

July 22 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

is a relatively easy decision to make if the Congress can be convinced that that's where the American people are. And I believe people of all ages think that now we have this moment which is once in a lifetime, maybe once in a generation opportunity, and we ought to take it and go with it.

So I thank you for coming, and I'm going to start down here and go over here and shake

hands with anybody who wants to come by and say hello.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in the Dart Auditorium. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on House Action on a Proposed Republican Tax Cut

July 22, 1999

Last night the Republicans went behind closed doors, not to strengthen Medicare and Social Security, but to provide political cover for their exploding tax cut. Today the Republicans charged ahead and passed a plan that threatens our ability to pay off the debt and strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The plain fact is that their tax plan is designed to explode to a \$3 trillion cost at the very time

that Medicare and Social Security come under strain. It would also force deep and devastating cuts in a broad range of domestic programs, including education, the environment, and law enforcement. If the Republicans send me a plan that undermines our ability to reform Social Security and Medicare and abandons the fiscal discipline that has helped to fuel our economic growth, I will send it straight back with a veto.

Statement on Senate Action on Proposed Hate Crimes Legislation

July 22, 1999

I am gratified that the Senate has unanimously passed the strong legislation I proposed to combat hate crimes.

All Americans deserve protection from hate crimes, and that requires us to stand together against intolerance, prejudice, and bigotry. The hate crimes prevention act gives power to those values and will help make our country more safe and secure.

Senate approval of this legislation gives it real momentum, and I call on the House of Representatives to meet its responsibility in combating violence that is fueled by hate. We have some distance to go before the hate crimes prevention act is the law of the land, but tonight's action by the Senate is a big step forward in the journey toward greater protection for all Americans.

Statement on Signing the National Missile Defense Act of 1999

July 22, 1999

I have signed into law H.R. 4, the "National Missile Defense Act of 1999." My Administration is committed to addressing the growing danger that rogue nations may develop and field long-range missiles capable of delivering weap-

ons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies.

Section 2 of this Act states that it is the policy of the United States to deploy as soon as technologically possible an effective National Missile

Defense (NMD) system with funding subject to the annual authorization of appropriations and the annual appropriation of funds for NMD. By specifying that any NMD deployment must be subject to the authorization and appropriations process, the legislation makes clear that no decision on deployment has been made. This interpretation, which is confirmed by the legislative record taken as a whole, is also required to avoid any possible impairment of my constitutional authorities.

Section 3 of the Act states that it is the policy of the United States to seek continued negotiated reductions in Russian nuclear forces. Thus, section 3 puts the Congress on record as continuing to support negotiated reductions in strategic nuclear arms, reaffirming my Administration's position that our missile defense policy must take into account our arms control and nuclear nonproliferation objectives.

Next year, we will, for the first time, determine whether to deploy a limited National Missile Defense, when we review the results of flight tests and other developmental efforts, consider cost estimates, and evaluate the threat. Any NMD system we deploy must be operationally effective, cost-effective, and enhance our security. 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.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 22, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 4, approved July 22, was assigned Public Law No. 106-38. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 23.

Statement on the Death of King Hassan II of Morocco *July 23, 1999*

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn that His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco has passed away. The prayers of all Americans go out to the royal family and the people of Morocco.

Over his 38-year reign, King Hassan II demonstrated time and again his leadership, his courage, and his willingness to embrace change. He worked tirelessly to promote the welfare of his people, and in recent years he took important steps to deepen freedom in his country.

He offered wise counsel to every U.S. President since John F. Kennedy. He worked to break down barriers among the peoples of the Middle East, bravely opening a dialog with Israel, helping to arrange President Sadat's historic journey to Jerusalem, seeking greater tolerance and stability across the region.

Hillary had the honor of being his guest just a few months ago. We will never forget his extraordinary hospitality nor the many times he stood shoulder to shoulder with the United States.

King Sidi Mohammed and the Moroccan people can continue to count on the support of the United States. To King Sidi Mohammed, to the rest of the royal family, and to the people of Morocco, Hillary and I send our heartfelt condolences.

The Middle East has lost one of its greatest peacemakers. In his honor, we must rededicate ourselves to fulfilling his vision: a just and lasting peace for all the Middle East's children.