'll never forget the first time I ever met two seniors on Medicare who looked at me and told me that they were choosing, every day, between food and medicine. That was almost 7 years ago, but it still happens today.

At a time of soaring surpluses, no senior should wind up in the hospital for skimping on their medication to save money. But that also happens today, in 1999. At a moment of such tremendous promise for America, no middle-aged couple should have to worry that Medicare will not be there when they retire, that a lifetime's worth of investment and savings could be swallowed up by medical bills. If we want a secure life for our people, we must commit ourselves, as a country, to secure and modernize Medicare, and to do it now.

In the months before the election season begins, we can put partisanship aside and make this a season of progress. With our economy

strong, our people confident, our budget in surplus, I say again, we have not just the opportunity but a solemn responsibility to fortify and renew Medicare for the 21st century.

It's the right thing to do for our parents and our grandparents. It's the right thing to do for the children of this country. It is the right thing to do so that when we need it, the burden of our health care costs does not fall on the children and hurt their ability to raise our grandchildren.

Like every generation of Americans before us, our generation has begun to fulfill our historic obligation to strengthen our fundamental commitments and keep America a nation of permanent renewal. Just a few days before our last Independence Day of this century, let us commit again to do that with Medicare.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Statement on the Death of Michael Hooker

June 29, 1999

I was saddened to learn of the death of University of North Carolina Chancellor Michael Hooker. Michael Hooker devoted his life to improving higher education, not only in North Carolina but all over America. As chancellor of UNC, he was committed to building the best educational and cultural climate for students, while deepening the university's commitment to North Carolina and its economic future. His devotion led him to visit every county in North Carolina to discuss new ways of developing educational opportunity, and to encourage more

people to participate in the educational system. I am especially grateful for his role in helping Education Secretary Riley implement our America Reads challenge, which enlists college students as tutors to help elementary students learn to read.

Michael Hooker represented the very best in our education system, and the very best in public service. He will be missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Carmen, and his daughter and grandchildren.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

June 29, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, as amended (47 U.S.C. 396(i)), I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) for Fiscal Year 1998 and the Inventory of the Federal Funds Distributed to Public Telecommunications Entities by Federal Departments and Agencies for that same year.

Among its many outstanding projects over the past year, CPB has put considerable time and effort into strengthening the teaching and development of America's literary tradition. Working

with educators, writers, and experts from all across the country, CPB has launched a companion website filled with exceptional teaching materials and continues to make possible the broadcast of some of the Nation's finest literature over our public airwaves. In addition, CPB is also expanding the availability of teacher professional development in the social sciences, humanities, and literature.

As we move into the digital age, I am confident that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting will continue to act as a guiding force. As the projects above illustrate, CPB not only

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inspires us, it educates and enriches our national culture. The White House,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON June 29, 1999.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

June 29, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) as declared in

Executive Order 12808 on May 30, 1992, and with respect to Kosovo as declared in Executive Order 13088 on June 9, 1998.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 29, 1999.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Venezuela-United States Tax Convention and Protocol With Documentation

June 29, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Venezuela for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, together with a Protocol, signed at Caracas on January 25, 1999. Also transmitted is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention, which is similar to tax treaties between the United States and other developing nations, provides maximum rates of tax

to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for resolution of disputes and sets forth rules making its benefits unavailable to residents that are engaged in treaty shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 29, 1999.

Remarks on Medicare in Chicago, Illinois

June 30, 1999

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, and good morning. I want to say that it's wonderful for me to be back in Chicago. Most of

you know how much I love it here, and I am delighted to be here. I bring you greetings from the First Lady, who I left on my way here

and who was jealous that I was coming and she wasn't, especially since I'm also going to see the Cubs play this afternoon—[laughter]—and I enjoy that; and from the Vice President and all the members of our administration who have worked so hard on this health care issue.

I want to thank Anna Willis for her remarks and her leadership for the aging community here in Chicago. And I know that with me on the stage, and perhaps out in the audience as well, are members of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Aging, the Cook County Board of Commissioners, the Cook County Council, the Chicago City Council. I thank them all for being here.

I'd like to thank Linda Esposito for speaking on behalf of pharmacists who have to live with the consequences of the absence of prescription drug coverage for our seniors every day and who do their best to serve them well under very adverse circumstances. And I thought she did a very fine job; I thank her for being here.

And I want to thank Hanna Bratman for having the courage to get up here and tell her story and introduce me. You know, I do this all the time. It's second nature for me. But most people, it's pretty scary to get up in front of all of you and all those cameras and talk about your life and talk about your circumstances. And I thought she did a fine job, and I thank her for doing that.

I'd also like to thank these ladies on my left, Anne Thomas and her daughters, Lee Hamilton and Laura Peterson, because they represent what I think of as the ultimate test of Medicare, which is whether it's fair and helpful and supportive of families and our intergenerational responsibilities, parents to their parents, to their children. And I'll say more about that, but thank you for joining us today, as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, as is so often the case when I get up to speak, the people who spoke before me have said everything that needs to be said. One guy got up—you know the great story about the last speaker at a long dinner; eight people spoke, and he got to speak at 10 o'clock, and he said, "Well, everything that needs to be said has been said, but not everyone has said it." [Laughter] So relax; I'm going to talk a little bit.

Let me say to all of you that we have an unprecedented opportunity and an unprecedented responsibility to strengthen Medicare and to improve it, to modernize it so that no

one has to make the choice that you have heard talked about, between affording health care and affording other necessities of life, between remaining independent or relying on your children and undermining their ability to raise your grandchildren.

We have this opportunity because our economy is the strongest in a generation, perhaps ever, because our country is clearly moving in the right direction, a leading force for freedom and peace and human rights around the world, as our wonderful men and women in uniform demonstrated in Kosovo recently. Our social fabric here is mending. The crime rate is down; the welfare rolls have been cut in half; teen pregnancy is down; drug abuse among our young people is down; and a record 90 percent of our young people are immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the history of our country. Our cities, which were once thought of as being economically depressed, are thriving again. Chicago is exhibit A—look at this beautiful building and this beautiful vista we have here.

When I became President, we had a \$290 billion budget deficit. The debt of our Nation had quadrupled in only 12 years. Today, we are going to be, in 1999, \$99 billion in the black. We actually projected yesterday that for the next 15 years, the surplus will be a trillion dollars more than we thought it was just 6 months ago.

Now, this is a great tribute to the ingenuity and the hard work of the American people and to the disciplined decisions that we have made, starting in 1993, to cut that deficit until we balanced the budget and got into surplus. If we keep going on the plan I have proposed to save Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt, this country actually can be out of debt—out of debt—in 15 years for the first time since 1835.

Now, let me just say, since all of you know it's the strength of the economy that has put people to work and raised their incomes and brought in the revenues that enabled us to save Medicare, the reason it's a good thing for all Americans for us to be out of debt is that if we're out of debt, it means that the Government won't be competing with you and the business people to borrow money. It means interest rates will be lower for business loans, for car loans, for home loans, for credit cards, for college loans. It means, therefore, there will be more

investment, more jobs, higher incomes. It means we will be less dependent on the world for money to come into this country, so if there is another financial problem as there was in Asia a couple of years ago, it will have less impact on us. It means people all over the world that we look to to buy products that are produced in Illinois and throughout the United States will be able to borrow money more cheaply and have more money to buy our products, to help our prosperity as we help theirs, if we get this country out of debt.

So I want to emphasize to you, everything I am proposing to do with Medicare and with Social Security can be done in a way that gets the country out of debt for the first time since 1835. And in a global economy, it is very, very important to our children and our grandchildren that we give them the opportunities they deserve.

Now, how are we going to do that? We have to set aside the bulk, a little more than three-quarters, of the surplus for saving Social Security and Medicare. We need to do that, quite apart from this prescription drug benefit. Let's talk about that. Why do we need to do that? Because we have a high-class problem in America: we're all living longer. Life expectancy is already over 76 in America. For young people growing up, their life expectancy will probably be over 80. Anybody who lives to be 65 in America today has a life expectancy of 85. People over 80 are the fastest growing group of Americans.

Now, when you put that life expectancy development up next to the fact that the baby boom generation, the biggest generation in American history until the present one in our schools today, is getting ready to retire—some of them, anyway. I'm the oldest of the baby boomers, and I hope I don't have to retire. But anyway, I'm going to retire from this job, but generally I think I should keep working. *[Laughter]*

But when you look at the fact that with the baby boomers retiring, the oldest of the baby boomers—that's me, we turn 65 in 2011, not that far away—there are going to be a lot more people retired relative to the number of people working, which means there will be a lot more people drawing Social Security and a lot more people drawing Medicare relative to the number of people working.

Now, we can make some changes in the program, but I would argue that now that we have this surplus and we project this surplus to last

into the future, and if we know it's good for us anyway, for all Americans of all ages, to pay the debt down, we should save this much money now to stabilize Social Security and Medicare and pay the debt off.

Now, I know there are a thousand good uses for this surplus. If I gave each of you a piece of paper and I said name 10 things that you would like to see your country do, we might have 100 different things on that list, and they'd all be good. But I say we should take care of first things first. And we don't have any more important obligation, not only to seniors but to their children and their grandchildren, than to preserve the integrity of Social Security and Medicare and preserve the long-term economic health of this country. So I hope that all of you will support that.

We can talk more about Social Security later, but if my proposal is accepted, we'll have Social Security solid for way more than 50 years already. And with a few other changes, we could take it out to 75 years; we could do something to deal with the fact that elderly women on Social Security are far more likely to be poor, and they need some extra help; and we could lift the earning limitation for people on Social Security. I would like to see those things done.

But let's talk about Medicare. We should secure and strengthen and modernize Medicare. It's been around for 34 years now. It's made health care more accessible and more affordable. As you heard Hanna say, it's given millions of American families peace of mind by paying for medical costs that otherwise would have bankrupted families in their later years. It has also freed the children of Medicare's recipients from the painful choice of mortgaging their children's future to provide a decent health care for their parents. But you've got people living longer and the baby boomers set to retire; therefore, more people drawing Medicare and fewer people paying in. What that means is that the Trust Fund will become insolvent by the year 2015, 15 years from now.

Now, we've already done a lot to try to stave that off. When I became President in 1993, the Trust Fund was supposed to become insolvent in 1999—this year. We've made a lot of changes. Some of them were difficult and somewhat unpopular, but we have saved Medicare until 2015.

But that's not enough. Keep in mind, the baby boom generation won't begin to turn 65

until 2011. Then, over the next 30 years, the number of people who are 65 or over will actually double. So we need to lengthen the life of the Medicare Trust Fund, and we need to do it now. The sooner you deal with these issues, the easier it is to deal with them. The longer we take to deal with them, the more painful and the more expensive it will be to deal with it.

The plan I announced yesterday to secure and modernize Medicare for the 21st century does the following things. First of all, it extends the solvency of the present Medicare program to the year 2027. That is very important. Changes made today can keep it alive until 2027. That will almost completely take in the baby boom generation—not quite but nearly. And that gives all of our successors plenty of time to take advantage of all the increases in health care options that I'm convinced will allow people to stay healthier even longer in the years ahead.

To do it, I propose that we use 15 percent of the budget surplus over the next 15 years. Again I say, there are a lot of good uses for the surplus. A lot of people would like to have more money right now. But there is nothing more important than taking care of first things first. Keeping the economy strong by paying the debt off and saving Medicare and Social Security, I think, are the most important things we can do, and we should do them first.

Now, we also plan to modernize the way the program works, to introduce more innovations now used in private sector health plans, to offer seniors the chance to choose between lower cost managed care plans for Medicare and the traditional program without forcing the choice by having unreasonable increases in the premiums in the traditional program, to guarantee that our seniors have the information necessary to make informed choices and that all the available plans have certain core medical benefits necessary to preserve the integrity of the program, to make sure that as we hold costs down, we keep quality up.

But we also, as everybody before me has said, need to modernize Medicare. One of the ways, but not the only way, is with prescription drugs. Think of it this way: Medicine has changed a lot. The whole health care system has changed a great deal since 1965. But Medicare hasn't changed with it. As a consequence, the average senior citizen today is paying a larger percent

of his or her income, out of pocket, for health care than they were paying in 1965 before Medicare came in, primarily because of the prescription drug issue.

But think of the other challenges. A revolution in medical science has brought cures to diseases once thought incurable, provided doctors the tools to prevent diseases from starting in the first place, and given millions of people the chance to live not only longer but healthier lives. Once, the cure for many illnesses was a surgeon's scalpel. Now it's just likely to be a pharmacist's prescription drug. Every day new drug therapies are being developed to treat chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. We have to do more to make sure all seniors can take advantage of this medical revolution.

We also have to do more to encourage seniors to take advantage of preventive technologies, to take advantage of screenings for cancer, for diabetes, for osteoporosis, and other diseases. To do that, my plan will eliminate the deductible and all copayments for these preventive tests. Just think of it this way: Under Medicare today, very often you can't get Medicare to pay for screening and prevention, but you can get Medicare to pay for the far more expensive hospitalization that would not have occurred in the first place if the screening and prevention had been done. So this will actually save us money in the long run, as well as making people healthier.

We also do have to make prescription drugs more available and more affordable. They are essential to medical care. Just a few statistics: More than four out of five seniors use at least one prescription a year. Now, for most seniors, it's much more than that. And for many seniors, the proper regimen of pills, properly taken at home, can spell the difference between maintaining an active and independent life or being hospital- or nursing-home- or home-bound for life.

If we were creating the Medicare program today, if we were starting from scratch and it didn't exist, no one would even consider having a program without a prescription drug benefit for the elderly and disabled.

So what are we going to do? You heard Hanna talk about the cost of her drugs. This is a costly issue. A month's supply of a popular blood pressure medicine costs more than \$70 a month. A cholesterol medication probably

taken by some of you in this room costs about \$100 a month. When you consider that some of the newest drugs cost as much as \$15 a pill, that two-thirds—listen to this—two-thirds of all people over 65 suffer from two or more chronic diseases, that one in five elderly people takes at least five prescription medications a day, the pharmacy bills can be staggering.

Each year more than 2 million seniors spend more than \$1,000 on medication, people such as our friend Anne Thomas, here to my left, whom I mentioned earlier with her daughters. She's from Oak Brook. Her osteoporosis prescriptions swallow up a sixth of her income, almost 17 percent. Last year she, too, was diagnosed with asthma, but she chose not to fill her prescription because the \$300-a-month price tag was more than she could afford.

Finding the funds to pay for prescription drugs is a struggle for seniors at many income levels, not just the poor. Indeed, of the 15 million seniors in our country that don't have any prescription drug coverage, nearly half are middle class Americans. And that does not count the millions of seniors who have some prescription coverage, but the coverage is totally inadequate or far too expensive.

The number of plans that offer coverage is declining, and those that charge high prices and offer modest benefits are increasing. Forty percent of all older Americans without prescription drugs—let me say that again—40 percent are middle class. Nearly half the uninsured live in isolated rural areas. And as I said, as drug prices rise and more private insurers drop drug coverage altogether, about 15 million of our seniors will be uninsured within the year.

This is not the way to honor people after a lifetime of work and good citizenship. No American should have to choose between fighting infections and fighting hunger, between skipping doses and skipping meals, between staying healthy and paying the rent. We can do better than that. We are now prosperous enough to do better than that.

