

vote for this bill, just as it was written, and I'm very proud of them.

This is the sort of thing America wants us to do. We can work together across party lines; we can get things done. There will still be plenty for the two parties to argue about in good conscience in the coming election. No matter what we do, we can deal with every challenge before the Congress now, and there will still be things to debate next November.

So I would hope that this is an omen of more good things to come. And I'm certainly prepared to do my part, and I'm very grateful today. I talked to some Republican and Democratic House Members before the vote and encouraged them. And I'm very proud of all of them. And I thank them.

Meeting With Teamsters President

Q. Could you tell us about your talks with Hoffa?

The President. Excuse me?

Q. Could you tell us about your talks with Jimmy Hoffa—

The President. Oh, sure—

Q. —and did you ask him to not stand in the way of an early endorsement of the AFL-CIO for Gore?

The President. Actually, we didn't talk much about that. We talked about—this is the first long personal visit we've had, although we've worked on a lot of things. He thanked me for the work that I'd done over the last 6½ years. We talked a little about that.

We talked about—interestingly enough, we talked about Franklin Roosevelt and Frances Perkins and the rise of the American labor movement for some good amount of time; said he was glad I was coming tonight, and that President Roosevelt was the last President to talk to the Teamsters.

And we talked quite a bit about trade and about his strong feeling that we ought to make sure that the safety provisions of NAFTA are met. And I assured him that we were doing everything we could to do just that and that we would continue to do so.

He said he was deeply concerned that, ever since the recession in Mexico and then the recession in Asia, countries with whom we had had a balance of trade or a small surplus we now seem to be running large deficits with. He was concerned about the rise of protectionism in Europe. And we talked about that.

And that was—most of our conversation was about that. We also talked about golf for probably too long. We had a good talk about golf. We didn't talk too much about other politics, and I said I look forward to seeing him tonight.

Thank you.

Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation

Q. Mr. President, do you have any reason to believe the Senate will allow the right to sue?

The President. Sure, if they listen to the American people. That's what happened today. I mean, 70 percent of our citizens want it; 70 percent of Republicans want it. And there's a way to do it. If they just look at their own estimates—not mine, the Congressional Budget Office—says it will add, at the most, \$2 a month a policy to have all the protections of the Patients' Bill of Rights. And that's a good investment in our future.

Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. at the Sheraton Towers. In his remarks, he referred to James P. Hoffa, general president, International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

Statement on the Manual for Courts-Martial

October 7, 1999

I have signed an Executive order amending the Manual for Courts-Martial, which sets out procedures for criminal trials in the Armed Forces. The amendments make a number of desirable changes to modernize the rules of evidence that apply to court-martial proceedings

and to take into account recent court decisions. These changes have been recommended by a committee of experts representing all the military services.

There are four principal changes. First, the new rules provide that evidence that a violent

crime was a hate crime may be presented to the sentencing authority as an aggravating factor in the determination of the appropriate sentence. As in the case of laws that apply in civilian courts, this rule sends a strong message that violence based on hatred will not be tolerated. In particular, the rules provide that the sentencing authority may consider whether the offense was motivated by the victim's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

Second, the rules provide special procedures for cases in which there are allegations of child abuse and children are called to testify. The new rules allow for televised testimony from a location other than the courtroom and provide for other special procedures to make it as easy as possible for children who are witnesses to testify completely and accurately. These provisions are similar to those applied in most civilian courts.

Third, the order adds a new evidentiary rule to court-martial proceedings providing that most statements to a psychotherapist are privileged. The purpose of this change is to encourage candid confidential communications between patients and mental health professionals. It is similar to a privilege that is recognized by the Federal courts and courts of virtually all States. The privilege is not absolute, and the exceptions make clear that communications must still be disclosed when necessary for the safety and security of military personnel and in other compelling cases.

Finally, the new rules create the offense of reckless endangerment as an additional crime under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. This offense is similar to that found in most State codes.

NOTE: The Executive order of October 6 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Protect Pensions *October 7, 1999*

I commend Senators Moynihan, Jeffords, Leahy, Robb, Kerrey, and Rockefeller and Representatives Matsui, Weller, Andrews, Gejdenson, Pomeroy, Bentsen, and Kelly for introducing the "Pension Reduction Disclosure Act of 1999." This important new legislation, developed in partnership with my administration, will secure the right-to-know for American workers when changes are being made to their private pension retirement benefits. I applaud the leadership of these Members of Congress in furthering our effort to protect the retirement security of American workers and look forward to working with them to achieve speedy enactment of this legislation.

Our voluntary, employment-based pension system plays a critical role in providing income security for American workers in retirement. Increasingly, employers are converting traditional, employer-sponsored defined benefit plans to cash balance and other new types of pension plans. While these new types of pension plans may provide enhanced benefits for some workers, they also could result in other workers hav-

ing smaller pensions at retirement than they would have if their old plan had continued.

Unfortunately, too few workers understand the effects of these conversions. Too many workers today are left in the dark about changes to their retirement plan. In fact, under some new plans, some workers may not even realize that they have temporarily stopped earning any benefits at all. This is not right. It needs to be changed.

This legislation would ensure that all Americans have the necessary information to plan for retirement. It would provide workers with meaningful and timely notice of plan changes and clearly demonstrate the impact of those changes now and in the future. It would shine sunlight on changes in retirement benefits. And it would do this without unduly burdening employers. It is truly a smart, commonsense measure, and Congress should pass it.

The sponsoring Members and my administration worked closely together to develop this proposal. I am grateful to Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, Treasury Secretary Larry Summers, and National Economic Council Director Gene