

I must say that we even have some people in the United States who believe the Kyoto Protocol is some sort of plot to wreck our economy and who unfortunately, some of them, have a good deal of influence. They continue to deny that global warming is real.

All I know is, the overwhelming consensus of scientists and the evident lessons of the weather patterns of the last few years all say the climate is warming at an unsustainable rate. We know it takes at least 50 years to turn it around. Why would we take a risk in not doing it when we know we have the technology today, with alternative energy sources and conservation, to chart a different future? I hope that in my country and yours and throughout the world, we will have the sort of partnership to which we have committed ourselves on this day.

Finally, let me just say that we don't have to choose—we don't have to choose—between economic opportunity and environmental protection. But we do have to choose between a future of sustainable development for all of our children, with clean water and sanitary conditions and energy efficiency and clean air, and a future in which we give it up simply because we refuse to take the necessary decisions to preserve them.

On this Earth Day this year and on this historic day today of partnership between our two nations, when we stand in the shadow of the Taj Mahal, we remember that it is a monument built in love. All the most important monuments are built for love. The most important monument today we can give our children and our children's children is the preservation of the Earth that was given to us. We should give that monument in the spirit of love.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:55 p.m. at the Taj Khema overlooking the Taj Mahal. In his remarks, he referred to Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India; Chief Minister Ram Prakash Gupta of Uttar Pradesh; Mayor Baby Rani Maurya and Commissioner Nita Chowdhury of Agra; Hindu priest Veer Bhadra Mishra, civil engineering department head, Banaras Hindu University, and founder, Sankat Mochan Foundation; the President's mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham; and M.C. Mehta, co-founder, Indian Council for Environmental Legal Action. Prior to the President's remarks, Foreign Minister Singh and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright signed the joint statement.

Statement on Senate Action on Social Security Reform Legislation *March 22, 2000*

I am pleased that the Senate has followed the House in passing a measure to eliminate the retirement earnings test for seniors. In my 1999 State of the Union Address, I asked Congress to work with me to end this confusing and outdated policy that discourages healthy senior citizens from continuing to work past 65 if they choose to do so. I look forward to opening a new era of opportunity for older Americans by signing this measure into law.

Eliminating the earnings limit is an important first step in undertaking comprehensive Social Security reform this year. The work on the re-

tirement earnings test shows that Congress can work together to further the people's business. We should build on this bipartisan spirit to make further progress on Social Security. Last fall I sent Congress legislation that would use the benefits of debt reduction to extend the life of Social Security to the middle of the next century. Today I call on Congress to work with me on this simple plan to extend the solvency of Social Security while strengthening benefits to reduce poverty among elderly women.