And I say again, there are many good uses for the surplus. I have my ideas; the Congress has their ideas. But first things first: We have to take care of this problem and do it now.

Now, we want to make sure that this plan is financially responsible, that it can be paid for, that it won't break the bank. Here's what we propose to do: My plan will make a prescription drug benefit available to all Medicare re-

cipients but will provide extra help for those with lower incomes. For people up to 135 percent of the poverty rate, we will waive the co-pay and the monthly premium. But people with incomes a little higher than that, we will have other subsidies, not quite as generous. But for everyone, for a modest monthly premium, Medicare will pay for half of all the prescription drug costs, over the next few years, up to a ceiling of \$5,000. In the first year, we have to start with a ceiling of \$2,000, because it's a big program and we've got to put it in and prove we can make it work. But under my plan, I will ask the Congress to approve and fund going to a \$5,000 ceiling drug benefit, half of all the costs, now, with no deductible.

This drug benefit is one that virtually all of our seniors can afford, and it is constructed in a way America can afford. It will help millions and millions of people. Older and disabled Americans will save even more on prescription drugs under our plan because Medicare's private contractors will get big volume discounts that seniors could never get on their own. So when they pay for half the price, that half will be a much smaller amount that would otherwise be the case.

Now, what I would like to say not only to those of you in this room—where I suppose I'm preaching to the saved, as we say down home—but to all Americans, including those who are not in this room, is that this is something that is important, that goes way beyond health care and way beyond money. How can you put a price on being able to see the birth of a grandchild or to enjoy them as they grow up or read to them or take them fishing or be active with your friends and family? How can you put a price, if you are a child, on being able to know and spend time with and enjoy your grandparents?

There is no dollar value we can put on providing the best quality of life we can. And I want you all to understand, we can afford this. If this is not done, it is because somebody made a different decision to do something else with the money. This is not welfare. This is not some blind gift. This is something we are doing for the integrity of families through the generations.

Our country is in the best shape it's been economically, maybe ever, certainly in a long time. And what we're going to do now will define what kind of country we will be well into the 21st century. Are we going to squander this

money we worked so hard for after only 6 years of effort, turned around an unbelievable record of fiscal irresponsibility, or are we going to pay off our debts in the bank and pay off our debts to our families, not only to our parents and grandparents but to future generations? That is the question.

So I want to ask you to join me. You know, Hanna said she didn't know much about politics. I thought she made a pretty good political speech, myself. [Laughter] But she said something that's really important. She said, "You know, I don't understand why this should be a political issue."

You know, sometimes when things get real tense in Washington, you know, and some of my friends in the other party get real excited, I say, "Hey, loosen up, you know. We're all getting older; none of us are going to be here forever. People get a chance to vote every election. Loosen up. Relax. No one escapes time and age. Republicans age just like Democrats." [Laughter] People who are independents still get sick every now and then, even though they refuse to register in a political party. This is not a political issue anywhere in America, and it should not be a political issue in Washington, DC. This is something we can do together for the future of America.

I want you to reach out to your Representatives from Illinois. You are represented in this State by both Republicans and Democrats in the United States Congress, more or less fairly apportioned. I wish it were different, but there it is. [Laughter] You can write to them. You can call them. You can say, "Do this not only for us, but do it for our children and our future. Do it because we're all aging and it's a high-class problem, that we're living longer."

But we have to prepare for the day when the baby boomers retire. And we should not wait another day to provide the prescription drug benefit. And we have the money to do it. This is simply a matter of choice. I ask you, without regard to your party, to reach out to the members of your congressional delegation and say, "This is the right choice for our future."

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center. In his remarks, he referred to Anna L. Willis, commissioner, Chicago Department on Aging; and pharmacist Linda Esposito, vice president, Illinois Pharmacists Association.

Exchange With Reporters at Wrigley Field in Chicago June 30, 1999

First Lady

Q. Mr. President, Hillary is a Yankees fan. Are you still a Cubs fan? [Laughter]

The President. Yes, and so is she. You know what she said. Don't play press games here. [Laughter] This is about sports, not politics.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, what did Tony Blair tell you when you had—

Q. Did Tony Blair give you an update?

The President. I got an update from Tony Blair on where things are, and we're now in touch with the various parties, and I expect to make some more phone calls sometime in the next hour or so. It's an all-nighter.

Q. Will the talks be extended tonight?

The President. Yes, I think by most standards they've already been extended. But I do expect so. I think they'll work quite late.

First Lady

Q. Do you think the First Lady will let you keep the jacket, since she's a big Cubs fan?

The President. Yes. [Laughter] But I will have to disclose it. I'll have to share wearing rights.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:50 p.m. in the Chicago Cubs' locker room. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Message to the Congress on the Generalized System of Preferences *June 30, 1999*

To the Congress of the United States:

The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) offers duty-free treatment to specified products that are imported from designated beneficiary developing countries. The GSP is authorized by title V of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended.

I have determined, based on a consideration of the eligibility criteria in title V, that Gabon and Mongolia should be added to the list of beneficiary developing countries under the GSP.

I have also determined that the suspension of preferential treatment for Mauritania as a beneficiary developing country under the GSP, as reported in my letters to the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate of June 25, 1993, should be ended. I had determined to suspend Mauritania from the GSP because Mauritania had not taken or was not taking steps to afford internationally recognized worker

rights. I have determined that circumstances in Mauritania have changed and that, based on a consideration of the eligibility criteria in title V, preferential treatment under the GSP for Mauritania as a least-developed beneficiary developing country should be restored.

This message is submitted in accordance with the requirements of title V of the Trade Act of 1974.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 30, 1999.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message. The related proclamation of June 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Chicago *June 30, 1999*

Thank you very much. First, let me thank the leaders of the Democratic National Committee who are here, Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz, and say to our former chairman and my 1992 campaign manager, David Wilhelm, and Deegee, I'm glad to see you and all my other friends and many of you who were formerly associated with our administration.

I want to thank Lew and Susan and Lou and Ruth Weisbach and Fred Eychaner for their work on this dinner tonight. This has been kind of an emotional day for me. I—Bruce and I and Hillary, we did drag in here one night about 7 years ago, and you know, I thought—I was totally out of gas when I got here, and I had virtually forgotten why I was even thinking of running for President; I just wanted to go to bed. And then I came in here, and I got all pumped up. I saw all this art that I didn't know anything about, and it certainly was interesting. *[Laughter]* And I sort of began to get educated. And then I went into the library and went nuts over the books, and I certainly approved of their

reading tastes. And then we got to talking about health care and first one thing and then another, and before you know it, we were sort of off and going and forming a friendship that has stood the test of 7 years' time. And I'm very grateful that you had us back tonight, and I thank you.

I want to thank all of the rest of you for being here, and I want to thank Chicago for being so wonderful to Hillary and to me and to Al and Tipper Gore, for giving us—for me, I basically won the Democratic nomination on Saint Patrick's Day in 1992. And I must say, I learned a lot from my friend Al Gore, who did well on Super Tuesday and then had difficulty going after that in 1998, so I later told him when I asked him to join the ticket, I said, "Now, don't ever forget what I learned from your campaign." I spent enormous amounts of time in Illinois and Michigan. Of course, it helped that roughly 30 percent of the primary voters in both States were born in Arkansas and couldn't make a living there

and had to come up here. *[Laughter]* That was of some modest benefit to me at the time. But I'm very grateful for that and grateful for the way that this city and this State have stayed with us through thick and thin in the life of this administration.

I appreciate something Joe Andrew said—apart from the fact that the party's out of debt; that's good news. I'm here tonight, in a way, because I can't run for reelection. But I believe in what I've spent my life doing, what Hillary and I have spent our lives doing, what Al Gore and I have spent 7 years working to do, and I believe in what still needs to be done.

I believe that politics is a good thing for America, not a bad thing. It is what makes democracy work. And it becomes public service when it is dominated by good values, good ideas, and the ability to turn those ideas into action. I enjoy a good contest if it is a contest of ideas. And I don't mind receiving the verdict of the electorate as long as I'm absolutely sure that everyone who opposes us actually know precisely what they're doing. And I think that is something that we all ought to have in mind as we approach this election season.

I say—I think I see Senator Carol Moseley-Braun smiling, and I thank her for her loyal support and leadership for her time in the Senate, the first 6 years of my administration. I'm glad to see John Schmidt here tonight. I thank him for his service in the administration and for still caring enough to be here after having run for office, which is, by any standard, an exhausting enterprise. And I thank Neil Hartigan and the whole Hartigan family for being here and always being there for me. And Billy Singer—I see all these people who do not presently hold elective office but have participated in this process.

I'm here for the same reason you are. And if the Democrats want me 10 years from now, I'll be there then, because I knew when I got into this that it was a temporary job. *[Laughter]* I never had any illusions that I could be President for life, although I confess that I love the job, even on the worst days. *[Laughter]* But what I want you to focus on just for a minute with me tonight is that I am grateful that time and circumstance and the wonderful help of my friends and a lot of gifts from the good Lord and my family gave me the opportunity to serve as President at this time of profound change in our country. And if I have contributed in

some way to what has happened that is good for America, I am grateful for that as well.

But I have to tell you something. I think that good things happen when good people establish good teams, and they have a good vision, they have a good strategy, they have good ideas, and they're good at turning their ideas into reality. And I used to tell our people all the time in the darkest days, in the early days when we were in Washington, don't worry about what they're saying about you today; worry about what it will look like 3 or 4 years from now. We need—the test of what we're doing is whether it improves the lives of the American people, whether it makes us a more secure, more humane country with a better future for all of our people.

And that's why I hope you're here, because we had certain ideas that our party held to that basically our friends in the other party didn't agree with. And one of the reasons I believe, I will always believe, that there was so much intense effort made in Washington to try to sort of go after not just me but many of us, personally, and try to divert the attention of the American people, was they were afraid they couldn't compete with our ideas, and they knew they were working. And the better the country did, sometimes their more partisan members—the better we did, the madder they got, and the better the American people did, the madder they got.

So let's step back from all that now, because I won't be a candidate in 2000. What were the ideas that were—that drove us, and what were the consequences? The first thing we decided is that the Democratic Party had to become the party of fiscal responsibility again. We could no longer participate in a kind of unspoken deal with the Republicans where we would both allow these intolerable deficits to go on because we wanted to spend money and they didn't want to raise any money. And they'd let us spend money and we'd let them avoid raising it, and the deficit would get bigger and bigger and bigger, and we were driving the country into the ditch. We quadrupled the debt in 12 years. And the Democrats in Congress, by the way, to their everlasting credit, tried to stop it. They actually spent less money than the Republicans asked them to, in the White House.

And we said, we're going to bring the deficit down; we're going to cut spending, but we're

actually going to increase our investment in education and in research, environmental protection, and things that are fundamental to our future. And most people didn't think we could do it.

Well, 6 years later, we've gone from a \$290 billion deficit to, in 1999, a \$99 billion surplus, \$142 billion next year. And we have cut the Government to its smallest size since Kennedy was President. But we have almost doubled investment in education and training for our children.

It was an idea, and it worked. And we've got the strongest economy in a generation, maybe ever, because the idea was right. And we had a lot of Members of Congress actually lay down their seats in the '94 elections because we didn't have a vote to spare when our party took the lead on that kind of economic policy.

Then we had an idea about crime, that the Democrats were for law and order. We wanted to save streets; we wanted to save schools. And we knew from what was already beginning to work in a lot of our cities that what we needed was more police on the street and more guns off the street and out of the hands of kids and criminals. And we knew we needed to give our children something to say yes to, not just something to say no to.

And so we fought for the Brady bill, and we fought for the assault weapons ban, and we fought for 100,000 police on the street. And the leaders of the other party said that it would have no effect on the crime rate, that nothing good would happen, that we would never see these police on the street, that no guns would be kept out of the hands of criminals because criminals didn't buy guns in gun stores anyway. I heard all that. And one of the reasons that our friends in the other party are in the majority today in the House is that they beat somewhere between 12 and 15 of our House Members, the NRA did, in 1994, scaring the living day-lights out of rural people, saying we were going to take their guns away.

Well, 6 years later, we've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years; we finished putting 100,000 police out there, under budget and ahead of schedule; 400,000 gun sales have been canceled to criminals, felons, fugitives, and stalkers. And this is a safer, better, stronger country. We were right about that. And it's an important issue going forward, just like the management of the economy is.

I'll give you just two other examples—I could give you 10—where we had different ideas. We believed we could grow the economy and not just maintain but improve the environment. And a lot of people don't believe that to this day. But compared to 6 years ago, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer; the food supply is purer. We have immunized 90 percent of our kids against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the history of the country and set aside more land in perpetuity than any administration except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt.

And the economy is stronger. We did not hurt the economy; we helped the American economy by doing what was right by the environment. And we had to fight the other party to do that. There was an honest disagreement. That is relevant for us going forward.

In the area of education, we fought for tax cuts that would, in effect, open the doors of college of all Americans: \$1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, other tax credits for other years. We fought for better student loans and more work-study positions. We fought to hook up all the classrooms in this country to the Internet.

And now we're fighting to have a national ratification of what you're doing here in Chicago, with no social promotion but not blaming the children for the failures of the system, and instead giving them all access to summer school and after-school programs. I want to this year say we are only going to give Federal aid to education to States and districts that end social promotion but don't dub the children failures, and give them the after-school or summer school programs and the support they need to succeed.

I'll just give you one last idea. We had an idea that we could best solve our social problems in this country, generally, not by asking the Government to do it and not by leaving the Government out of it but by forming new partnerships with the private sector and with individual citizens. So we started AmeriCorps, the national service program. We said, we'll give young people some money to go to college if they'll give a year or two of their lives to serving in their communities.

I believed the young people, the so-called Generation X-ers, were not selfish people, as

they were caricatured. I thought they were passionately committed to the future of this country. And in 4½ years, we have had 100,000-plus volunteers for AmeriCorps; it took the Peace Corps 20 years to get that many. And the man who started it, Eli Segal, is here with us tonight, and I thank him for that.

Then I gave Eli another job. I said, we're going to reform welfare, and we're going to say, "If you're able-bodied, you've got to go to work," but we don't want to hurt children. So we're going to say, "If you go to work, we will give you child care; we will give you medical care; we will give your kids nutrition; but you've got to go to work." And then I realized that not all these people would be able to go to work, because they had no real experience. No one had ever said, "Here's how you interview for a job; here's how you show up; here's how you relate to people at work." We had some serious problems there.

So I asked Eli if he would help me go out and challenge the business community of this country to actually take personal responsibility for hiring people off welfare. We started with 5 companies; then we had 100; then we had 1,000. In 3 years, he has gone from 5 companies to 12,000 businesses, hiring half a million people off welfare. And here's a little shameless plug. We're coming to celebrate this in Chicago on August 3d, and we need more help.

So what's the point of all this? The point of all this is, this country is doing well, but we all know there are still challenges out there. It seems to me that the Democratic Party is entitled to the benefit of the doubt of the American people. When we go to them in the Congress races, when we go to them in the Presidential race, we need to make it clear that there is a connection between the values and the ideas and the actions we have taken and the consequences we see in every community in this country.

And that is why we need your contributions and why we need your voice. This is not an accident. We cannot see this coming election as just sort of a—*independent of the reality of the last 6 years.* But our party also has a solemn responsibility between now and then in Washington to keep trying to get things done for the American people. We shouldn't be caught playing politics, waiting for the next election. Our belief is that we get paid by the American people every week, not just in the seasons

where there is no politics—every week. They pay us to show up and produce.

