

be. The Europeans are shouldering the lion's share of the burden.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:55 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Health Crispus W.C.B. Kiyonga of Uganda; James D. Wolfensohn, President, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and World Bank Group; Kayla Rolland, who died after she

was shot by 6-year-old classmate Dedrick Owens in Mount Morris Township, MI; and Stanley Fischer, First Deputy Managing Director and Acting Managing Director, International Monetary Fund, who was nominated for the position of IMF Managing Director. A reporter referred to State Secretary for International Finance Caio Koch-Weser of Germany, who was also nominated for the position of IMF Managing Director. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the First Estimate of E-Commerce Retail Sales

March 2, 2000

Today the Commerce Department released the first-ever official estimate of retail E-commerce sales—or “E-tail” sales. This is a historical landmark that symbolizes and helps measure our transition to a new information economy. We first started keeping track of retail sales on a monthly basis in 1951. The announcement that E-tail sales over the Internet and other electronic networks reached \$5.3 billion in the fourth quarter of 1999 is an important step to ensure that we have accurate and timely information about the economy in the 21st century.

This is only the latest evidence of the dramatic contribution that the Internet, information technology, and E-commerce have made to what is now the longest economic expansion in his-

tory. When I became President in 1993, there were 50 sites on the World Wide Web. Today, there are more than 10 million. The information technology industry now accounts for fully one-third of our economic growth, and the jobs it creates pay almost 80 percent more than the private sector average. Using the Internet, families can obtain lower prices and better choices for everything from groceries to home mortgages to automobiles. Our goal must be to continue to support the basic research that has allowed the Internet to flourish, to enable every American to enjoy the benefits and opportunities of the new economy, and to ensure that the privacy of individuals is protected in the information age.

Remarks to the 1999 NCAA Football Champion Florida State Seminoles

March 2, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Well, President D'Alemberte, I was hardly old enough to vote the first time I met you. *[Laughter]* You're aging well. *[Laughter]*

Coach Bowden, welcome. I also want to welcome all the Floridians who are here. I thank Senator Graham and Senator Mack for coming; and Representatives Boyd, Brown, Deutsch, Foley, and Miller. And we have—Senator Breaux from Louisiana is here, and Congressman Blumenauer from Oregon are here. I don't know if they're trying to spy for their football

teams—*[laughter]*—but we're honored to have them. The mayor of Tallahassee is here, Scott Maddox; and State Representative Margie Turnbull. We welcome all of them. And mostly, I want to say a warm word of welcome to the Seminoles. I want to welcome you back to the White House.

This was the first national champion football team that I welcomed at the White House, in early 1994. And that team was 12 and 1; this team is undefeated. I came in with you, and I'm going out with you.

This team has won 109 games, this Florida State team, in the 1990's—truly the team of the decade in American football. In the first Sugar Bowl of the new millennium, you played a Virginia Tech team that you got way ahead of, but I think you must respect them a lot because they didn't give up. And Michael Vick and his Hokie teammates turned out to be worthy adversaries, Coach. And for those of us who love football, it was a sight to behold.

We all sat on the edge of our seats as you reclaimed the lead in the fourth quarter with your 85-yard scoring drive and quarterback Chris Weinke's touchdown pass to Ron Dugans. It was a 46–29 victory, hard won and richly deserved. After it was over, I think there wasn't a single football fan in America who doubted that Florida State was truly the best team in the country and a deserving national champion.

I could say a lot about all the players and the ones who had starring roles in the games, and not just the championship game but the other games. I watched several of them on television last year.

But I want to say a special word of personal admiration and respect for Coach Bowden. I have watched him year-in and year-out. I have watched him be gracious in victory and gracious in defeat, which is more difficult. Of course, it's easy if you don't lose very much. *[Laughter]* That makes it a little easier. But I have been immensely impressed by the leadership that he and his team have brought to the young men that have been on this football team, especially this year, but also in past years.

Bobby, I was told that for 24 years you had an empty picture frame on your desk, waiting for an undefeated team, and I'm glad you can finally fill that picture frame. Congratulations to you.

And let me say to all the young men on this team, some of you will play some more football and go on into the pro ranks, and if you do, I wish you well. Most college football players, even on national championship teams, don't go on to play in the pro ranks, and I wish you well, too. What it takes to win on the football team, hard work and discipline and devotion to a common effort, give you pretty good lessons for life. And if you remember what brought you to the national championship, you'll be a champion when you leave Florida State whether you play any more football or not.

That is the ultimate lesson, Coach, of the way you run this team. I respect you; I admire you. I congratulate you all. And I thank you for giving the rest of us who just watch from the stands or on television a magnificent season. Thank you very much.

[At this point, Talbot D'Alemberte, president, Florida State University, and Bobby Bowden, coach, Florida State Seminoles, made brief remarks; and player Todd Frier presented the President with a team jersey.]

The President. That's great. I'm going to have to bulk up before I can—*[laughter]*. Well, this is terrific. I want to thank all of you. A lot of people here I see made the trip up from Florida, and I want to welcome you to the White House and, in closing, just say this: When we have an event like this and we're able to invite people to come in here and express their pride and support for some remarkable achievement, it embodies the motto that the White House is the people's house.

And I think I should tell you that this is not only the first national championship of this new millennium, the first national championship team, but you are coming here in the 200th anniversary of the White House. It was completed in 1800, and John Adams, our second President, was the first person to live here. Every President since then has lived here.

And this house has seen a lot of changes and a lot of things come and go. But the feelings you have today and, I hope, the pride you feel as Americans in being here are what has sustained us now for 200 years. And if we just keep them, a couple hundred years from now, there will be another group of young people here celebrating an athletic achievement. Chances are they'll still be playing football, and the offensive line will average 500 pounds. *[Laughter]*

Thank you very much, and welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:22 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representatives Corrine Brown and Dan Miller; and Michael Vick, quarterback, Virginia Tech Hokies. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President D'Alemberte, Coach Bowden, and Mr. Frier.