

*Sept. 20 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999*

that the supply hasn't been contaminated. There are just things that have to be done.

So I urge you to keep your spirits up and know we're going to be with you every step of the way. Know that you have strong advocates in your local officials, your wonderful Governor, and your very vigorous congressional delegations that are represented here. We're going to stay

with you until you get back on your feet again, as long as it takes.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:27 p.m. on Main Street. In his remarks, he referred to Mayors Donald A. Morris of Tarboro and Delia Perkins of Princeville, NC.

### **Statement on the Death of Raisa Gorbacheva** *September 20, 1999*

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Raisa Maksimovna Gorbacheva, wife of former Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev. We extend our deepest condolences to her family and friends in Russia and other countries.

The example she set through her help for child victims of leukemia and through her own courageous struggle against this terrible disease was an inspiration to people everywhere.

### **Statement on the Earthquake in Taiwan** *September 20, 1999*

Hillary and I were saddened by news of injuries and deaths sustained by the people on Taiwan as a result of a major earthquake today. Our thoughts are with all of those who have

suffered losses and who may still be in need of assistance. We are in touch directly with the Taiwan authorities to determine what assistance from the United States may be needed.

### **Remarks on Hurricane Floyd, in New York City** *September 21, 1999*

Good morning, everyone. I'm a little hoarse. Forgive me. I want to begin my visit by expressing our concern and support for the families and the communities in this area recovering from Hurricane Floyd.

As you know, I traveled to North Carolina yesterday and saw some of the worst storm damage and flooding that I have, personally, ever seen. I know people in New Jersey and New York have also been injured. I want to thank the city, county, and State officials for all the work they have done to get help to people quickly where it's needed.

We are doing all we can at the Federal level, and I'd like to mention just three things. First,

last Saturday I issued a major disaster declaration for New Jersey. Sunday I issued a similar one for Orange, Rockland, Putnam, and Westchester Counties in New York. These actions help to speed Federal assistance for individuals and communities recovering from flood damage.

Second, FEMA officials are on the ground now responding to the challenges with clean water, housing, and restoring communication and power links. Housing inspectors, small business teams, community relations specialists are on the scene to help meet people's needs. Starting today AmeriCorps volunteers will be helping people clean up the damages to their homes and pick up the pieces of their lives.

Third, I'm sending our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, to New Jersey and New York today to inspect the damage and report back immediately on what more we need to do. I want to make sure that the assistance is delivered responsibly, efficiently, and in adequate amounts.

Again I want to say, as I did yesterday, that in difficult times like this, we're reminded that the power of the American spirit is even strong-

er than the power of a hurricane. The American people are supporting all those who have been injured in this, and we will stand by them until they recover.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. at the Wall Street Landing Zone upon arriving in New York City.

## Remarks to the 54th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City

*September 21, 1999*

Thank you very much. Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, members of the United Nations General Assembly, good morning. I hope you will forgive me for being a little hoarse today. I will do the best I can to be heard.

Today we look ahead to the new millennium, and at this last General Assembly of the 20th century, we look back on a century that taught us much of what we need to know about the promise of tomorrow. We have learned a great deal over the last 100 years: how to produce enough food for a growing world population; how human activity affects the environment; the mysteries of the human gene; an information revolution that now holds the promise of universal access to knowledge. We have learned that open markets create more wealth, that open societies are more just. We have learned how to come together, through the U.N. and other institutions, to advance common interests and values.

Yet, for all our intellectual and material advances, the 20th century has been deeply scarred by enduring human failures, by greed and lust for power, by hot-blooded hatreds and stone-cold hearts.

At century's end, modern developments magnify greatly the dangers of these timeless flaws. Powerful forces still resist reasonable efforts to put a human face on the global economy, to lift the poor, to heal the Earth's environment. Primitive claims of racial, ethnic, or religious superiority, when married to advanced weaponry and terrorism, threaten to destroy the greatest

potential for human development in history, even as they make a wasteland of the soul.

Therefore, we look to the future with hope but with unanswered questions. In the new millennium, will nations be divided by ethnic and religious conflicts? Will the nation-state itself be imperiled by them or by terrorism? Will we keep coming closer together instead, while enjoying the normal differences that make life more interesting?

In the new century, how will patriotism be defined, as faith in a dream worth living or fear and loathing of other people's dreams? Will we be free of the fear of weapons of mass destruction or forced to teach our grandchildren how to survive a nuclear, chemical, or biological attack?

Will globalism bring shared prosperity or make the desperate of the world even more desperate? Will we use science and technology to grow the economy and protect the environment or put it to risk, put it all at risk in a world dominated by a struggle over natural resources?

The truth is that the 20th century's amazing progress has not resolved these questions, but it has given us the tools to make the answers come out right, the knowledge, the resources, the institutions. Now we must use them. If we do, we can make the millennium not just a changing of the digits but a true changing of the times, a gateway to greater peace and prosperity and freedom. With that in mind, I offer three resolutions for the new millennium.