That's why you heard me say yesterday, "We've got the new surplus; all right, here's my plan for Medicare. We'll make it stable until 2027; we'll provide preventive services for free, screenings for everything from osteoporosis to cancer screenings and all kinds of other preventive services; we will employ modern means of competition, but we will have adequate funding to keep the quality up; and we will provide a prescription drug benefit for the first time in history to our seniors." I think that's a big idea.

I also think that it is a big idea to take this surplus and say to our friends in the Republican Party, "Can you have a tax cut? Of course you can. But first things first. First, let's save Medicare and save Social Security and pay the debt of the country off by 2015 so that our children and our children's children will have a stronger economy and a stronger society. Then there will be money left over; we can argue about what to do with it, and you'll have some that you can give in a tax cut. But let us save Social Security and Medicare and deal with the baby boom generation and pay the debt of the country off."

Now, these are ideas. These things have consequences. So when people ask you, "Why did you come tonight?" I hope you say, "Well, you know, Chicago took Bill Clinton to the race a long time ago." Or, "He made a pretty good talk." I hope you say that. But I hope you'll be able to tell people, "Look, I am a Democrat for the 21st century. Here are my ideas. Here is why I write checks to do this. This is what I believe in. And, oh, by the way, it works. It makes a difference. My children will have a better future."

And I could go through issue after issue after issue. But if you just look at—you just look at the issue of Social Security, Medicare, and paying off the debt. Why should a liberal Democrat be for putting America out of debt? Here's why: because we live in a global economy. And if we have no public debt, then the Government will not be competing not only with you but with every poor, blue-collar worker of all races in this country for money for a home mortgage, for a car payment, for a credit card payment, for a college loan, for a business loan. And if we don't have any public debt, interest rates will be lower in America, which means there

will be more investment, more jobs, higher wages, and less debt for ordinary people.

It means, furthermore, that the next time we have a global financial crisis like we had in Asia 2 years ago, the United States will be less vulnerable, and our friends in the developing countries will be able to get more money at a lower cost because we won't be taking any away from them. And that's good, because as they get richer, they can buy more of our stuff. So I'm making a good Republican argument for my position here.

This is a big deal. You need to go tell—this is a huge idea. Do you know when the last time the country was out of debt? 1835. [Laughter] This is a big idea. And we can do it in a way that saves Social Security and Medicare. But liberals, as well as conservatives, should be for it, for the reasons I said—big idea—matters. It matters.

It matters whether we close this gun show loophole. The same crowd that said nobody, no crooks, bought guns at gun stores—and now they know they were wrong, because we've got 400,000 sales were canceled in 5 years—now they say that we shouldn't do background checks where they admit the crooks do buy their guns, not just gun shows but also urban flea markets. And we're for it, and the leaders of the other party are against it.

This is an important issue; this is a big idea. Kids' lives are at stake—not just in scenes of carnage, like what happened at Littleton, but every day of the world, 13 kids die from gun violence—nameless, faceless kids you don't know because they die one and two at a time. A lot of them are poor kids in inner cities, that don't have any votes, any influence, nobody to speak up for them if we don't do it.

It matters. This is a big idea. This is not some trivial thing, that, oh, these parties are having a little dispute. This matters. And I believe we're right. And I think all the evidence is that they're wrong. And I could go through the environment and health care and the Patients' Bill of Rights and every other issue, and make the same case.

You go home tonight, and you just think about the three things I talked about. Think about the economy; think about Social Security and Medicare; think about education policy, what I said—what a difference it's made to Chicago that you've finally got your schools getting juiced up again because somebody believes that

all kids can learn, and somebody believes that kids should be held to high standards, and there are consequences, and you don't just get patted on the back whether you know what you're supposed to know or not—but we don't point the finger at kids and call them a failure when the system is failing them.

You just think about this stuff. It matters what you do in life. Politics is no different than your family life, no different than your business life, no different than your school life. This matters. And on the great ideas of the age, we have been right in preparing America for the 21st century. It's not Bill Clinton being President. It is, we have a party that is best for all the American people, that has become a party of permanent change, of restless, constructive, positive change.

And this is a better country because of that, because people like you are thinking about tomorrow. You know, nearly everybody here would be better off, in the next 6 months, in the next year and a half, going to a Republican fundraiser. I mean, they'll give you a bigger tax cut than we will. [Laughter] They will. You'd be better off in the next year and a half going to a Republican fundraiser. It wouldn't be—the house wouldn't be as interesting as this. [Laughter]

You know, the people that were good enough to serve us dinner tonight, they're the ones that we're going to help immediately. We're trying to make sure their parents can afford to have prescription drugs so they don't have to bankrupt their kids and their ability to raise their grandkids. We think we ought to raise the minimum wage. We think their kids ought to be able to go to college.

But most of you who paid to get here tonight would be better off in the short run if you were over with the Republicans. But you aren't because you know that in the long run and in the not-so-very-long run, people who think about what's best for all Americans and how we reach across the lines that divide us and how we think about our children's future—that is what is best for us.

If I told you—suppose you'd all been here with Lew and Susan, back in 1991, and I'd said, "Now here, folks, I want you to vote for me for President." Just keep in mind, 1991, we're in this big old creaking recession, and everybody is feeling bad, and there's about to be a riot out in Los Angeles in a few months.

And I said, "Now, I want you to vote for me, and in 7 years you'll have nearly 19 million jobs and the longest peacetime expansion in history and a \$100 billion surplus and trillions expected in the surplus over the next 15 years. And we'll be able to solve the problems the baby boomers present to Social Security and Medicare. And along the way, we'll have a 25-year-low in crime, and we'll cut the welfare rolls in half. And we will be a leading force for peace, from Bosnia to Kosovo to the Middle East to Northern Ireland. And we will have extra money to make sure we're working hard to be prepared for the security problems of the future. But we will double our investment in education, clean up the environment, and we'll be moving this country forward."

If I'd told you all that, you'd have said, "There's another lying politician, if I ever heard one." [*Laughter*] Wouldn't you? You would have said, "That kid needs to go home to Arkansas. He's, you know, he's not living in the real world." We did better than I thought we could. Why? Because we didn't do it alone. All we did was to unleash the incredible potential of the American people and give everybody a chance.

So I say to you, I thank you for being here. I thank you for what you've done for me, for Hillary, for Al and Tipper. I thank you for what you will do. But don't kid yourself; part of the

reason that we've done as well as we have is that people like you, with good values and good common sense, with an ability to see the future, had the right ideas. And you hired us, and we turned them into action. And when you go home tonight and you go about your business tomorrow, and people ask you why you came and why you're a Democrat, you tell them, "Because we've got good ideas, and they've changed America for the better, and here's what we want to do tomorrow and next year and in the new century."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:07 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee (DNC); former DNC chair David Wilhelm and his wife, Deegee; dinner hosts Lewis and Susan Manilow; Lou Weisbach, chief executive officer, HA-LO Industries, Inc., and his wife, Ruth; Fred Eychaner, president, Newsweb Corp.; Bruce Lindsey, Deputy Counsel to the President; former Senator Carol Moseley-Braun; John R. Schmidt, former U.S. Associate Attorney General; Neil Hartigan, former State attorney general; and attorney William S. Singer, member, Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States.

Appendix A—Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this book.

January 1

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC, from Hilton Head, SC.

January 2

The White House announced that the President exchanged letters with President Jiang Zemin of China celebrating the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

January 5

In the morning, the President met with King Hussein I of Jordan.

In the afternoon, the President briefly attended a meeting concerning the pork industry.

The President announced his intention to nominate Armando Falcon, Jr., to be Director of the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph A. Cari, Jr., to be Chair and Steven Alan Bennett to be Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

January 6

In the morning, the President met with his foreign policy team.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert A. Seiple to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom.

The President announced his intention to nominate Wayne O. Burkes to be a member of the Surface Transportation Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Regina Montoya to be U.S. Representative to the 53d session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The President announced his intention to nominate Carolyn L. Huntoon to be Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Melvin E. Clark, Jr., to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

January 8

In the morning, the President traveled to Detroit, MI, where he toured the North American International Auto Show.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

The President announced the nomination of James Roger Angel to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation.

The President announced the nomination of Myrta K. Sale to be Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management at the Office of Management and Budget.

The President declared a major disaster in Illinois and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by snow beginning on January 1 and continuing.

January 11

In the morning, the President met with President Carlos Menem of Argentina in the Oval Office and again later in the Cabinet Room.

The President announced his intention to appoint Thomas H. Baer, Elizabeth Holtzman, and Richard Ben-Veniste as members of the Nazi War Criminal Records Interagency Working Group.

January 14

In the morning, the President traveled to Alexandria, VA, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate C. Richard Barnes to be Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gary S. Guzy to be General Counsel at the Environmental Protection Agency.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lorraine Pratte Lewis to be Inspector General of the Department of Education.

The President announced his intention to nominate David C. Williams to be Inspector General for Tax Administration at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rear Adm. Donald E. Hickman as a member of the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

January 15

In the morning, the President traveled to New York City, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

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The President announced his intention to nominate Cheryl L. Shavers to be Under Secretary for Technology at the Department of Commerce.

The President declared a major disaster in Alabama and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe winter storms, ice, and freezing rain on December 23–29, 1998.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe winter storms, ice, and freezing rain on December 23–29, 1998.

The President declared an emergency in Indiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by snow beginning on January 1 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by near-record snow on January 1 and continuing.

January 17

The President met with his lawyers to discuss the Senate impeachment trial.

January 19

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by the severe storms, tornadoes, and high winds on January 17 and continuing.

January 20

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Buffalo, NY, and in the afternoon, they traveled to Norristown, PA. In the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

January 21

In an evening ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Yvonne A-Baki of Ecuador, Anton Buteiko of Ukraine, Hassaballah Abdelhadi Ahmat Soubiane of Chad, Ceslav Ciobanu of Moldova, Thomas Ndikumana of Burundi, Zina Andrianarivelo-Razafy of Madagascar, Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo of the Holy See, and Yuri Viktorovich Ushakov of Russia.

The President announced his intention to appoint Travis C. Johnson and Leo Victor Valdez as members of the Advisory Council of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Larry Brummett to the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma City National Memorial Trust.

The President declared a major disaster in Maine and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, heavy rains, high winds, and inland and coastal flooding and erosion on October 8–11, 1998.

The President declared a major disaster in Louisiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe ice storm on December 22–28, 1998.

January 23

The President declared a major disaster in Arkansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and high winds on January 21 and continuing.

January 24

In the morning, the President traveled to Little Rock, AR, to inspect tornado damage in the surrounding areas. In the afternoon, he traveled to Beebe, AR, where he inspected tornado damage there.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

January 25

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe winter storms, ice, and freezing rain on December 22–26, 1998.

January 26

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to St. Louis, MO. In the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rudy de Leon as a member of the National Partnership Council.

January 27

In the afternoon, the President met with President-elect Hugo Chavez of Venezuela in National Security Adviser Samuel R. Berger's office.

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton hosted a dinner for the Nation's military leaders in the State Dining Room.

The President announced his intention to appoint John C. Pierce and Joyce Van Schaack as members of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Joseph (Jody) Trapasso as a member of the Community Adjustment and Investment Program Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint Edward F. Hartfield and Mary E. Jacksteit as members of the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

The President announced his intention to appoint W. Peter Conroy as the Alternate Federal Commissioner to the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin Compact Commission and the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa River Basin Compact Commission.

The President declared an emergency in Michigan and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by near-record snow on January 2 and continuing.

The White House announced that the President invited President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana for a state visit on February 24.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Manchester, NH on February 18.

January 28

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Oakton, VA, and later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert W. Gee to be Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy at the Department of Energy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Steven W. Percy as a member of the President's Council on Sustainable Development.

The White House announced that the President invited Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy, President of the Council of Ministers, for an official working visit on March 5.

January 29

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India concerning India-U.S. relations and non-proliferation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Evelyn R. Villines as a member of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Boston, MA, and New York City on February 2.

January 30

The President and Hillary Clinton went to Camp David, MD, for the weekend.

The White House announced that the President and Hillary Clinton will travel to Mexico for a meeting with President Ernesto Zedillo on February 15 and to Central America on March 8–11, visiting Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

February 1

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint E. Linn Draper, Jr., as a member of the President's Council on Sustainable Development.

February 2

In the morning, the President traveled to Boston, MA. In the evening, he traveled to New York City and later returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Anne Udall to be a Public Trustee at the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation.

The White House announced that the President will meet with President Jamil Mahuad of Ecuador and President Alberto Fujimori of Peru at the White House on February 5.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Atlanta, GA, on February 5 and to Wintergreen, VA, on February 9.

February 3

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph E. Brennan to be a Commissioner of the Federal Maritime Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph Bordogna to be Deputy Director of the National Science Foundation.

February 4

In the morning, the President met separately with Prime Minister Pandeli Majko of Albania, Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski of Macedonia, and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority in the Cabinet Room at the Washington Hilton Hotel. The President also had brief discussions with Leah Rabin, widow of the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and with Steven Flatow, whose daughter was the victim of a 1995 terrorist attack in Gaza.

The White House announced that the President will launch the AmeriCorps Call to Service campaign at the University of Maryland in College Park on February 10.

February 5

In the afternoon, the President met with President Jamil Mahuad of Ecuador and President Alberto Fujimori of Peru in the Oval Office. Later, he traveled to Atlanta, GA. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced the nomination of Thomas J. Erickson to be a member of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced the appointment of Mary Beth Cahill as Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Public Liaison and Robert B. (Ben) Johnson as Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Office on the President's Initiative for One America, a new office to follow up on the work of the President's Initiative on Race.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities:

Betsy Levitt Cohn;
Cynthia Friedman;
Alice Kandell;
Hilary Rosen; and
Howard A. Tullman.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany on February 11.

February 7

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Amman, Jordan.

En route aboard Air Force One, the President met with former Presidents Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter,

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and George Bush, concerning the Middle East, Kosovo, Russia, and North Korea.

February 8

During the day, the President attended funeral services for King Hussein I of Jordan. He also had separate meetings with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and President Ezer Weizman of Israel, President Boris Yeltsin of Russia, Prince Charles and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, President Jacques Chirac of France, Queen Beatrix and Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands, Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan, Crown Prince Saad al-Sabah of Kuwait, King Juan Carlos I of Spain, and President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria. The President also met briefly with leaders of Oman, Yemen, and Bahrain.

In the evening, the President met with King Abdullah II of Jordan. Later in the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC.

February 9

In the morning, the President traveled to Wintergreen, VA, where he addressed members of the House Democratic caucus. In the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint James V. Kimsey, William F. Murdy, and Jude W.P. Patin to the U.S. Military Academy Board of Visitors.

The President declared a major disaster in California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe freeze on December 20–28, 1998.

The White House announced that the President invited Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany for an informal visit to the White House on February 11.

February 10

In the afternoon, the President traveled to College Park, MD. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paula J. Dobriansky to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

February 11

In the afternoon, the President met with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany in the Oval Office.

The President announced the nomination of Leonard R. Page to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rolland A. Schmitt to be U.S. Commissioner of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.

February 14

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Merida, Mexico, where they toured the Governor's Palace with President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico and his wife, Nilda.

