

And President Clinton, your comment on President Mubarak's statement?

President Mubarak. Is the question directed to me?

Q. Yes, first, Your Excellency.

President Mubarak. I think I have already mentioned that, in the comments I started with, there should be some steps to make that feel much far better and to start the peace process. Eighteen months is quite a lot; we could achieve in one year so many things. The peace process was already started years and years ago. The Palestinians have signed some agreements. If Mr. Barak—and I'm sure that he's going to do it—starts implementing the Wye agreement, for example makes some steps for the settlements, I think the process will move. And we hope that we could finish or reach a final status in one year. One year and a half is quite a lot of time for negotiations.

President Clinton. I agree with that. It doesn't have anything to do with the time left I have on my term. My advice would be—let me go back to 1993 when I became President. Our biggest problem was the domestic economy was not doing well, and we had a \$290 billion deficit, and there was no easy way to close it. And we presented an economic plan to the Congress that passed by only one vote in both Houses. It was very controversial; it was very difficult, I think in that sense—politically, internally—was perhaps more controversial than making—than in Israel going forward with the peace process maybe now, given the vote in the last election.

I think it's better, if you know you've got to do something without which you cannot succeed in serving your people in the long run, it's better to do it sooner rather than later, generally. That is generally true. And if it is going to be difficult and there are tough consequences, it's better to take them early rather than later. That is just a general rule. Because otherwise, if you don't do it, you may never get around to doing it, but it won't get any better. It will just get worse and worse and worse.

So it's better to just take a deep breath and go on and do what you think has to be done. That's what I believe.

Press Secretary Lockhart. Thank you.

President Clinton. First—next question, I'll give you—next time we come, I'll give you the first one, after we do the roll. I've got to go. Thank you.

President Mubarak. Thank you very much.

President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 177th news conference began at 1:47 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; CNN senior White House correspondent Wolf Blitzer; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; King Abdullah II of Jordan; outgoing Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak of Israel; and former Senator Bill Bradley. President Mubarak referred to President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks on the Charters of Freedom Project July 1, 1999

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. As you might imagine, this is a very special day for Hillary and for me, in a signal honor for us to have the chance to serve at this moment. I want to thank John Carlin for his faithful stewardship of these great documents; thank my friend Mike Armstrong for his generosity and for calling on others in the business community to help in this endeavor; thank Secretary Riley and NASA and the Department of Com-

merce for working with the National Archives in designing and developing the new encasement that will house our charters. I thank the Center for Civic Education for their efforts to teach our children the importance of history.

I'd like to thank these young people who are here who read—first they helped us recite the Pledge of Allegiance, and then they read from our founding documents. And I thought that young man did a remarkable job introducing

Hillary. I thought they were all great. Let's give them a hand. *[Applause]*

And I would like to say a special word of appreciation to Congressman Ralph Regula for his leadership and for proving that this is one issue which is not a partisan issue. This is an American issue, and I'm very grateful to him for his leadership in the United States Congress on this.

On July 4, 1776, King George of England wrote in his diary, "Nothing of importance happened today." Now, even making allowances for the absence of world news and the Internet, His Majesty's diary entry stands as one of the more inaccurate statements ever written. *[Laughter]* We all know that those who put their names to the Declaration of Independence changed the world forever.

Before then, liberty had been a rare and fleeting thing in the course of human history. Citizens of ancient democracies enjoyed it but let it slip from their grasp. So the Founders labored mightily to craft a Declaration of Independence, then a Constitution and a Bill of Rights that they hoped would help America to beat the odds and keep liberty alive.

Two hundred and twenty-three years later we can safely say they succeeded not only in keeping the liberty they created, in fact, alive, but in moving ever closer, generation after generation, to the pure ideals embodied in the words they wrote.

Today, our liberty extends not just to white men with property but to all Americans. Our concept of freedom no longer includes the so-called freedom to keep slaves or extract profit from the labor of children. And our Constitution is the inspiration behind scores of democratic governments around the world, from Japan to Poland to Guatemala to South Africa.

