

their middle years, will take their hands and say, "Fifty years ago I was chanting, 'U.S.A., U.S.A.,' with my voice, but I still chant with my heart." We are very grateful to you, all of you.

So on this centennial anniversary, on behalf of a grateful nation and grateful people throughout the world, I say to every soldier, sailor, airman, marine, and coastguardsman, to every man and woman who fought bravely for our Nation and brought dignity to the world, thank you for a job well done. May we look forward

to a century in which all your sacrifice and all your service is honored and redeemed with the greatest peace and prosperity the world has ever known.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in Hall E at the H. Roe Bartle Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas A. Pouliot, commander in chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; and former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jesse Brown.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Elections in Haiti August 16, 1999

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

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 561(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1999 (FOAA), as enacted in Public Law 105-277, I hereby report to the Congress that the central Government of Haiti: (1) has achieved a transparent settlement of the contested April 1997 elections, and (2) has made concrete progress on the constitution of a credible and competent provisional electoral council that is acceptable to a broad spectrum of political parties and civic groups in Haiti. Section 561(b) states that funds appropriated by the FOAA and made available to support elections in Haiti shall not be restricted if I report to the Congress that the central Government of Haiti has met the two aforementioned criteria.

The first criterion in section 561(b) of the FOAA, a transparent settlement of the contested April 1997 elections, was cumulatively met by a public declaration by the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) on June 11 and the promulgation of the Electoral Law, which was published in the national gazette *Le Moniteur* July 19, and republished with corrections July 22. Taken together, these two acts establish that 19 Senate seats will be run in the legislative and local elections projected for late 1999. Included in this number are the two still-contested Senate seats from April 1997. Article 63 of the Electoral Law specifically states "the number of Senators

to be elected in the upcoming elections shall be determined by the CEP." This authority is also provided in Article 16. Article 130 states that the elections are to fill Senate seats vacant by "fact or law."

Pursuant to its authority to determine which seats will be competed, the CEP declared publicly on June 11 that it "has decided to call elections to fill all Senate positions currently vacant, whether *de facto* or *de jure*, without distinction." In a number of subsequent public statements, as well as in private assurances to the Embassy and others in the international community, CEP officials explicitly and unanimously reiterated that because there are presently eight sitting Senators and the Constitution calls for a Senate of 27 Senators, a total of 19 Senate seats will be competed, including the two still-contested positions.

The second criterion, concrete progress on constituting a competent, credible, and broadly acceptable CEP, was achieved March 16 when President Preval announced that nine-member body's composition after consultations with the five-party *Espace de Concertation*. Since that time, the CEP has performed in a competent, even-handed, and credible manner and has been deemed acceptable even by parties and movements who stand in staunch opposition to the government.

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 Public Service Announcements on School Violence

August 17, 1999

Leilani, most people twice your age couldn't do that. *[Laughter]*

Earthquake in Turkey

Ladies and gentlemen, because this is my first chance of the week to speak to the press, before we get on to showing the spot, I have to say just a couple of words about the awful earthquake that occurred in Turkey, which I'm sure a lot of you have heard about. It has claimed hundreds of lives and many injuries.

So let me begin by saying on behalf of all Americans, our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families. Most of you know that Turkey has been our friend and ally for a long time now. We must stand with them and do whatever we can to help them get through this terrible crisis.

We've already released aid for the Turkish Red Crescent. We're sending a team to Turkey to help with search and rescue today. Our Energy Secretary, Bill Richardson, and General Hugh Shelton, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, are actually in Turkey, and they have personally conveyed our willingness to provide additional assistance. General Shelton has met with his Turkish counterpart to offer the military's help with disaster relief. And we will continue to determine what further help is needed. But you can only imagine how difficult this is for them, and we will do what we can to help.

School Violence

Now, let me thank Leilani again and Wyatt Keusch and Harrison Boatwright, who are the young people here with us, who are also in the PSA. I want to thank Secretary Riley and Attorney General Reno, who have really done a wonderful job of trying to have a coordinated and balanced approach to keeping our children safe. Governor Romer, thank you. I want to thank all the people here from the entertainment industry, Jack and Richard and Eddie, Sheila and all the others who stood up. Thank

you so much for your generosity and your far-sightedness. Thank you, Peggy Conlon; you're a great spokesperson for the people you represent, and you've been great in helping us to get this far. And I want to thank my long-time friend Drew Altman and the Kaiser Foundation for their support in this endeavor. I'd also like to thank the young AmeriCorps members who are here today, who spent a lot of time working with our young people and trying to help them stay safe. This is a very important issue to Hillary, to me, to our entire administration.

In 2 weeks Leilani's going to start at a brand new school. That's probably more scary than introducing the President to a bunch of strangers. *[Laughter]* And you know, there are always a lot of worries associated with going to a new school: All these strange people—are they going to like me? Am I going to like them? You've got to get to know the teachers; you've just got to find your way around; got to remember the combination to a new locker. *[Laughter]* Those are the things that our kids ought to be worried about.

They shouldn't be worried about whether what they saw in Littleton or Conyers or what that young madman in Illinois and Indiana or at the Jewish community center in L.A. could possibly happen to them. That's what they shouldn't worry about. But they do because they've seen the press reports, and so has our entire Nation.

We're still grieving for the young children, the teacher, the counselor, the receptionist, at the Jewish community center, or the family of that young Filipino-American, Joseph Iletto, who was killed only because he was an Asian-American who worked for his country's government.

Secretary Riley has gone across the country trying to make sure that all of us can put this in some kind of context. The Attorney General has, as well. The crime rate in this country's at a 26-year low; juvenile crime is going down;