February 15

In the morning, the President toured the grounds of the Hacienda Temozon with President Zedillo. In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC.

February 16

The President announced his intention to appoint Gregory L. Craig to the President's Export Council.

The White House announced that the President proposed \$956 million in disaster assistance for Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and other Caribbean nations struck by Hurricanes Mitch and Georges in the fall of 1998.

February 17

The President declared a major disaster in Wyoming and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm on October 5–9, 1998.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Tucson, AZ, and San Francisco and Los Angeles, CA, on February 25–March 2, and to Arkansas and Texas on March 12–14.

February 18

In the morning, the President traveled to Dover, NH, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President named Maurice Goldhaber and Michael E. Phelps as the winners of the Enrico Fermi Award, given for a lifetime of achievement in the field of nuclear energy.

February 19

The President announced his intention to appoint Valerie J. Bradley as Chair and the following individuals as members of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation:

Joyce A. Keller;
John F. Kennedy, Jr.;
K. Charlie Lakin;
T.J. Monroe;
Elizabeth C. Pittinger;
Michael L. Remus;
Jacquelyn B. Victorian;
Barbara Y. Wheeler; and
Sheryl White-Scott.

February 22

The President announced his intention to appoint Thomas R. Reedy as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

February 23

The President announced his intention to nominate George T. Frampton, Jr., to be a member of the Council on Environmental Quality. The President will designate him as Chair upon confirmation.

The White House announced that the President will address the opening of the U.S.-Africa Ministerial on Partnership in the 21st Century on March 16 in Washington, DC.

February 24

In the morning, the President met with President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana in the Cabinet Room.

February 25

In the morning, the President traveled to Tucson, AZ. In the afternoon, he visited the Major League Baseball Arizona Diamondbacks' practice facility at Tucson Electric Park.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lawrence J. Delaney to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

In the evening, the President traveled to San Francisco, CA.

February 26

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Los Angeles, CA.

The President announced his intention to nominate Larry Harrington to be U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

February 27

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Park City, UT.

March 1

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

March 3

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Newark, NJ, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate David B. Sandalow to be Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environment and Scientific Affairs at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate John D. Holum to be Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard M. McGahey to be Assistant Secretary for the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration at the Department of Labor.

March 4

The President announced his intention to nominate Kelly H. Carnes to be Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy at the Department of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kenneth H. (Buddy) MacKay as Special Envoy of the President and Secretary of State for the Americas.

March 5

The President announced his intention to nominate Bill Lann Lee to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice.

March 8

In the morning, the President traveled to Managua, Nicaragua, and later to Posoltega, Nicaragua.

In the afternoon, the President toured the area damaged by mudslides and participated in a plaque dedication ceremony in memory of the victims.

Later, the President traveled to San Salvador, El Salvador.

March 9

In the morning, the President traveled to Comayagua, Honduras.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where he was briefed by U.S. military personnel on the construction of the Juan Molina Bridge. Later, he returned to San Salvador, El Salvador.

March 10

In the morning, the President met with President Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador in the Presidential Office at Casa Presidencial.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Guatemala City, Guatemala, and in the evening, he traveled to Antigua, Guatemala.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ann Lewis as Counselor to the President and Loretta Ucelli as Assistant to the President and Communications Director.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by near-record snow on March 3–6.

The White House announced that the President sent the Congress a request for \$15 million in FY 1999 supplemental funding for the Department of the Interior.

March 11

In the morning, the President met with Central American leaders in Casa Santo Domingo.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Guatemala City, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint Amanda Aguirre, Jeffrey Brandon, Carlos Rene Gonzales, Rosemarie Marshall Johnson, Laurance N. Nickey, and Paul Villas as members of the U.S. section of the United States-Mexico Border Health Commission.

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March 12

In the morning, the President traveled to Hope, AR, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Texarkana, TX.

The President announced the appointment of Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, William E. Kennard, and G. Mario Moreno to serve as members of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center.

March 13

In the afternoon, the President traveled from Texarkana, TX, to Little Rock, AR. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

March 15

The President announced his intention to nominate Brian E. Sheridan to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict.

March 16

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Stuart, FL. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Detroit, MI, and Boston, MA, on April 16.

March 17

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland in the Oval Office.

In the evening, the President met separately with Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble, and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams in the Oval Office.

March 18

The President announced his intention to appoint Iris J. Burnett as a member of the Board of Governors for the United Services Organizations, Inc.

March 19

In the morning, the President met with Senate leaders in the Oval Office to discuss issues regarding Kosovo.

March 20

In the evening, the President attended the annual Gridiron Club dinner in the Presidential Ballroom at the Capital Hilton Hotel.

March 21

In the afternoon, the President went to Camp David, MD, where he met with members of the foreign policy team and had telephone conversations with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, President Jacques Chirac of France, and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany on the situation in Kosovo.

The White House announced that the President sent a letter to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning the situation in Kosovo.

March 22

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

March 23

In the morning, the President met with members of the foreign policy team in the President's Study. Later, he met with Members of Congress in the Yellow Oval Room.

In the afternoon, the President met with Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate T. Michael Kerr to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division at the Department of Labor.

The President announced his intention to nominate Irasema Garza to be Director of the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor.

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward B. Montgomery to be Assistant Secretary for Policy at the Department of Labor.

March 24

In the morning, the President met with the national security team in the Oval Office. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning the situation in Kosovo. Later, the President was briefed again by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger in the Oval Office.

March 25

The President announced his intention to nominate Johnnie E. Frazier to be Inspector General of the Department of Commerce.

March 26

In the morning, the President met with members of the national security team in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to appoint Harold Hongju Koh as Commissioner on the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The White House announced that the President will host an official visit by Premier Zhu Rongji of China on April 6–14, including a White House visit on April 8.

March 28

In the afternoon, the President went to Camp David, MD.

March 29

In the morning, the President returned to the White House, where he met with Chief of Staff John Podesta in the Oval Office. Later, he met with the foreign policy team and military leaders in the Oval Office concerning the situation in Kosovo.

The President announced the appointment of Robert A. Babbage, Jr., and Larry Echohawk as members of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

March 30

In the afternoon, the President met with President-elect Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria concerning a range of bilateral and regional issues.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom concerning the situation in Kosovo and the Northern Ireland peace process.

The President announced his intention to nominate John Hanson to be Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

April 1

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland concerning the Northern Ireland peace process. Later, he met with the national security team in the Oval Office.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Norfolk, VA. While en route aboard Air Force One, he met with Defense Secretary William Cohen and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Henry (Hugh) Shelton. Following his arrival at Norfolk Naval Station, he met privately at the Pennsylvania House with a group of military families to convey the Nation's appreciation for their sacrifices and hardships.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert Z. Lawrence to be a member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers.

April 2

In the morning, the President met with representatives of humanitarian organizations in the Cabinet Room concerning relief efforts in Kosovo.

The President designated Harold C. Pachios as Chair of the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

April 3

The President and Hillary Clinton went to Camp David, MD.

April 4

The President and Hillary Clinton returned to the White House.

April 5

The President announced the appointment of Barbara Bostick-Hunt as Special Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs at the White House.

April 7

The President announced his intention to appoint John C. Culver, William C. Mauk, and Huel D. Perkins to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate David L. Goldwyn to be Assistant Secretary for International Affairs at the Department of Energy.

April 8

The President announced his intention to appoint Miguel Angel Corzo and Susan Keech McIntosh as members of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

April 9

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA. In the afternoon, he had a telephone conversation from Memorial Hall with Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy concerning the situation in the Balkans. In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany on April 20.

The White House announced that the President invited President Jose Aznar of Spain for an informal visit on April 13.

The President declared a major disaster in Louisiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on April 3–7.

April 12

In the morning, the President traveled to Barksdale Air Force Base, LA, where he met with families of tornado victims from Bossier Parish, LA, at Hoban Hall.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. In the evening, he met with congressional leaders in the Yellow Oval Room, concerning the situation in the Balkans.

The President announced his intention to nominate Delmond J.H. Won to be a Commissioner of the Federal Maritime Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jody L. Williams as a member of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The White House announced that the President spoke on April 10 to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan concerning the situation in the Balkans.

April 13

In the evening, the President had dinner with President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain in the Yellow Oval Room.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert J. Einhorn to be Assistant Secretary for Non-proliferation at the Department of State.

April 14

The President announced his intention to appoint Rita Bass, Norma Lee Funger, Mary French (Muffy) Moore, and Yeni Wong as members of the President's

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Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carolyn S. Brody, J. Carter Brown, Eden Donohue Rafshoon, and Harry G. Robinson III to the Commission of Fine Arts.

The President announced the appointment of Arnold Donald, Carolee Friedlander, James Kelly, and John Sandner as members of the President's Export Council.

The President also announced his intention to appoint William Crowell as a member of the President's Export Council.

April 15

In the morning the President traveled to San Francisco, CA, and in the evening, he traveled to Detroit, MI.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph F. Baca and Robert N. Baldwin to be members of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

April 16

In the evening, the President traveled to Boston, MA, and later returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate John R. Hamilton to be Ambassador to Peru.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frank Almaguer to be Ambassador to Honduras.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald W. Keyser for the rank of Ambassador as Special Negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh and New Independent States Regional Conflicts.

April 19

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning the situation in the Balkans.

Later, he met with Federal Emergency Management Agency Director James Lee Witt and members of the Project Impact Fire Services Partnership for Disaster Prevention.

In an afternoon ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Martin Butora of Slovakia; Sheila Sisulu of South Africa; Dato Ghazzali bin Sheikh Abdul Khalid of Malaysia; Farid Abboud of Lebanon; Leonard Nangolo Iipumbu of Namibia; Alfred Toro Hardy of Venezuela; and Peter Moser of Austria.

The President announced his intention to appoint Solomon D. Trujillo as a member of the National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint Solomon D. Trujillo as a member of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Shahara Ahmad-Llewellyn to the Board of Governors for the United Services Organizations, Inc.

The White House announced that the President proposed a \$6.049 billion emergency supplemental package to fund the military and humanitarian efforts in Kosovo.

April 20

The President announced his intention to nominate Gwen C. Clare to be Ambassador to Ecuador.

The President announced his intention to nominate Oliver P. Garza to be Ambassador to Nicaragua.

The President announced his intention to nominate Dr. Ikram Khan to be a member to the Board of Regents for the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

The President declared a major disaster in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on April 3 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Georgia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes beginning on April 15.

April 21

In the evening, the President met with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom in the Residence.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard L. Morningstar to be Ambassador to the European Union with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

The President announced his intention to appoint James R. Houghton and Susan D. Auld as members of the National Skill Standards Board.

The President announced the appointment of John Dillon as a member of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

April 22

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation from the White House with Attorney General Janet Reno in Littleton, CO, concerning the attack at Columbine High School.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Alexandria, VA, and later returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joyce E. Leader to be Ambassador to Guinea.

April 25

The President had a telephone conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning Russian Special Envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin's mission to Belgrade, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

April 26

The President announced his intention to appoint David Ibarra to be a member of the U.S. Air Force Academy, Board of Visitors.

April 27

The President named Lloyd N. Cutler as Senior White House Representative on Pacific Salmon to coordinate U.S. strategy for Pacific salmon treaty negotiations with Canada.

The President declared an emergency in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by fire hazards on April 15 and continuing.

April 29

The President announced his intention to appoint Eric Lander and Ruth Patrick to be members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint Felix Sanchez to be a member of the Community Adjustment and Investment Program Advisory Committee.

April 30

The President announced his intention to appoint Walter Parker as the Academic Representative to the Arctic Research Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert Raben to be Assistant Attorney General for Legislative Affairs at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to appoint Earl S. Richardson as Chair and Willis B. McLeod as a member of the President's Board of Advisers on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

May 2

The President had a telephone conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning the visit of Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia on May 3.

May 3

In the morning, the President met with Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan in the Oval Office and later in the Cabinet Room.

In the afternoon, the President met with Special Envoy and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia in the Oval Office concerning the situation in the Balkans.

Later, the President met in the Oval Office with civil rights leader Jesse Jackson and his delegation, whose personal appeal won the release of three American infantrymen held prisoner by Serbian authorities.

The President announced his intention to nominate Alberto J. Mora to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

The President announced his intention to appoint Daniel Lamaute as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint Paul F. Cole and Alan L. Wurtzel as members of the National Skill Standards Board.

May 4

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Brussels, Belgium, arriving the following morning.

The President announced his intention to nominate Larry C. Napper for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Coordinator for East European Assistance.

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward E. Kaufman to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

The President announced his intention to nominate David B. Dunn to be Ambassador to Zambia.

The President announced his intention to nominate James Lewis to be Director of the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity at the Department of Energy.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by tornadoes and severe storms May 3–4.

The President declared a major disaster in Kansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on May 3.

May 5

In the morning, the President met with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana in his office at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Later, the President was briefed on NATO military progress in the Balkans by Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and Gen. Klaus Naumann, chairman, NATO Military Committee, in Consultation Room 3.

Later in the morning, the President met with Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene of Belgium in the VIP Lounge at Brussels National Airport. He then traveled to Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, where he toured military aircraft with F-16, A-10, and F-117 aircrews and ground support personnel at an outdoor aircraft pad in the afternoon.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, where he toured the Humanitarian Relief Operations Center at the Warrior Preparation Center in the evening.

Later in the evening, the President traveled to Rhein Main Air Base, Germany.

The President announced his intention to appoint Laila Al-Marayati, Firuz Kazemzadeh, and Charles Z. Smith as members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard S. Lanier to the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mark W. Erwin to be Ambassador to Mauritius, the Seychelles, and the Comoros.

The President announced his intention to nominate Florence K. Murray to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

Appendix A / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

May 6

In the morning, the President traveled to Ingelheim, Germany. Later, with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, he visited a Kosovar refugee family's living quarters in Room 20 of the Refugee Reception Center. The President also had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy concerning the release of Democratic League of Kosovo leader Ibrahim Rugova.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Bonn, Germany. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on May 4.

May 7

In the morning, the President traveled to Houston, TX. In the afternoon, he traveled to Austin, TX.

The President announced his intention to nominate M. Michael Einik to be Ambassador to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald L. Pressley to be the Assistant Administrator for Europe and the New Independent States at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher E. Goldthwait to be Ambassador to Chad.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Twenty-First Century Workforce Commission:

Morton Bahr;
Roger Knutsen;
Lawrence Perlman;
Susan M. Green; and
Patricia W. McNeil.

The White House announced that the President invited King Abdullah II of Jordan for a working visit on May 18.

May 8

In the morning, the President traveled to Oklahoma City, OK, where he toured tornado-damaged areas by helicopter.

In the afternoon, the President took a walking tour of tornado damage in the Del Aire neighborhood in Del City, OK. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

May 10

In the afternoon, the President met with President Fernando Cardoso of Brazil in the Oval Office to discuss global, regional, and other issues.

The President announced his intention to nominate Stuart E. Weisberg to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

May 11

In the morning, the President met privately with 15 corporate leaders in the Cabinet Room to discuss the new markets initiative.

Later, the President traveled to Atlanta, GA, where he toured the Sweet Auburn Market.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph Limprecht to be Ambassador to Albania.

