

had an income just about half the national average. I've got a cousin who lives in Arkansas. He's a small-business man—he works for a small business—who two or three times a week plays chess on the Internet with a guy in Australia. Now, they've got to work out the times; how they do that, I don't know. But the point I want to make to you is, he thinks he knows as much about his life and his interests and how he relates to the Internet and the world as I do. He thinks he knows just as much about his interests as his President does, who happens to be his cousin.

So we need these networks. And you are in an unbelievably unique position. So my one wish

for you—you might think I'd say China or this or that and the other—it's nothing specific: Develop a shared vision. When good people with great energy have shared vision, all the rest works out.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:36 p.m. in the Plenary Room at the Congress Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Andres Pastrana of Colombia; President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit of Turkey; and John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO.

Statement on Debt Reduction

January 31, 2000

Today we received further evidence that our economic strategy of fiscal discipline is working. By making the tough choices necessary to turn record deficits into record surpluses, we are now in a position to start paying down the debt. According to the latest numbers from the Department of the Treasury, we will pay down \$152 billion in debt in the 3 months from April to June—the largest debt paydown in our Na-

tion's history. By the end of this fiscal year, we will have repaid approximately \$300 billion in debt. If we continue on this path of fiscal discipline, we can pay off our national debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President. This will keep interest rates low and investment high and lead to savings on everything from mortgages to student loans for working families across America.

Statement on Action To Resolve the Impasse Over Armed Forces Training on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico

January 31, 2000

Today I am announcing a course of action to resolve the impasse over United States Armed Forces training on Vieques. This course will give the people of Vieques the right to determine the future of the island while assuring that our training needs are met. I have received a letter from the Governor of Puerto Rico endorsing this course.

I am issuing two directives. They provide that between later this year and early 2002, there will be a referendum held on Vieques, in which the people of Vieques will be asked to choose between two alternatives. If they choose the first alternative, the Navy will cease all training on

Vieques and leave the island by May 1, 2003. If they choose the second, training will continue on Vieques on terms that will be presented at least 3 months before the vote.

During the period leading up to the vote, training done on Vieques will be limited to non-explosive ordnance—meaning there will be no live fire—and the Navy and Marine Corps will cut in half the amount of time they will spend training to no more than 90 days per year, which is what we need to meet our training needs. I will also implement measures to meet the health, safety, environmental, and economic concerns of the people of Vieques, and I will ask