

detect emerging infectious diseases, and protect Americans from the threat of bioterrorism.

This debate is not just about how much we spend but also how wisely we spend. I sent Congress a budget, for education, health care, and other programs, that invests in results and

is fully paid for. But Congress continues to pursue an agenda of irresponsible cuts and ill-conceived allocations. The patience of the American public is wearing thin. It is time for Congress to put aside partisanship and make the targeted investments our Nation's future demands.

## Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and an Exchange With Reporters in Oslo

November 2, 1999

### *Middle East Peace Process*

*The President.* I think I can speak for all of us when I say, first, we're very grateful to the Government of Norway for inviting us here for this important ceremony. And we now have to give some real energy to the framework talks, but I think even though the issues are difficult, the will is strong, and we're off to a good start.

*Q.* How do you see the strong focus, Mr. President, on the issue of the settlement?

*The President.* I think that the less we say now to the public and the more we work in private, the better off we'll be and the more likely we will be able to get an agreement.

*Q.* [Inaudible]—a summit in January or February in Washington, or maybe in Camp David?

*The President.* I wouldn't—I don't think we should rule it out or in. We ought to make sure—see how much progress we can make between now and then. You know, I would do anything I could to help them.

*Q.* What is the main issue you will discuss right now when you start negotiations?

*The President.* I think we just have to talk about—to get agreement on the ground rules, how we're going to proceed.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in the U.S. Ambassador's residence. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks Following Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters in Oslo

November 2, 1999

### *Middle East Framework Agreement*

*The President.* Ladies and gentlemen, we have just completed a very good meeting. I feel that we have revitalized the peace process, and we've got these final status—the framework talks off to a very good start.

The two sides have not only named their teams; they have agreed that the leaders will personally continue to meet on a regular basis. They have agreed to work very hard to avoid public comments or actions which will cause

enormous difficulty for the other side in the next 100 days or so when they're trying to come to agreement on the framework. And they have agreed with me that we might well have a summit at the end of this process if enough progress has been made to make us all believe that, in good faith, we can actually get an agreement at a summit.

*Q.* Is that the framework process, Mr. President?

*The President.* The framework process, yes.

*Q.* When will you have that summit?

Q. [Inaudible]—their intentions, though?

*The President.* Well, when and whether depends upon what we're doing. We have a very ambitious timetable here. I think the timetable is the middle of February that they've agreed to have the framework agreement. So you won't have to wait long for answers to the details. We'll all be in high gear between now and then.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, is this more than you expected to come out of Oslo? Are you surprised?

*The President.* I feel quite good about it. I feel very good about it. I'm very pleased by it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. at the U.S. Ambassador's residence. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks to the American Embassy Community in Oslo

November 2, 1999

Thank you very much. Well, Mr. Ambassador, Doreen, Mr. DCM, Congressman Sabo, thank you for coming with us. And thank you so much, Secretary Albright, for all you've done to make this a safer, better world.

Now, Hermelin did not tell you the truth. [Laughter] He says, "Come to Norway. I guarantee you a standing ovation." That's why you don't have any chairs today. [Laughter] He did not even tell you the truth about how he got this job. This deal about, "Oh, I got to go to Norway, and I thought I hit the lottery," that's not what happened. [Laughter]

He called me, and he said—you said, "Name one person in America who has done more for you than I have"—[laughter]—"just one." I said, "Hillary." [Laughter] He said, "You can't make her an Ambassador." So I said, "Well, what do you want?" He said, "I want to go to Norway." I said, "David, you can't even find Norway on a map." [Laughter] He said, "No, you have to appoint me to Norway." He said, "You know the Oslo accords and the role they have in the Middle East peace process?" I said, "Yeah, sure, of course, I do." He said, "I, David Hermelin, am the last remaining Norwegian Jew on the face of the Earth." [Laughter]

So even though it isn't true—[laughter]—hasn't he been good for the American Embassy? You know, one of the great joys of my life, because I've spent so much of it in public life, I'll be—when I leave on January 21st, 2001, I'll be moving out of public housing for the first time in 20 years. [Laughter] One of the great joys of my life is, I've gotten to meet so many thousands of people from all over the

world, all over our country, from all different walks of life with all different slants on things and all kinds of different talents. And this man and his wife, his children, and his family are truly among the most wonderful human beings I've ever met anywhere in the world. And I am so blessed that they have been with me.

I also want to say again to those of you who are Norwegian nationals, how profoundly grateful I am to His Majesty, the King, and to the Prime Minister and the Government and people of Norway for inviting me to come and for opening once again their hearts to the peace process in the Middle East and having this truly remarkable event today in honor of our friend Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

And for those of you who were there or who saw it on television, I'm sure you'll agree it was a very moving event. And I can tell you, I met just before I came here with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, and I think that the event and the feeling of the people and the luncheon that followed really did help to put them in a good frame of mind as we kind of head for the last sprint toward getting a framework agreement on all these final status issues by next February. It will be very difficult to do.

The chances that we can do it now are dramatically increased in no small measure because we have had one more great gift from this small but remarkable and wonderful country. So I thank them very much for that.