The President announced his intention to appoint Don Christiansen and Robert Valentine as members of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

May 12

In the evening, the President met with tribal leaders in the Roosevelt Room.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey Rush, Jr., to be Inspector General at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to nominate Prudence Bushnell to be Ambassador to Guatemala.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jack E. Hightower to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ray Marshall as a member of the National Skill Standards Board.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on May 5 and continuing.

May 13

In the evening, the President attended a Democratic National Committee Jefferson Trust dessert reception at a private residence.

The President announced his intention to designate Edward B. Montgomery to serve as Acting Deputy Secretary of the Department of Labor.

The President announced his intention to nominate Arthur L. Money to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jane Slate Siena to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Parker Westbrook and Arva Parks McCabe as members of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Yulee, FL, on May 25–30.

May 14

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Jiang Zemin of China concerning the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Later, he traveled to Seattle, WA.

In the late afternoon, the President traveled to Palo Alto, CA.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kevin Gover as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center.

The President announced his intention to appoint Karen Lau Sullivan as U.S. Representative to the Pacific Community.

May 15

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Los Angeles, CA.

May 16

In the morning, the President traveled to San Diego, CA, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Las Vegas, NV.

May 17

In the morning, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Colorado and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on April 29 and continuing.

May 18

The White House announced that the President will send a Presidential mission co-led by Labor Secretary Alexis Herman and Rev. Jesse Jackson, Special Envoy for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa, to attend the Fifth African/African-American Summit on May 17–21.

May 19

In the morning, the President traveled to New York, NY, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, the President met with Representative Bill Archer in the Oval Office.

The President named Patrick A. Mulloy as a member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

May 20

In the morning, the President traveled to Littleton, CO, where he met with the families of those killed in the Columbine High School shooting.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lee Sachs to be Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Financial Markets.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paul S. Miller to be Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Amy Achor to be the youth member and Christopher Gallagher for a second term to be member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Anthony Musick to be Chief Financial Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to appoint Garry Mauro, Jack Quinn, and Eli Segal as members of the Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae) Board of Directors.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals to the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee:

James W. Evatt;
John H. Mattingly;
Dennis J. Picard;
Michael T. Smith; and
Lawrence A. Weinbach.

May 21

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by storms, flooding, and tornadoes on May 16 and continuing.

May 22

In the morning, the President traveled to Irvington, VA. Later, he met with Democratic Senators in the Cove Room at the Tides Inn.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

May 23

In the morning, the President traveled to Grambling, LA, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

May 25

In the morning, the President traveled to Edinburg, TX, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Yulee, FL.

May 26

The President announced his intention to nominate A. Peter Burleigh to be Ambassador to the Philippines and Palau.

May 27

The President announced his intention to nominate Thomas J. Miller to be Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald K. Bandler to be Ambassador to Cyprus.

The President announced his intention to nominate Bismarck Myrick to be Ambassador to Liberia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Johnnie Carson to be Ambassador to Kenya.

Appendix A / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

The President announced his intention to nominate J. Brady Anderson to be Administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to designate Thomasina Rogers as Chair of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ann Brown to be Chair and Commissioner and Mary Sheila Gall to be Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Europe on June 15–22.

May 28

The President announced the nomination of the following individuals to be members of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board:

Steve H. Nickles;
Robert Tobias;
James W. Wetzler;
Karen Hastie Williams; and
Larry Levitan.

The President announced his intention to nominate M. Osman Siddique to be Ambassador to Fiji, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu.

The President announced his intention to appoint William F. Paul and Carl G. Lewis as members of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint David Benton as Commissioner of the Pacific Salmon Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Marcelle Leahy as a member of the Board of Directors for the Student Loan Marketing Association.

The White House announced that the President announced that Elie Wiesel will travel to Macedonia and Albania on May 31–June 3 at the President's request, to meet with Kosovar refugees and representatives of international human rights and relief organizations.

May 30

In the evening, the President attended a Progressive Foundation conference in the Game Lodge at the White Oak Plantation in Yulee, FL. Later, he and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC.

May 31

In the morning, the President traveled to Arlington, VA, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

June 1

In the afternoon, the President attended a Democratic National Committee Leadership 2000 luncheon at a private residence.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ned McWherter as a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

June 2

In the morning, the President traveled to Colorado Springs, CO. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Mayor Jim Dailey of Little Rock, AR, concerning the crash landing of American Airlines Flight 1420 at Little Rock National Airport.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael D. Metelits to be Ambassador to Cape Verde.

The President announced his intention to nominate F. Whitten Peters to be Secretary of the Air Force.

The President announced his intention to appoint John Kimball as a member of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Norman F. Ramsey as a member of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint Lori Saldana as a member of the Advisory Council of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission.

June 3

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and another with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, concerning possible solutions to the situation in the Balkans.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ann F. Lewis, Molly Murphy MacGregor, and Ruth J. Simmons to the Women's Progress Commemoration Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships:

Rudolph Estrada;
Samuel Fried;
Janice Griffin;
Susan Levine;
Brian O'Dwyer;
Reginald Robinson; and
Tom Werner.

June 4

The President announced the recess appointment of James C. Hormel as Ambassador to Luxembourg.

The President announced his intention to nominate David H. Kaeuper to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo.

June 5

In the morning, the President went to Camp David, MD.

June 6

In the afternoon, the President returned to the White House. In the evening, he again went to Camp David and later returned to the White House.

June 7

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning the situation in the Balkans.

The President announced his intention to nominate Delano E. Lewis to be Ambassador to South Africa.

The White House announced that the President named Roger Ballentine as Deputy Assistant to the President for Environmental Initiatives.

June 8

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning the situation in the Balkans.

Later, the President met with President Arpad Goncz of Hungary in the Cabinet Room.

The President announced his intention to nominate David W. Ogden to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate John E. Lange to be Ambassador to Botswana.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gilbert F. Casellas as Co-Chair of the Census Monitoring Board.

The President declared a major disaster in North Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, snow and ice, ground saturation, landslides, mudslides, and tornadoes beginning on March 1 and continuing.

The White House announced that the President extended an invitation to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt for an official working visit on July 1.

The White House announced that the President sent to the Congress fiscal year 2000 budget amendments to strengthen Embassy security and to meet Supreme Court requirements for the 2000 census.

June 9

In the morning, the President met with author and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel in the Oval Office concerning Mr. Wiesel's visit to refugee camps in Macedonia and Albania on May 31–June 3.

The President announced his intention to nominate Franz S. Leichter to be a member of the Board of Directors for the Federal Housing Finance Board.

The President declared a major disaster in South Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on June 4 and continuing.

June 10

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations from the Oval Office with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; NATO Secretary General Javier Solana; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; Prime Minister Massimo

D'Alema of Italy; President Jacques Chirac of France; President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada.

In the afternoon, the President had separate telephone conversations from the Oval Office with Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany.

The President announced his intention to appoint John Arendt, Alberto A. Sagues, and Jeffrey Wong to the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board.

June 11

In the morning, the President traveled to Whiteman Air Force Base, MO, where he toured a B-2 bomber. Later, the President met privately with 50 base personnel and their families in Building 1117. In the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint Thomas E. Britton as Chair and David A. Kessler and Judith R. Olson as members of the Commission on Presidential Scholars.

June 12

In the morning, the President traveled to Chicago, IL, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

June 13

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended "An American Celebration" at Ford's Theatre.

The President had a telephone conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning NATO peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo.

June 14

The President had separate telephone conversations concerning NATO peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo with the following foreign leaders: President Boris Yeltsin of Russia, President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic, Prime Minister Ivan Kostov of Bulgaria, Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski of Macedonia, and Prime Minister Radu Vasile of Romania.

The President also had separate telephone conversations with President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela concerning regional issues and cooperation on counter-narcotics efforts, and with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India concerning the situation in Kashmir.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Connecticut and New York City on June 28; Chicago, IL, on June 30; Miami, FL, on July 13; and Cincinnati, OH, and Aspen, CO, on July 23.

June 15

In the evening, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jerry Florence to be a member of the National Museum Services Board.

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The President announced his intention to appoint Gary Vikan as a member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations:

Thomas J. Donohue;
Gerald Greenwald;
Louis V. Gerstner, Jr.;
Rhonda Karpatkin; and
Robert Shapiro.

June 16

In the morning, the President met with President Ruth Dreifuss of Switzerland concerning the situation in Kosovo.

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Paris, France. While en route aboard Air Force One, the President had separate telephone conversations with Representatives Nick Lampson and Bob Etheridge concerning proposed gun control legislation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Greta Dicus as Chair of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

June 17

In the evening, the President traveled to Cologne, Germany.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael A. Sheehan to be Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism with the rank of Ambassador at the Department of State.

June 18

In the afternoon, the President attended a working session with G-7 leaders in the Assembly Hall at the Gurzenich.

The President announced his intention to nominate A. Lee Fritschler to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education at the Department of Education.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert S. Gelbard to be Ambassador to Indonesia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Sally Katzen to be Deputy Director for Management at the Office of Management and Budget.

The President announced his intention to appoint Victoria Catchett, Carl Feen, Christine Warnke, and Cynthia Yorkin to the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

June 19

In the morning and afternoon, the President attended working sessions with G-8 leaders in the Exhibit Hall of the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, Germany.

June 20

In the afternoon, the President met with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia in the Cologne Room of the Renaissance Hotel.

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Bonn, Germany.

The President had a telephone conversation with Kosovo Liberation Army leader Hashim Thaci.

June 21

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom concerning the two British soldiers killed in an explosion in Negrovce, Kosovo.

The President announced his intention to nominate Martin George Brennan to be Ambassador to Uganda.

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard Glenn as a member of the Arctic Research Commission.

June 22

In the morning, the President traveled to Skopje, Macedonia.

In the evening, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Aviano Air Base, Italy. Later, they returned to Washington, DC.

June 23

The President announced his intention to nominate Paul W. Fiddick to be Assistant Secretary of Administration at the Department of Agriculture.

The President announced his intention to nominate Evelyn S. Lieberman to be Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to appoint W. Cullen Battle as a member of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Stewart H. Gamage as a member of the Commission on Presidential Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint Diane Takvorian and Roberto Ortego as members of the Advisory Council of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission.

June 24

In the morning the President met with his economic team.

The President announced the nomination of William J. Ranier as Chairman and Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael Gaines, Timothy E. Jones, Marie F. Ragghianti, and John R. Simpson to be members of the U.S. Parole Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Diana E. Murphy to be Chair and member and the

following individuals to be members of the U.S. Sentencing Commission:

Ruben Castillo;
Sterling Johnson, Jr.;
Joseph Kendall;
Michael O'Neill;
William K. Sessions III; and
John R. Steer.

The White House announced that President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea will make an official working visit to the White House on July 2.

June 25

In the evening, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton went to Camp David, MD.

June 27

In the evening, the President returned to the White House.

June 28

In the morning, the President traveled to Westport, CT, and in the afternoon, he traveled to New York City. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard Monroe Miles to be Ambassador to Bulgaria.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael E. Ranneberger to be Ambassador to Mali.

The President announced his intention to nominate Carl Spielvogel to be Ambassador to the Slovak Republic.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Prime Minister John Howard of Australia for a working luncheon on July 12.

June 29

The President announced his intention to nominate Barbro A. Owens-Kirkpatrick to be Ambassador to Niger.

The President announced his intention to nominate Charles A. Blanchard to be General Counsel of the Army.

The President announced his intention to nominate Carol DiBattiste to be Under Secretary of the Air Force.

The President announced his intention to appoint Anita Borg as a member of the Commission on the Advancement of Women and Minorities in Science, Engineering, and Technology.

June 30

In the morning, the President traveled to Chicago, IL, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President had two separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom concerning the Northern Ireland peace process.

The President announced his intention to appoint Patricia Gallup to the Twenty-First Century Workforce Commission.

Appendix B—Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted January 6

J. Brian Atwood,
of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Brazil.

Wayne O. Burkes,
of Mississippi, to be a member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring December 31, 2002, vice Gus A. Owen, term expired.

Melvin E. Clark, Jr.,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 1999, vice Gloria Rose Ott, term expired.

Carolyn L. Huntoon,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Environmental Management), vice Alvin L. Alm, resigned.

Regina Montoya,
of Texas, to be a Representative of the United States of America to the 53d session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Hassan Nemazee,
of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Argentina.

Robert A. Seiple,
of Washington, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom (new position).

Stephen H. Glickman,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of 15 years, vice John Maxwell Ferren, term expired.

Hiram E. Puig-Lugo,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Arthur L. Burnett, Sr., resigned.

Eric T. Washington,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of 15 years, vice Warren Roger King, resigned.

Kay Kelley Arnold,
of Arkansas, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation for a term expiring October 6, 2004, vice Neil H. Offen, term expired.

Hulett Hall Askew,
of Georgia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation for a term expiring July 13, 1999 (reappointment).

Richard W. Bogosian,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Special Coordinator for Rwanda/Burundi.

Harry J. Bowie,
of Mississippi, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Consumer Cooperative Bank for a term of 3 years, vice Tony Scallon, term expired.

Kenneth M. Bresnahan,
of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Labor, vice Edmundo A. Gonzales, resigned.

Robert Clarke Brown,
of Ohio, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring November 22, 1999, vice Jack Edwards, term expired.

William Clyburn, Jr.,
of South Carolina, to be a member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring December 31, 2000, vice J.J. Simmons III, term expired.

Gordon Davidson,
of California, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2004, vice Kenneth Malerman Jarin, term expired.

Montie R. Deer,
of Kansas, to be Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission for the term of 3 years, vice Tadd Johnson.

Sylvia de Leon,
of Texas, to be a member of the Reform Board (Amtrak) for a term of 5 years (new position).

Appendix B / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Vivian Lowery Derryck,
an Assistant Administrator of the Agency for International Development, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring September 27, 2003, vice John F. Hicks, Sr., term expired.

Charles H. Dolan, Jr.,
of Virginia, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2000 (reappointment).

Craig Gordon Dunkerley,
of Massachusetts, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Special Envoy for Conventional Forces in Europe.

Douglas S. Eakeley,
of New Jersey, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation for a term expiring July 13, 1999 (reappointment).

Susan G. Esserman,
of Maryland, to be Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, vice Jeffery M. Lang, resigned.

Timothy Fields, Jr.,
of Virginia, to be Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste, Environmental Protection Agency, vice Elliott Pearson Laws, resigned.

Phyllis K. Fong,
of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Small Business Administration, vice James F. Hoobler.

Timothy F. Geithner,
of New York, to be an Under Secretary of the Treasury, vice David A. Lipton.

Gary Gensler,
of Maryland, to be an Under Secretary of the Treasury, vice John D. Hawke, Jr.

T.J. Glauthier,
of California, to be Deputy Secretary of Energy, vice Elizabeth Anne Moler.

Rose Eilene Gottemoeller,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Non-Proliferation and National Security), vice Archer L. Durham, resigned.

Richard A. Grafmeyer,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Social Security Advisory Board for the remainder of the term expiring September 30, 2000, vice Harlan Matthews, resigned.

Frank J. Guarini,
of New Jersey, to be a Representative of the United States of America to the 52d session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Stephen Hadley,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2003.

John Paul Hammerschmidt,
of Arkansas, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term of 4 years (new position).

Denis J. Hauptly,
of Minnesota, to be Chairman of the Special Panel on Appeals for a term of 6 years, vice Barbara Jean Mahone, term expired.

