

makes it a lot easier for private companies to donate food and for people like you to prepare and distribute it. Our Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman, has gotten the whole Government working on food rescue programs like this one. And now the Agriculture Department is working around the country to form new grassroots partnerships to fight hunger, to increase local food production, and to help low income families move into independence. But we've got to have the support of volunteers, and we have to have the willingness of the community.

We come here at holiday season because everybody's thinking about this. But what we should do at holiday season is to make commitments that last all year long, not just at the holiday season. The AmeriCorps members here—I want to say again how proud I am of you and what a testament you have been to the proposition that working with others is not a burden, it is a joy; it is not just a duty; it is a privilege. And whether you are preparing

meals or teaching a child to read or painting an old school, you always get more than you give. And most of us get out of this life ahead of where we would be if all we got is just what we deserve. [Laughter] And I think this is really an important thing to remember at this season.

So again, I want to thank all of you. Thank you, Robert Egger; thank you, graduates; thank you trainees; thank you, staff and volunteers and supporters of the D.C. Central Kitchen. You have captured the spirit of the season, and I hope others will catch it from you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:12 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Harris Wofford, chief executive officer, Corporation for Public Service; and Robert Egger, director, Donna Simon, graduate, and Steve Pritchett, Melody Swint, and Michele Rhyne, trainees, D.C. Central Kitchen.

Statement on Lifting the Ban on Direct Flights Between the United States and Nigeria

December 22, 1999

Earlier today, Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater announced that the United States is lifting our ban on direct flights to Murtala Muhammed Airport in Lagos, Nigeria.

I congratulate President Obasanjo and his government for taking the steps necessary to remove this ban, including the overhauling of Nigeria's airport security system. These important reforms provided one more indication of the Nigerian administration's commitment to good governance. They offer new evidence that

Nigeria is reversing the damage that years of corruption and mismanagement inflicted upon its international reputation.

I am deeply gratified to see a government chosen by the Nigerian people earning the trust and respect of the world. I look forward to strengthening our partnership with Nigeria even further over the coming year.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria.

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa, 1999

December 22, 1999

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Kwanzaa.

With roots in the ancient history and cultural traditions of Africa and celebrating such fundamental American values as unity and self-deter-

mination, this joyous annual festival reflects the diversity that gives our nation much of its strength and resilience. Each year during Kwanzaa, millions of African Americans gather with family and friends to celebrate their rich

heritage, to reaffirm the bonds of family and community, and to give thanks to our Creator for the beauty and bounty of life.

As we look forward to the new millennium, we must not lose sight of the values and traditions that have strengthened and sustained us in the past. The seven principles of Kwanzaa—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose,

creativity, and faith—can be invaluable tools in teaching us how to live together in the 21st century as a community, in harmony with one another and our environment and in humility before God.

Hillary joins me in extending warmest wishes for a joyous Kwanzaa and every happiness in the coming year.

BILL CLINTON

Interview With Larry King of CNN's "Larry King Live" December 22, 1999

Cabinet Room

Mr. King. Good evening. We're in the Cabinet Room at the White House in this Christmas season. It's a great pleasure to have as our special guest, as part of our millennium month, the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. Do you spend a lot of time—do you have a lot of Cabinet meetings?

The President. I do. And I have a lot of other meetings in here, like with individual Cabinet members. I met this week with three or four different Cabinet members and extended staff here. So we have large meetings in here.

Mr. King. This room is, like, right off the Oval Office?

The President. That's right, right off the Oval Office.

Mr. King. Did they plan it that way so the President could run right in and meet with—how often do you have Cabinet meetings?

The President. I don't have too many full Cabinet meetings, because we have 23 members of the Cabinet plus Chief of Staff. So I have a few of those a year, when we have to do a review and get all geared into one issue or another. But I have a lot of meetings with various Cabinet officials in this room and with maybe more than one who are all working on a common project.

Year 2000 Problems

Mr. King. We have a lot to talk about, and I want to get an overview as we look ahead to this millennium but cover some current things. I guess the thing everybody is talking about is, should we be frightened? That's the basis of the State Department yesterday—should

we travel; should we stay home? We're told the Cabinet members have been asked to stay home or stay in Washington. Is that true?

The President. The Cabinet members are staying here, but it's really just as a precaution, because we feel a high level of confidence about where we are with the Y2K problems. We've been working on this for years. We've spent a lot of money on it; we've tried to get all the private sector involved. All the big systems in this country, I think—airline travel, banking systems, electrical systems, Social Security checks—all those things I think are in good shape. We're here partly as a precaution and partly so, if any of our friends in other parts of the world have any trouble, we can all be there to give whatever help we can.

Year 2000 Terrorism

Mr. King. And how about the terrorism threat, where people are asked to be careful, especially overseas, and we have these arrests occurring in Washington and Vermont?

The President. Well, what I would say to the American people about that is that we know that at the millennium, a lot of people who may even be a little crazy by our standards or may have a political point to make, may try to take advantage of it. So we are on a heightened state of alert. We're working very hard on it. No one can guarantee that nothing will happen. But all I can say is we're working very hard.

And my advice to the American people would be to go on about their business and do what they would intend to do at the holiday season but to be a little more aware of people and