Each generation of Americans is called upon not only to preserve that liberty but to enhance it; not only to protect the institutions that secure our liberty but to renew and reform them to meet the challenges of the present with an eye for the future. The renewal of our generation—in our economy, our social fabric, our world leadership for peace and freedom—is well symbolized by the project we celebrate today, employing the finest minds and latest technologies to preserve these charters of freedom for generations yet unborn.

When Hillary and I first realized that the turn of the millennium would occur while we

were in the White House, we knew we had an obligation to mark it in ways that would be good for the country, in her words, "by honoring the past and imagining the future."

What we do with these hallowed pieces of parchment, all Americans can do with the important historical treasures that exist all around them, in their attics, their parks, their townhalls. Saving America's treasures is not about living in the past. It is about conveying to future generations the American story in all its texture and richness and detail, about fulfilling our duty to be good ancestors, about catching the spirit Thomas Jefferson had in his later years, when he became devoted to preserving desks and chairs and other ordinary things from his extraordinary times. "These small things," he wrote, "may perhaps, like the relics of Saints, help to nourish our devotion to this holy bond of Union and keep it longer alive and warm in our affections."

I want to thank, first and foremost, Hillary for leading this effort, which has already accomplished so much from restoring the Star-Spangled Banner to honoring our great artists, thinkers, and scientists. I look forward to walking on some of those 2,000 millennium trails we'll build together and to naming more and more millennium communities.

We can all take pride in our efforts to renew our national treasures, for in a larger sense, the story of our Nation is the story of constant renewal, the realization that we preserve the ideals embodied in these documents not simply by revering them but by reaffirming our commitment to them. Each generation must widen the circle of opportunity, deepen the meaning of freedom, and strengthen the bonds of our community.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." We fought a war of revolution to make those words real in 1776. We rededicated ourselves to that proposition in 1863, recognizing that the bright words of the Declaration could not abide the stain of slavery or endure the breaking of our Union. We rededicated ourselves at the coming of the industrial age, when we recognized that new measures were required to protect and advance equal opportunity and freedom. We rededicated ourselves again in 1920, when we ratified the 19th amendment, granting women the right to vote. We saved those ideals in World War II and for millions upon millions of people in the cold war. We rededicated ourselves again in 1963,

hearing and heeding Dr. King's dream that, one day, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners would one day sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

Today, at the coming of the information age, we rededicate ourselves yet again. Thank God our challenges are not those of depression or war but those brought on by this hopeful and remarkable explosion in technology, by the globalization of our economy, by all the changes in the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world.

To keep our ideals alive, we must embrace new ideas and follow a new course. Because we believe equal opportunity in 1999 is just as important as it was in 1776, we must rededicate ourselves to the truest guarantor of that opportunity, a world-class educational system that benefits every single child.

Because we believe the Federal Government must promote the general welfare, as our Founders instructed, we are dedicated to using its resources to pay squarely our single, greatest challenge as a nation today, the aging of America, and to do so in a way that pays off our national debt for the first time since 1835.

Because we believe every human being has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and no one should be discriminated against, uprooted, abused, or killed because of his or her race or ethnic background or religion, we are proud to stand with our allies in defense of these ideals in Kosovo.

It is natural for any American contemplating the documents behind me to look upon those who crafted them as almost superhuman in their wisdom and the times that they lived as a golden age. But the more you read about them, the more you respect their achievement because the Founders were not gods on Earth; they were farmers and lawyers, printers and merchants, surveyors and soldiers, chosen by their constituents to hash out divergent interests and make difficult decisions about the future, to engage, in other words, in politics.

I said at my alma mater, Georgetown, last week, that at its best, politics is about values, ideas, and action. That's what they were about. They turned politics into public service and made it a noble endeavor and left us a framework to keep it going. The Declaration and the Constitution emerged only after fierce debate and difficult compromise. Today, these documents enjoy universal acclaim.