John D. Hawke, Jr.,
of the District of Columbia, to be Comptroller of the Currency for a term of 5 years, vice Eugene Allan Ludwig, resigned.

James Catherwood Hormel,
of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Luxembourg.

A.E. Dick Howard,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation for a term of 6 years, vice Lance Banning.

Albert S. Jacquez,
of California, to be Administrator of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation for a term of 7 years, vice Gail Clements McDonald, resigned.

Ayse Manyas Kenmore,
of Florida, to be a member of the National Museum Services Board for a term expiring December 6, 2000 (reappointment).

Zalmay Khalilzad,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2001, vice Christopher H. Phillips, resigned.

Kenneth W. Kizer,
of California, to be Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs for a term of 4 years (reappointment).

George M. Langford,
of New Hampshire, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2004, vice Charles Edward Hess, term expired.

Joseph A. Miller, Jr.,
of Delaware, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2004, vice John Hopcroft, term expired.

Norman Y. Mineta,
of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term of 6 years (new position).

Arthur J. Naparstek,
of Ohio, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2003 (reappointment).

Jose Antonio Perez,
of California, to be U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of California for the term of 4 years, vice Steven Simpson Gregg.

Susan E. Rice,
an Assistant Secretary of State, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring September 17, 2003, vice George Edward Moose, term expired.

Bill Richardson,
of New Mexico, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the 42d session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Robert C. Richardson,
of New York, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2004, vice James L. Powell, term expired.

Stanley A. Riveles,
of Virginia, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Commissioner to the Standing Consultative Commission.

Cleo Parker Robinson,
of Colorado, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2004, vice Ira Ronald Feldman, term expired.

Peter F. Romero,
of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State, vice Jeffrey Davidow.

Maxine L. Savitz,
of California, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2004, vice Frank H.T. Rhodes, term expired.

Paul L. Seave,
of California, to be U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of California for a term of 4 years, vice Charles Joseph Stevens, resigned.

Luis Sequeira,
of Wisconsin, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2004, vice Ian M. Ross, term expired.

Gerald M. Shea,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Social Security Advisory Board for a term expiring September 30, 2004 (reappointment).

James M. Simon, Jr.,
of Alabama, to be Assistant Director of Central Intelligence for Administration (new position).

Jack J. Spitzer,
of Washington, to be Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the 52d session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

William Lacy Swing,
of North Carolina, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Ruth Y. Tamura,
of Hawaii, to be a member of the National Museum Services Board for a term expiring December 6, 2001 (reappointment).

Chang-Lin Tien,
of California, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, for a term expiring May 10, 2004, vice Richard Neil Zare, term expired.

Edwin M. Truman,
of Maryland, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury, vice Timothy F. Geithner.

Mark Reid Tucker,
of North Carolina, to be U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of North Carolina for the term of 4 years, vice William I. Berryhill.

John F. Walsh,
of Connecticut, to be a Governor of the U.S. Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2006, vice Bert H. Mackie, term expired.

Diane Edith Watson,
of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federated States of Micronesia.

Appendix B / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Kent M. Wiedemann,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Alice Rae Yelen,
of Louisiana, to be a member of the National Museum Services Board for a term expiring December 6, 2001, vice Fay S. Howell, term expired.

Submitted January 7

James Roger Angel,
of Arizona, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring February 4, 2002, vice Charles Szu, term expired.

Alejandro N. Mayorkas,
of California, to be U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California, vice Nora Margaret Manella, resigned.

Myrta K. Sale,
of Maryland, to be Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget, vice G. Edward DeSeve.

John T. Spotila,
of New Jersey, to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, vice Sally Katzen.

Thomas Lee Strickland,
of Colorado, to be U.S. Attorney for the District of Colorado for the term of 4 years, vice Henry Lawrence Solano, resigned.

Submitted January 14

Charles Richard Barnes,
of Georgia, to be Federal Mediation and Conciliation Director, vice John Calhoun Wells, resigned.

Gary S. Guzy,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, vice Jonathan Z. Cannon, resigned.

Lorraine Pratte Lewis,
of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General, Department of Education, vice Thomas R. Bloom.

David C. Williams,
of Maryland, to be Inspector General for Tax Administration, Department of the Treasury (new position).

Submitted January 19

Cheryl Shavers,
of California, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Technology, vice Mary Lowe Good.

Submitted January 26

Marsha L. Berzon,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice John T. Noonan, Jr., retired.

Legrome D. Davis,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, vice Edmund V. Ludwig, retired.

Barbara Durham,
of Washington, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice Betty Binns Fletcher, retired.

Timothy B. Dyk,
of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit, vice Glenn L. Archer, Jr., retired.

Keith P. Ellison,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas, vice Norman W. Black, retired.

Gary Allen Feess,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California, vice James M. Ideman, retired.

Barry P. Goode,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice Charles E. Wiggins, retired.

Ronald M. Gould,
of Washington, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice Robert R. Beezer, retired.

William J. Hibbler,
of Illinois, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, vice James H. Alesia, retired.

Matthew F. Kennelly,
of Illinois, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, vice Paul E. Plunkett, retired.

Lynette Norton,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, vice Maurice B. Cohill, Jr., retired.

Richard A. Paez,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice Cecil F. Poole, resigned.

Virginia A. Phillips,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California, vice William M. Byrne, Jr., retired.

Stefan R. Underhill,
of Connecticut, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Connecticut, vice Peter C. Dorsey, retired.

T. John Ward,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern
District of Texas, vice William Wayne Justice, retired.

Helene N. White,
of Michigan, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Sixth
Circuit, vice Damon J. Keith, retired.

Ronnie L. White,
of Missouri, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern
District of Missouri, vice George F. Gunn, Jr., retired.

Submitted January 29

Robert Wayne Gee,
of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Fos-
sil Energy), vice Patricia Fry Godley, resigned.

Submitted February 4

Thomas J. Erickson,
of the District of Columbia, to be a Commissioner
of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for
the term expiring April 13, 2003, vice John E. Tull,
Jr., term expired.

Submitted February 8

Joseph Bordogna,
of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Director of the National
Science Foundation, vice Anne C. Petersen, resigned.

Anne Jeannette Udall,
of North Carolina, to be a member of the Board
of Trustees of the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and
Excellence in National Environmental Policy Founda-
tion for a term expiring October 6, 2004 (reappoint-
ment).

Submitted February 10

Richard Holbrooke,
of New York, to be the Representative of the United
States of America to the United Nations with the
rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary, and the Representative of the United
States of America in the Security Council of the
United Nations, vice Bill Richardson, resigned.

Richard Holbrooke,
of New York, to be a Representative of the United
States of America to the Sessions of the General As-
sembly of the United Nations during his tenure of
service as Representative of the United States of
America to the United Nations.

Carl Schnee,
of Delaware, to be U.S. Attorney for the District of
Delaware for the term of 4 years, vice Gregory M.
Sleet, resigned.

Submitted February 11

Leonard R. Page,
of Michigan, to be General Counsel of the National
Labor Relations Board for a term of 4 years, vice
Frederick L. Feinstein who was appointed to this posi-
tion during the last recess of the Senate.

John C. Truesdale,
of Maryland, to be a member of the National Labor
Relations Board for the term of 5 years expiring Au-
gust 27, 2003, vice William B. Gould IV, resigned,
to which position he was appointed during the last
recess of the Senate.

Submitted February 12

Naomi Reice Buchwald,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the South-
ern District of New York, vice Miriam G. Cedarbaum,
retired.

G. Edward DeSeve,
of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Director for Manage-
ment, Office of Management and Budget, vice John
A. Koskinen, to which position he was appointed dur-
ing the last recess of the Senate.

David M. Hurd,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the North-
ern District of New York, vice Con. G. Cholakakis, re-
tired.

Submitted February 23

Paula J. Dobriansky,
of Virginia, to be a member of the United States
Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term
expiring July 1, 2001 (reappointment).

George T. Frampton, Jr.,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the
Council on Environmental Quality, vice Kathleen A.
McGinty, resigned.

Submitted March 2

Lawrence J. Delaney,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air
Force, vice Arthur L. Money.

Lawrence Harrington,
of Tennessee, to be U.S. Executive Director of the
Inter-American Development Bank for a term of 3
years, vice L. Ronald Scheman, resigned.

Richard M. McGahey,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Sec-
retary of Labor, vice Olena Berg, resigned.

Appendix B / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Submitted March 5

Kelly H. Carnes,
of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary
of Commerce for Technology Policy, vice Graham R.
Mitchell, resigned.

John David Holum,
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Arms Control
and International Security, Department of State (new
position).

Bill Lann Lee,
of California, to be an Assistant Attorney General,
vice Deval L. Patrick, resigned.

Beth Nolan,
of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General,
vice Walter Dellinger.

David B. Sandalow,
of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary
of State for Oceans and International Environmental
and Scientific Affairs, vice Eileen B. Claussen, re-
signed.

Submitted March 8

Julio M. Fuentes,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Third
Circuit, vice Robert E. Cowen, retired.

Robert A. Katzmann,
of New York, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Second
Circuit, vice Jon O. Newman, retired.

M. James Lorenz,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the South-
ern District of California, vice Rudi M. Brewster, re-
tired.

W. Allen Pepper, Jr.,
of Mississippi, to be U.S. District Judge for the North-
ern District of Mississippi, vice L.T. Senter, Jr., re-
tired.

Karen E. Schreier,
of South Dakota, to be U.S. District Judge for the
District of South Dakota, vice Richard H. Battey, re-
tired.

Submitted March 15

Raymond C. Fisher,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth
Circuit, vice David R. Thompson, retired.

Adalberto Jose Jordan,
of Florida, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern
District of Florida, vice Lenore Carrero Nesbitt,
retired.

Submitted March 18

Brian E. Sheridan,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense,
vice Henry Allen Holmes.

Submitted March 23

Gary L. Visscher,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Occupational
Safety and Health Review Commission for a term
expiring April 27, 2001, vice Daniel Guttman.

Submitted March 24

William Haskell Alsup,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the North-
ern District of California, vice Thelton Eugene Hen-
derson, retired.

J. Rich Leonard,
of North Carolina, to be U.S. District Judge for the
Eastern District of North Carolina, vice W. Earl Britt,
retired.

Carlos Murguia,
of Kansas, to be U.S. District Judge for the District
of Kansas, vice Sam A. Crow, retired.

Marsha J. Pechman,
of Washington, to be U.S. District Judge for the West-
ern District of Washington, vice William L. Dwyer,
retired.

Submitted March 25

Johnnie E. Frazier,
of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department
of Commerce, vice Frank DeGeorge, resigned.

Ellen Segal Huvelle,
of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. District Judge
for the District of Columbia, vice John Garrett Penn,
retired.

James W. Klein,
of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. District Judge
for the District of Columbia, vice Stanley S. Harris,
retired.

Barbara M. Lynn,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern
District of Texas, vice Harold Barefoot Sanders, Jr.,
retired.

Marshall S. Smith,
of California, to be Deputy Secretary of Education,
vice Madeleine Kunin.

Submitted April 12

David L. Goldwyn,
of the District of Columbia to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (International Affairs), vice Robert Wayne Gee.

John T. Hanson,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Public and Intergovernmental Affairs), vice Kathy Elena Jurado, resigned.

Delmond J.H. Won,
of Hawaii, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for the term expiring June 30, 2002 (reappointment).

Submitted April 13

Robert J. Einhorn,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Non-proliferation) (new position).

Submitted April 20

Frank Almaguer,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Honduras.

John R. Hamilton,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Peru.

Donald W. Keyser,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Special Negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh and New Independent States Regional Conflicts.

Submitted April 21

Gwen C. Clare,
of South Carolina, a career member of the Senior Foreign Services class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Ecuador.

Oliver P. Garza,
of Texas, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Nicaragua.

Richard L. Morningstar,
of Massachusetts, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the European Union, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

Submitted April 22

Anna J. Brown,
of Oregon, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Oregon, vice Malcolm F. Marsh, retired.

Kermit Bye,
of North Dakota, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit, vice John D. Kelly, deceased.

Faith S. Hochberg,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Jersey, vice Joseph H. Rodriguez, retired.

H. Alston Johnson III,
of Louisiana, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, vice John M. Duhe, Jr., retired.

Ikram U. Khan,
of Nevada, to be a member of the Board of Regents of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences for a term expiring May 1, 1999, vice Alan Marshall Elkins, term expired.

Ikram U. Khan,
of Nevada, to be a member of the Board of Regents of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences for a term expiring May 1, 2005. (reappointment)

Submitted April 27

Joyce E. Leader,
of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guinea.

Submitted April 30

Frank H. McCarthy,
of Oklahoma, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Oklahoma, vice Thomas Rutherford Brett, retired.

Submitted May 3

Robert Raben,
of Florida, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Andrew Foiss, resigned.

Submitted May 5

David B. Dunn,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Zambia.

Edward B. Montgomery,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor, vice Richard M. McGahey.

Appendix B / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Submitted May 10

M. Michael Einik,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Mark Wylea Erwin,
of North Carolina, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Mauritius, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros and as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Seychelles.

Christopher E. Goldthwait,
of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Chad.

Edward E. Kaufman,
of Delaware, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2000 (reappointment).

Larry C. Napper,
of Texas, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Coordinator of the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Program, vice Ralph R. Johnson.

Donald Lee Pressley,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Agency for International Development, vice Thomas A. Dine, resigned.

Submitted May 12

Joseph Limprecht,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Albania.

Submitted May 18

Jack E. Hightower,
of Texas, to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science for a term expiring July 19, 1999, vice Robert S. Willard, resigned.

Jack E. Hightower,
of Texas, to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science for a term expiring July 19, 2004 (reappointment).

Submitted May 20

Robert Clarke Brown,
of Ohio, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring November 22, 2005 (reappointment).

James B. Lewis,
of New Mexico, to be Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact, Department of Energy, vice Corlis Smith Moody, resigned.

Lewis Andrew Sachs,
of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Gary Gensler.

Submitted May 24

Paul Steven Miller,
of California, to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2004 (reappointment).

Withdrawn May 24

J. Brian Atwood,
of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Brazil, which was sent to the Senate on January 6, 1999.

Submitted May 26

Mary Sheila Gall,
of Virginia, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for a term of 7 years from October 27, 1998 (reappointment).

A. Peter Burleigh,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Philippines and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Republic of Palau.

Alberto J. Mora,
of Florida, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2000 (reappointment).

Withdrawn May 26

Myrta K. Sale,
of Maryland, to be Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and

Budget, vice G. Edward DeSeve, which was sent to the Senate on January 7, 1999.

Submitted May 27

J. Brady Anderson,
of South Carolina, to be Administrator of the Agency for International Development, vice J. Brian Atwood.

Donald Keith Bandler,
of Pennsylvania, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cyprus.

Johnnie Carson,
of Illinois, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kenya.

Larry L. Levitan,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for a term of 5 years (new position).

Thomas J. Miller,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bismarck Myrick,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Liberia.

Steve H. Nickles,
of North Carolina, to be a member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for a term of 4 years (new position).

M. Osman Siddique,
of Virginia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Fiji, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Nauru, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Tonga, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Tuvalu.

Robert M. Tobias,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for a term of 5 years (new position).

James W. Wetzler,
of New York, to be a member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for a term of 3 years (new position).

