

a President gets two terms, and then the President has to go find something else to do with his life. And there are lots of other worthy things to do.

And I was a very happy person before I became President. I've never had any trouble finding something interesting to do that I believed in. And I will do my best to use the opportunity and the gift the American people gave me to serve in this position to be a useful citizen of my country and the world for the rest of my life, and I have no doubt that there will be some way I can do that. And I'm, frankly, kind of excited about it. I mean, it's a new challenge. I'll have to think in a different way and do a different way.

Will I miss a lot of the things about this job? Yes. I'll even miss all of you, believe it or not. *[Laughter]* But I'm just grateful that I've had the chance to serve and that the results have been good for our people and for our country and, I think, for the world.

And you know, that's part of life. Life has its rhythms. And the people that are most satisfied and most happy in life take the rhythms of life and make the most of them, instead of sitting around moping and wishing the rhythms were something other than they are. That's just not the way the life works. And listen, I'm way ahead, and I'm very grateful.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 179th news conference began at 2:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan; First Coast Guard District Commander Rear Adm. Richard M. Larrabee, USCG, who headed the search and recovery efforts off the coast of Martha's Vineyard, MA, to locate the missing aircraft that carried John F. Kennedy, Jr., his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and her sister Lauren Bessette. The President also referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; former Gov. Ned Ray McWherter of Tennessee; actor Tom Hanks; former U.S. Trade Representative Michael (Mickey) Kantor; President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; President Andres Pastrana of Colombia; Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong, Edwin (Buzz) Aldrin, and Michael Collins; physicist Stephen W. Hawking; former Senator George J. Mitchell, who led the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; United Kingdom Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam; civil rights leader Jesse Jackson; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Statement on Senate Inaction on the Nomination for Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division *July 21, 1999*

I strongly support the efforts of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans to call attention to the failure of the Senate to confirm Bill Lann Lee as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

I resubmitted Mr. Lee's nomination to the Senate more than 4 months ago, yet the Senate Judiciary Committee has not considered his nomination. Bill Lee has an excellent record as Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. Under his leadership, the Justice Department has enforced our civil rights laws justly and fairly. The Department is combating hate crimes, ensuring fair housing, fighting illegal discrimination against persons with

disabilities, protecting workers from exploitation, and taking other strong actions to protect people's rights.

Some of Mr. Lee's opponents have decided to use his nomination as a means of expressing their disagreement with the civil rights laws themselves. This is wrong. He deserves to be considered based on his record and abilities, not blocked because some Senators disagree with the law of the land. To refuse to allow the Senate to vote on his nomination does a disservice to the confirmation process, to this outstanding nominee, and to the American people.