And at the time they were written, believe it or not, many Americans—though, thank goodness not a majority—actually did not agree with them. Yet, the framers refused to let serious differences of opinion become excuses to put off action. They overcame their differences and completed their tasks and stayed true to an idea that Jefferson would later express in his first Inaugural, that every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle.

We have to keep that idea in mind today. The greatest threat to our democracy today, and certainly to freedom and democracy around the world, is the poisonous idea that what divides us is far more important than what we have in common; that as long as we have differences of opinion, we must have personal animosities, and we cannot have positive action. This is a dubious political strategy, a dangerous governing strategy, wrong as a matter of historical fact, and an affront to the sacred documents we gather here to save.

Despite their many differences, the framers drafted, debated, and signed the Declaration of Independence in less than a month. They drafted, debated, and approved the Constitution in less than 5 months. If they could produce those enduring charters of freedom in a matter of months, surely there is no reason why we here in our time cannot make major progress in the remaining months of this millennium, to prepare our Nation for the new millennium and a 21st century which I am convinced will be America's best days.

We owe it to these children to honor their past, to imagine their future, and to build a bridge to that future every single one of them can cross. So as we preserve the documents that launched this, the greatest journey in freedom and opportunity in all of history, let us resolve to do all we can to keep alive the spirit that got us to this point. These children will do the rest.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:55 p.m. in the Rotunda at the National Archives. In his remarks, he referred to C. Michael Armstrong, chairman and chief executive officer, AT&T; and students Jasmine Smith, Kevin Su, and Nora Skelly, who read passages from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First

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Lady. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Export Controls on High-Performance Computers and Semiconductors

July 1, 1999

Today I am announcing reforms to the administration's export controls on high-performance computers (HPC) and semiconductors. These policies will strengthen America's high-tech competitiveness, while maintaining controls that are needed to maintain our national security.

These reforms are needed because of the extraordinarily rapid rate of technological change in the computer industry. The number-crunching ability of a supercomputer that once filled a room and cost millions of dollars is now available in an inexpensive desktop computer. Computers that are widely used by businesses and can be manufactured by European, Japanese, and Asian companies will soon exceed the limits that I established on high-performance computers in 1996. These business computers have become commodities, and next year U.S. and foreign vendors are expected to sell 5 million of them.

Maintaining these controls would hurt U.S. exports without benefiting our national security. Moreover, a strong, vibrant high-tech industry

is in America's national security interests. That is why I have decided to raise the licensing threshold of high-performance computers to so-called tier two and tier three countries. For tier three countries, which present the greatest risk from a national security viewpoint, the administration will continue its policy of maintaining a lower threshold for military end-users than civilian end-users. I have also directed my national security and economic advisers to provide me with recommendations to update our export controls every 6 months.

Due to legislation passed by the Congress in 1997, this change will require congressional approval and a 6-month period before it can go into effect. I will work with the Congress to pass legislation that would reduce this period to one month, so that we can keep up with the rapid pace of technological change. I also want to work with the Congress on a bipartisan basis to explore longer term solutions to how we deal with commodities like widely available computers and microprocessors.

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 1999

July 1, 1999

I am delighted to join my fellow Americans across the nation and around the world in celebrating Independence Day.

Today we gather with family and friends to commemorate the 223rd anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In marking this historic event, and in remembering the courage and sacrifice of the patriots and soldiers who fought and died that we might shape our own destiny, we are truly celebrating the birth of our great country.

Every generation of Americans owes a profound debt of gratitude to our Founders for

envisioning a nation that, as President Lincoln so eloquently put it, was "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Inspired by this same vision, we have built together a society in which freedom and democracy do more than enlighten our laws and political institutions—they permeate our culture and way of life. We have only to look at the recent tragic events in Kosovo to recognize how blessed we are to live in a land where life, liberty, and equality are cherished rights, upheld by courts and custom, and where, as we realize more each day, our