Karen Hastie Williams,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for a term of 3 years (new position).

Patricia A. Coan,
of Colorado, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Colorado, vice Zita A. Weinshienk, retired.

Dolly M. Gee,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California, vice John G. Davies, retired.

William Joseph Haynes,
of Tennessee, to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee, vice Thomas A. Higgins, retired.

Victor Marrero,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, vice Sonia Sotomayor, elevated.

Charles R. Wilson,
of Florida, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, vice Joseph W. Hatchett, retired.

Fredric D. Woocher,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California.

Submitted June 7

Armando Falcon, Jr.,
of Texas, to be Director of the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight, Department of Housing and Urban Development, for a term of 5 years, vice Aida Alvarez.

Christopher C. Gallagher,
of New Hampshire, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2003 (reappointment).

David H. Kaeuper,
of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Congo.

Robert Z. Lawrence,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Jeffrey A. Frankel, resigned.

Appendix B / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Michael D. Metelits,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cape Verde.

Lawrence H. Summers,
of Maryland, to be Secretary of the Treasury, vice Robert E. Rubin.

Submitted June 8

Franz S. Leichter,
of New York, to be a Director of the Federal Housing Finance Board for a term expiring February 27, 2006, vice Daniel F. Evans, Jr., term expired.

Douglas L. Miller,
of South Dakota, to be a Director of the Federal Housing Finance Board for a term expiring February 27, 2002, vice Lawrence U. Costiglio, term expired.

Submitted June 9

John E. Lange,
of Wisconsin, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Botswana.

Delano Eugene Lewis, Sr.,
of New Mexico, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of South Africa.

Submitted June 10

Ann Brown,
of Florida, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for a term of 7 years from October 27, 1999 (reappointment).

Ann Brown,
of Florida, to be Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (reappointment).

James Catherwood Hormel,
of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Luxembourg, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

David W. Ogden,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Frank Hunger, resigned.

Withdrawn June 15

Richard A. Grafmeyer,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Social Security Advisory Board for the remainder of the term expiring September 30, 2000, vice Harlan Mathews, resigned, which was sent to the Senate on January 6, 1999.

Submitted June 17

Maryanne Trump Barry,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, vice H. Lee Sarokin, retired.

James E. Duffy, Jr.,
of Hawaii, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice Cynthia Holcomb Hall, retired.

Stuart E. Eizenstat,
of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, vice Lawrence H. Summers.

Elena Kagan,
of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit, vice James L. Buckley, retired.

F. Whitten Peters,
of the District of Columbia, to be Secretary of the Air Force, vice Sheila E. Widnall, resigned.

Michael A. Sheehan,
of New Jersey, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large (new position).

Withdrawn June 17

James W. Wetzler,
of New York, to be a member of the Internal Revenue Oversight Board for a term of 3 years (new position), which was sent to the Senate on May 27, 1999.

Submitted June 23

Irasema Garza,
of Maryland, to be Director of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labor, vice Karen Beth Nussbaum, resigned.

T. Michael Kerr,
of the District of Columbia, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, vice Maria Echaveste, resigned.

William J. Ranier,
of New Mexico, to be Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, vice Brooksley Elizabeth Born, resigned.

William J. Ranier,
of New Mexico, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the term expiring April 13, 2004, vice Brooksley Elizabeth Born, resigned.

Submitted June 24

Paul W. Fiddick,
of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, vice Wardell Clinton Townsend, Jr., resigned.

Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999 / Appendix B

Evelyn Simonowitz Lieberman,
of New York, to be Under Secretary of State for
Public Diplomacy (new position).

Submitted June 28

Richard Monroe Miles,
of South Carolina, a career member of the Senior
Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the
United States of America to the Republic of Bulgaria.

Michael Edward Ranneberger,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign
Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraor-
dinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of
America to the Republic of Mali.

Carl Spielvogel,
of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to
the Slovak Republic.

Submitted June 30

Charles A. Blanchard,
of Arizona, to be General Counsel of the Depart-
ment of the Army, vice William T. Coleman III.

Carol DiBattiste,
of Florida, to be Under Secretary of the Air Force,
vice F. Whitten Peters.

Barbro A. Owens-Kirkpatrick,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign
Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraor-
dinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of
America to the Republic of Niger.

Appendix C—Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary which are not included in this book.

Released January 2

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's exchange of letters with President Jiang Zemin of China on the 20th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations

Fact sheet: Strengthening America's Military

Released January 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, Office of Personnel Management Director Janice Lachance, and Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Care Chris Jennings on the President's long-term health care initiative

Released January 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey on the President's zero tolerance for drugs in prison initiative

Transcript of a press briefing by Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Robert Bell on military readiness

Released January 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore on the fiscal year 1999 budget surplus

Announcement of nomination for District of Columbia Superior Court and District of Columbia Court of Appeals Judges

Released January 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released January 8

Transcript of remarks by Special Counsel Gregory Craig on the upcoming Senate impeachment trial

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Attorney for the District of Colorado

Released January 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Council (NSC) Senior Director for Inter-American Affairs Jim Dobbins on the state visit of President Menem of Argentina

Statement by the Press Secretary: State Visit of President Menem of Argentina

Released January 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and Council on Environmental Quality Acting Chair George Frampton on the lands legacy initiative

Advance text of remarks by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger to the Carnegie International Non-Proliferation Conference

Statement by the Press Secretary: Trade Penalties Against Three Russian Entities

Released January 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore announcing 20 new empowerment zones

Transcript of a press briefing by Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed, and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the President's initiative to improve economic opportunities for Americans with disabilities

Released January 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Appointment of Donald K. Bandler as Special Assistant to the President for the NATO Summit

Appendix C / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Antony J. Blinken as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for European Affairs at the National Security Council

Statement by Special Counsel Gregory Craig on the Senate impeachment trial

Released January 16

Advance text of a statement by Special Counsel Gregory Craig on the Senate impeachment trial

Released January 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Education Secretary Richard Riley and Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on the State of the Union Address

Released January 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Counselor to the President Doug Sosnik, National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, and Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on the State of the Union Address

Released January 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by NSC Senior Director for Defense Policy and Arms Control Robert Bell on a limited national missile defense system

Released January 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, Nobel laureate Dr. Joshua Lederberg, and Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae) vice chair Jamie Gorelick on keeping America secure for the 21st century

Transcript of a press briefing by Attorney General Janet Reno, Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, and National Coordinator for Infrastructure Protection and Counterterrorism Richard A. Clarke on administration efforts to combat biological, chemical, and cyber terrorism

Released January 23

Statement by the Press Secretary: Situation in Romania

Released January 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, and Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on welfare-to-work funding in the budget

Released January 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs P.J. Crowley on the President's meeting with Pope John Paul II

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton's Meeting With His Holiness Pope John Paul II

Announcement of renomination for six U.S. Court of Appeals Judges and six U.S. District Judges, and nomination for two U.S. Court of Appeals Judges and four U.S. District Judges

Released January 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by NSC Senior Director for Inter-American Affairs Jim Dobbins on the visit of President-elect Chavez of Venezuela

Statement by the Press Secretary: State Visit by President Rawlings of Ghana

Released January 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema of Italy

Released January 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo on the President's meeting with the U.S. Conference of Mayors

Advance text of remarks by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling to the National Press Club

Released January 30

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the President's upcoming visits to Mexico and to Central America

Released February 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, Office of Management and Budget Director Jack Lew, and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the President's proposed budget

Released February 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on the President's visit to Boston, MA

Statement by the Press Secretary: Meeting With President Mahuad of Ecuador and President Fujimori of Peru

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Miles Lackey as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Legislative Affairs

Released February 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released February 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Council of Economic Advisers Chair Janet Yellen on the Economic Report of the President

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Senate vote rejecting the request for live witnesses in the Senate impeachment trial

Released February 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's meeting with President Jamil Mahuad of Ecuador and President Alberto Fujimori of Peru

Released February 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder and Treasury Under Secretary for Enforcement Jim Johnson on a gun control report by the Justice and Treasury Departments¹

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama

Released February 7

Announcement: Official United States Delegation to Amman, Jordan

Released February 8

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore to the Little League World Champions

¹This item was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 5, but it was embargoed for release until 10:06 a.m. on February 6.

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore on the 1999 National Drug Control Strategy

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey on the 1999 National Drug Control Strategy

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the President's visit to Jordan

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Attorney for the District of Delaware

Released February 9

Statement by the Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany

Released February 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

Released February 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by NSC Senior Director for European Affairs Antony Blinken on the President's meeting with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany

Released February 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, NSC Senior Director for Inter-American Affairs Jim Dobbins, Office of National Drug Control Policy Deputy Director Thomas Umberg, Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs Lael Brainard, and Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America Peter Romero on the President's upcoming visit to Mexico

Announcement: Official Delegation to Mexico

Announcement of nominations for U.S. District Judges for the Southern District of New York and the Northern District of New York

Released February 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Attorney General Janet Reno, National Security Adviser Sandy Berger, Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey, and National Economic Council Deputy Director Lael Brainard on the President's visit to Mexico

Appendix C / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Fact sheet: U.S. Support for Fire Prevention and Restoration Through the Mexico Nature Conservation Fund

Fact sheet: U.S.-Mexico Counterdrug Cooperation: Bi-national Performance Measures of Effectiveness

Fact sheet: U.S.-Mexico Economic Cooperation: New Financing Agreement To Support U.S. Exports to Mexico

Fact sheet: U.S.-Mexico Cooperation in Law Enforcement

Fact sheet: U.S.-Mexico Cooperation Against Border Violence

Fact sheet: U.S.-Mexico Cooperation on Tuberculosis Control

Fact sheet: U.S.-Mexico Civil Aviation Agreement

Released February 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by the First Lady and Tipper Gore on debt relief to Central American countries affected by Hurricane Mitch

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero; Ambassador Wendy Sherman, Counselor of the State Department; Assistant Director of Aid for Latin America and the Caribbean Mark Schneider; and Office of Management and Budget Executive Associate Director Josh Gotbaum on debt relief to Central American countries affected by Hurricane Mitch

Released February 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released February 19

Statement by the Press Secretary on acceleration of assistance for Jordan

Released February 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released February 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on the "Insure Kids Now" initiative

Statement by the Press Secretary: U.S.-Africa Ministerial in March

Released February 24

Fact sheet: Strengthening the U.S.-Ghana Partnership: The State Visit of President Rawlings

Released February 26

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the situation in Kosovo

Statement by the Press Secretary: Annual Presidential Certifications for Major Drug Producing and Transit Countries

Fact sheet: Overview of Annual Presidential Certification of Major Drug Producing and Transit Countries

Released March 1

Statement by the Press Secretary: Nigeria: Presidential Election Results

Released March 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Barry Toiv and NSC Spokesman David Leavy

Released March 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Barry Toiv and NSC Spokesman David Leavy

Released March 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, Deputy Chief of Staff Maria Echaveste, USIA Administrator Brian Atwood, and Acting Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero on the President's upcoming visit to Central America

Released March 5

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling and Council of Economic Advisers Chair Janet Yellen on the unemployment rate and the economy

Statement by the Press Secretary: Funds for the District of Columbia to Upgrade Computers for Year 2000

Announcement: Official Delegation to Central America

Released March 6

Statement by the Press Secretary: Murder of Americans by Colombian Rebels

Released March 8

Transcript of remarks by Peace Corps Director Mark Gearan on Peace Corps activities in Central America

Fact sheet: U.S. Immediate Relief Efforts Already Undertaken in Response to Hurricane Mitch

Fact sheet: President Clinton Announces New Disaster Assistance To Alleviate the Impact of Hurricane Mitch

Announcement of nomination for two U.S. Court of Appeals Judges and three U.S. District Judges

Released March 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Army Secretary Louis Caldera and Commander in Chief of U.S. Southern Command Charles Wilhelm on the U.S. military efforts in response to Hurricane Mitch

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore regarding the Kennedy-Murray ed-flex amendment

Statement by the Press Secretary: Medal of Freedom for George Mitchell

Fact sheet: President Clinton Outlines Central America Reconstruction Assistance

Released March 10

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, Acting Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero, Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner Doris Meissner, and Press Secretary Joe Lockhart on the President's visit to Guatemala

Fact sheet: President Clinton Highlights U.S. Support for Central America's Transformation

Statement by the Press Secretary on submission of a supplemental appropriation for the Department of the Interior

Announcement of nomination for U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Texas

Announcement of nomination for U.S. attorney for the Southern District of California

Released March 11

Fact sheet: President Clinton Highlights U.S. Support for Regional Cooperation at Antigua Summit

Released March 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice and NSC Senior Director for African Affairs Gayle Smith on the U.S.-Africa Partnership for the 21st Century

Statement by the Press Secretary: The President's Council on Food Safety/National Academy of Sciences Report

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Ninth Circuit and U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida

Released March 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released March 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcripts of press briefings by Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg on the President's Saint Patrick's Day schedule

Released March 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore to the National Newspaper Publishers Association

Released March 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released March 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by Vice President Gore on his telephone conversation with Prime Minister Yevgeniy Primakov of Russia

Released March 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Announcement of nominations for four U.S. District Judges

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Gore at the presentation of the Ron Brown Awards

Released March 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judges for the Northern District of Texas and the District of Columbia

Released March 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Appendix C / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement by the Press Secretary: Official Visit by Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji

Statement by the Press Secretary: Farm Loan Assistance

Statement by President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Chairman Warren B. Rudman on the review of security and counterintelligence at the Energy Department weapons labs

Released March 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released March 30

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton Meets With Nigerian President-Elect Obasanjo

Transcript of remarks by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the Warren Christopher portrait unveiling

Released March 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Initiates Review on Space Launch Ranges

Released April 1

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing an inter-agency delegation to southeast Europe

Transcript of a press briefing by U.S. Atlantic Fleet Commander in Chief Adm. J. Paul Reason, USN, and Air Combat Command Vice Commander Lt. Gen. Thomas Keck on the President's visit to Norfolk Naval Station

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of Defense William Cohen and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Hugh Shelton on the NATO mission in Kosovo

Released April 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by NSC Senior Director for Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs Eric Schwartz, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Julia Taft, USAID Deputy Administrator Hattie Babbitt, and Joint Chiefs Director of Logistics Lt. Gen. John McDuffie on relief efforts in the Balkans

Fact sheet: U.S. Humanitarian Relief Efforts for Kosovar Albanians

Released April 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Fact sheet: Additional U.S. Humanitarian Relief for Kosovar Albanians

Released April 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released April 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg, NSC Senior Director for Asian Affairs Kenneth G. Lieberthal, and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs Lael Brainard on the visit of Premier Zhu Rongji of China

Statement by the Press Secretary: U.S. Ports Closed to Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Vessels

Released April 8

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling and U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky on trade with China

Released April 9

Statement by the Press Secretary: Medal of Freedom for Helmut Kohl

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain

Released April 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of Defense William Cohen and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, on the situation in the Balkans

Statement by the Press Secretary on the verdict in the Susan McDougal trial

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's telephone conversation with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the situation in the Balkans

Released April 13

Transcript of a press briefing by the Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President and Mrs. Clinton's 1998 Federal tax return

Released April 14

Transcript of a press briefing by the Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling and Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers on the Universal Savings Accounts initiative

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of Commerce Bill Daley on Census 2000

Released April 15

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the situation in Kosovo

Released April 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency James Lee Witt, Agency for International Development Deputy Administrator Hattie Babbitt, and NSC Director for Multilateral Affairs Eric Schwartz on the humanitarian situation in the Balkans

Released April 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Office of Management and Budget Director Jack Lew, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, and Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre on the fiscal year 1999 supplemental budget request for Kosovo

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Hungarian President Goncz

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's meeting with FEMA Director James Lee Witt and members of the Project Impact Fire Services Partnership for Disaster Prevention

Released April 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the NATO 50th anniversary celebration

Statement by the Press Secretary: Imprisonment of Four Baha'is in Iran

Text of the citation for the presentation of the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany

Released April 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released April 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Announcement of nomination for two U.S. District Judges and two U.S. Court of Appeals Judges

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's decision to seek a delay in the destruction of the declared stocks of smallpox virus

Released April 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the North Atlantic Council meeting on Kosovo

Statement by the Press Secretary on the White House homepage link to information on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization 50th Anniversary Summit

Released April 24

Fact sheet: NATO Summit: NATO-Ukraine Commission

Fact sheet: NATO Summit: Membership Action Plan

Fact sheet: NATO Summit: The New Strategic Concept

Released April 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, and Secretary of Defense William Cohen on the NATO 50th Anniversary Summit

Released April 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process

Released April 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, Treasury Under Secretary for Enforcement Jim Johnson, and Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on proposed gun control legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary: Establishment of an Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U.S. Seaports

Released April 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Humanitarian Exemptions From Sanctions

Released April 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore at a youth issues event

Appendix C / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Released April 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Director of the National Economic Council Lael Brainard and NSC Senior Director for Asian Affairs Kenneth G. Lieberthal on the President's upcoming meeting with Prime Minister Obuchi of Japan

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Oklahoma

Released May 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Council on Environmental Quality Acting Chair George Frampton and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner on clean air initiatives¹

Fact sheet: New Sanctions Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Released May 2

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by Russian Special Envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin

Released May 3

Fact sheet: U.S.-Japan Cooperation in Science and Technology and the Environment

Fact sheet: U.S.-Japan Enhanced Initiative on Deregulation and Competition Policy

Released May 5

Transcript of a readout by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore on the Internet

Transcript of a press briefing by Defense Secretary William Cohen, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Hugh Shelton, and Supreme Allied Commander of European Forces Gen. Wesley Clark on the situation in the Balkans

Transcript of a press briefing by U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Brian Atwood and Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration Julia Taft on the President's meeting with Joint Task Force Shining Hope

Announcement: National Finalists for 1999-2000 White House Fellowships

Released May 6

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the G-8 statement on Kosovo

Released May 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on the White House Strategy Session on Children, Violence, and Responsibility

Statement by the Press Secretary: Administration Response to Report on China Satellite Launch

Statement by the Press Secretary: Working Visit With His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan

Released May 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on the White House Strategy Meeting on Children, Violence, and Responsibility

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Cardoso of Brazil

Released May 11

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released May 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released May 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released May 14

Transcript of a press readout by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: U.S. Ports No Longer Closed to Vessels Owned and Operated by the Government of Montenegro

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Court of Appeals ruling on clean air standards

Released May 17

Statement by Counsel to the President Charles Ruff on the President's 1998 Public Financial Disclosure Report

Released May 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

¹This item was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 30, but it was embargoed for release until May 1.

Transcript of remarks by the First Lady on her trip to the Balkans

Statement by the Press Secretary: Presidential Mission Travels to the Fifth African/African-American Summit

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan

Released May 19

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Education Secretary Richard Riley and Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Bruce Reed on proposed legislation to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Initiates Review on Space Launch Failures

Released May 20

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit to North Korea by Dr. William J. Perry

Statement by the Press Secretary: Colombian Peace Process

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Mara Rudman as Counselor to the President and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Released May 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a radio actuality by Vice President Gore on the Iowa disaster declaration

Statement by the Press Secretary on passage of the 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Sean Maloney as Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary

Released May 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Democracy in Georgia

Released May 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Agriculture Secretary Daniel Glickman and Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo on the White House Community Empowerment Conference

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Arturo Valenzuela as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Inter-American Affairs at the National Security Council

Statement by the Press Secretary: Amended Mines Protocol of the Convention on Conventional Weapons

Statement by the Press Secretary: Release of Cox Report

Released May 26

Statement by the Press Secretary: Presidential Delegation to Nigerian Inauguration

Advance text of remarks by Office of Management and Budget Director Jack Lew at the Brookings Institution

Released May 27

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton's Trip to Europe

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore at the juvenile justice press conference

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge and five U.S. District Judges

Released May 28

Statement by the Press Secretary: Elie Wiesel To Visit Refugee Camps in Macedonia and Albania

Released June 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released June 2

Fact sheet: New U.S. Aircraft Deployments to Operation Allied Force and U.S. Contributions to the Kosovo International Security Force (KFOR)

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing Special Envoy for the Americas Buddy MacKay's trip to Central America

Released June 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by the President's Coordinator for Climate Change Todd Stern on the Executive order on greening the Government through efficient energy management

Released June 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on efforts to further employment of people with disabilities

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Released June 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on the President's radio address on mental health ¹

Released June 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on the White House Conference on Mental Health ²

Released June 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Roger Ballentine as Deputy Assistant to the President for Environmental Initiatives

Released June 8

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Official Working Visit with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt

Statement by the Press Secretary: Actions by Iran Against Jews

Announcement: President Asks the Congress To Add Funding To Strengthen Embassy Security and To Meet Supreme Court Requirements for 2000 Census

Released June 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Elie Wiesel Reports on his Visit to Refugee Camps in Macedonia and Albania

Text of a report from Elie Wiesel to the President

Released June 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: African Growth and Opportunity Act and Caribbean Basin Initiative Enhancement

Released June 11

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Jeffrey A. Hunker as Senior Director for Infrastructure Protection, Office of Transnational Threats, at the National Security Council

¹This item was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 4, but it was embargoed for release until 10:06 a.m. on June 5.

²This item was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 4, but it was embargoed for release until 6 p.m. on June 6.

Transcript of a press briefing by Brig. Gen. Leroy Barnidge, Jr., USAF, on B-2 bomber operations

Released June 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the President's upcoming visit to Europe

Statement by the Press Secretary: Presidential Delegation to South African Inauguration

Released June 15

Announcement: Official U.S. Delegation for President Clinton's Trip to Europe, June 15–June 22

Released June 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling and Deputy Under Secretary of Labor for International Labor Affairs Andrew Samet on the President's remarks to the International Labor Organization Conference in Geneva, Switzerland

Released June 17

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judges for the Third Circuit, the Ninth Circuit, and the District of Columbia Circuit

Released June 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the President's bilateral meetings with foreign leaders

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the meeting of the G-7 and G-8

Statement by the Press Secretary: Jerusalem Embassy Act Waiver

Fact sheet: The Cologne Debt Initiative

Fact sheet: Strengthening the International Financial Architecture

Released June 19

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton's Visit to Macedonia and Aviano, Italy

Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999 / Appendix C

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the President's meeting with Prime Minister Sergey Stepashin of Russia

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg on the G-8 Summit

Statement by the Press Secretary: The President's Trip to America's New Markets

Transcript of a June 18 joint press conference in Helsinki by President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev of Russia on implementation of an international security presence in Kosovo

Released June 20

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the President's meeting with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Released June 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Fact sheet: U.S.-EU Cooperation on Russia and Ukraine

Fact sheet: The 1999 U.S.-EU Summit: Strengthening the Transatlantic Economic Partnership

Released June 24

Transcript of a press briefing by press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Official Working Visit by Korean President Kim Dae-jung

Released June 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Working Visit by Australian Prime Minister John Howard

Transcript of a press briefing by Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, Office of Management and Budget Director Jack Lew, and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the midsession review of the Federal budget

Released June 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling and Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on the President's plan to modernize Medicare

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling, and Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on the President's plan to modernize Medicare

Released June 30

Statement by the Press Secretary on resolution of charges against Webb and Suzy Hubbell

Statement by the Press Secretary on the release of newly declassified documents relating to events in Chile from 1973 to 1978

Appendix D—Presidential Documents Published in the Federal Register

This appendix lists Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the Federal Register. The texts of the documents are printed in the Federal Register (F.R.) at the citations listed below. The documents are also printed in title 3 of the Code of Federal Regulations and in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.

PROCLAMATIONS

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7162	Jan. 14	Religious Freedom Day, 1999	2989
7163	Jan. 15	Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 1999	2991
7164	Jan. 29	National Consumer Protection Week, 1999	5583
7165	Feb. 1	National African American History Month, 1999	5585
7166	Feb. 3	American Heart Month, 1999	6181
7167	Feb. 7	Death of King Hussein	6777
7168	Feb. 25	American Red Cross Month, 1999	10101
7169	Mar. 1	Irish-American Heritage Month, 1999	10381
7170	Mar. 1	Women's History Month, 1999	10383
7171	Mar. 1	Save Your Vision Week, 1999	10385
7172	Mar. 4	Death of Harry A. Blackmun	11373
7173	Mar. 11	National Older Workers Employment Week, 1999	12879
7174	Mar. 19	National Poison Prevention Week, 1999	14353
7175	Mar. 24	Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy, 1999	14807
7176	Mar. 25	Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 1999	15123
7177	Apr. 1	Cancer Control Month, 1999	17075
7178	Apr. 1	National Child Abuse Prevention Month, 1999	17077
7179	Apr. 7	National Equal Pay Day, 1999	17499
7180	Apr. 8	National D.A.R.E. Day, 1999	17939
7181	Apr. 9	Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 1999	18317
7182	Apr. 9	National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, 1999	18321
7183	Apr. 14	Jewish Heritage Week, 1999	19017
7184	Apr. 15	National Park Week, 1999	19439
7185	Apr. 16	National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week, 1999	19681
7186	Apr. 16	National Volunteer Week, 1999	19683
7187	Apr. 22	National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 1999	22777
7188	Apr. 23	National Science and Technology Week, 1999	23005
7189	Apr. 30	Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 1999	24275
7190	Apr. 30	Older Americans Month, 1999	24277
7191	Apr. 30	Law Day, U.S.A., 1999	24279
7192	Apr. 30	Loyalty Day, 1999	24281
7193	May 5	National Day of Prayer, 1999	25189
7194	May 5	Mother's Day 1999	25191
7195	May 10	Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, 1999	25797
7196	May 17	World Trade Week, 1999	27437
7197	May 17	National Defense Transportation Day and National Transportation Week, 1999	27439
7198	May 20	National Safe Boating Week, 1999	28083
7199	May 21	National Maritime Day, 1999	28709
7200	May 22	Small Business Week, 1999	28711
7201	May 26	Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day, 1999	29769
7202	May 28	To Eliminate Circumvention of the Quantitative Limitations Applicable to Imports of Wheat Gluten	29773

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7204	June 11	Flag Day and National Flag Week, 1999	32381
7205	June 18	Father's Day, 1999	33737
7206	June 30	To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences and for Other Purposes	36229

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13110	Jan. 11	Nazi War Criminal Records Interagency Working Group	2419
13111	Jan. 12	Using Technology To Improve Training Opportunities for Federal Govern- ment Employees	2793
13112	Feb. 3	Invasive Species	6183
13113	Feb. 10	President's Information Technology Advisory Committee, Further Amend- ments to Executive Order 13035, as Amended	7489
13114	Feb. 25	Further Amendment to Executive Order 12852, as Amended, Extending the President's Council on Sustainable Development	10099
13115	Mar. 25	Interagency Task Force on the Roles and Missions of the United States Coast Guard	15283
13116	Mar. 31	Identification of Trade Expansion Priorities and Discriminatory Procure- ment Practices	16333
13117	Mar. 31	Further Amendment to Executive Order 12981, as Amended	16591
13118	Mar. 31	Implementation of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998	16595
13119	Apr. 13	Designation of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia/Montenegro), Albania, the Airspace Above, and Adjacent Waters as a Combat Zone	18797
13120	Apr. 27	Ordering the Selected Reserve and Certain Individual Ready Reserve Members of the Armed Forces to Active Duty	23007
13121	Apr. 30	Blocking Property of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro, and Prohibiting Trade Transactions Involving the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in Response to the Situation in Kosovo	24021
13122	May 25	Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Southwest Border	29201
13123	June 3	Greening the Government Through Efficient Energy Management	30851
13124	June 4	Amending the Civil Service Rules Relating to Federal Employees With Psychiatric Disabilities	31103
13125	June 7	Increasing Participation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Federal Programs	31105
13126	June 12	Prohibition of Acquisition of Products Produced by Forced or Indentured Child Labor	32383
13127	June 14	Amendment to Executive Order 13073, Year 2000 Conversion	32793
13128	June 25	Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act	34703

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99-10	Jan. 25	Presidential Determination: Emergency migration and refugee assistance relating to the Kosovo crisis	5925
99-11	Jan. 28	Presidential Determination: Funding for international financial institutions and other international organizations and programs	6773
99-12	Feb. 3	Presidential Determination: Vietnamese cooperation in accounting for United States prisoners of war and missing in action (POW/MIA)	6779
99-13	Feb. 4	Presidential Determination: Assistance to Iraqi democratic opposition organizations	6781
99-14	Feb. 16	Presidential Determination: Waiver of prohibition on assistance to Montenegro	9263
	Feb. 24	Notice: Continuation of emergency relating to Cuba and regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels	9903
99-15	Feb. 26	Presidential Determination: Certification for major illicit drug producing and drug transit countries	11319
99-16	Mar. 4	Presidential Determination: U.S. contribution to Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO)	13495
	Mar. 10	Notice: Continuation of Iran emergency	12239
	Mar. 23	Memorandum: Delegation of authority under section 577 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1999 (as enacted in Public Law 105-277)	14809
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	Mar. 31	Memorandum: Delegation of the functions vested in the President by sections 1601(e) and 1601(g) of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998, as enacted in Public Law 105-277	17079
99-19	Mar. 31	Presidential Determination: Emergency migration and refugee assistance relating to the Kosovo crisis	17081
99-20	Mar. 31	Presidential Determination: Drawdown of articles and services to support international relief efforts for Kosovar refugees	17083
99-21	Apr. 8	Presidential Determination: Assistance for Croatia	18551
	Apr. 16	Memorandum: Delegation of authority under sections 212(f) and 251(a)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act	53883
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	May 18	Notice: Continuation of emergency with respect to Burma	27443
99-23	May 18	Presidential Determination: Emergency assistance for Kosovar refugees	28085
99-24	May 18	Presidential Determination: U.S. contribution to Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO)	28087
99-25	May 24	Presidential Determination: Waiver and certification of statutory provisions regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization	29537
	May 26	Memorandum: Delegation of authority under section 2106 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998, as contained in the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277)	29539
	May 27	Notice: Continuation of emergency with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)	29205
99-26	June 3	Presidential Determination: Normal trade relations with Belarus	31109
99-27	June 3	Presidential Determination: Normal trade relations with Vietnam	31111
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	June 10	Memorandum: Reports to Congress on the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions	32795
99-29	June 17	Presidential Determination: Suspension of limitation under the Jerusalem Embassy Act	33739
99-30	June 23	Presidential Determination: Canada-U.S. atomic energy agreement protocol ..	35921

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