

more trouble in good times than you can in bad times because you break your attention. You've worked so hard, you've labored, you've worked, and you think, "Gosh, I just want to forget about this now."

And I was just talking to Tyrone Brooks. He was at Selma when I was there, celebrating the 35th anniversary of the march over the Pettus Bridge, and it put me to thinking—I will close with this point—when we celebrate the longest economic expansion in American history in February, I got all my advisers together and I said, "Now, when was the longest economic expansion in history?" When many of you weren't here—it was between 1961 and 1969. You either weren't born or you were in another country. I was here. *[Laughter]*

Now, let me tell you what happened. Let me tell you what happened. In the full bloom of expansion in 1964, I graduated from high school. And yes, we were sort of peripherally involved in Vietnam, and yes, we did have a big civil rights challenge. But unemployment was low; inflation was low; growth was high; productivity was high. Most everybody then thought that our new President, Lyndon Johnson, with the great sympathy the country had after President Kennedy had been killed, would solve the civil rights problems of America in the Congress, and those that wouldn't be solved in the Congress would be solved in the courts. And no one believed Vietnam would tear the country up. And we all thought in the course of time we would win the cold war, and we would always just be prosperous.

Now, 4 years later, I graduated from college in Washington, DC—4 years—2 days after Senator Kennedy was killed, 2 months after Martin Luther King was killed, 9 weeks after Lyndon Johnson couldn't run for reelection because the

country was split down the middle. And within just a few weeks, the longest economic expansion in American history was itself history.

What's the point? Not to be down but to be determined, to realize it makes a difference who is in the Congress, to realize it makes a difference who is the President, to realize it makes a difference what people think the subject of this election is. The subject of this election is, what are we going to do with this magic moment in our history?

I've done the best I could to turn this country around and to get us moving in the right direction. But the best is still out there. That's what I want you to believe. And forget about me being President; as a citizen, I have waited 35 years for my country again to be in the position to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And it is a so much more interesting country now because so many of you are here. And the world is more interesting, and the potential is so great. But whether we seize it depends upon whether we understand what the issue is about, whether we work and vote, and whether people like Cynthia are in the United States Congress.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Saeid and Sudabeh Sadri; Gov. Roy Barnes of Georgia and his wife, Marie; Mayor Bill Campbell of Atlanta; State Representatives Tyrone Brooks, Calvin Smyre, and J. E. (Billy) McKinney; State Senators Robert Brown and Gloria S. Butler; NBA Atlanta Hawks player Dikembe Mutombo; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Statement on Congressional Action on Africa and Caribbean Basin Trade Legislation

April 14, 2000

The bipartisan agreement reached by the House and Senate on the Africa and Caribbean Basin trade legislation is a major step toward enactment of these historic initiatives. This bill is a win-win proposition for the United States

and our friends in Africa and the Caribbean Basin. It will boost investment, economic growth, and job creation in these countries, while improving the global competitive position of our own textile industry. It will help promote

economic reform, reduce poverty, and broaden participation in the benefits of the global economy. I congratulate congressional leaders from both parties who worked hard to reach this

agreement. I urge Congress to complete the remaining work on the bill rapidly so that final approval can occur during the first week after its Easter recess.

Statement on Signing Legislation Designating the Joseph Iletto Post Office *April 14, 2000*

Today I signed legislation designating the United States Post Office located at 14701 Peyton Drive in Chino Hills, California, as the “Joseph Iletto Post Office.” Joseph Iletto was a Filipino-American postal worker who was tragically murdered last year in a crime of hate. He was a dedicated public servant, killed simply because he was an Asian-American who worked for his country’s Government. It is a fitting tribute to the life and memory of Mr. Iletto that we name this Post Office in his honor.

During the last year, we have all been shaken by violent acts like the murder of Joseph Iletto,

acts that strike at the very values that define us as a nation. Now is the time for us to take strong and decisive action to fight hate crimes, and I call on Congress, at long last, to pass strong hate crimes legislation. It is time for us all to raise our voices against intolerance and to build the one America that our hearts tell us we can be.

NOTE: H.R. 3189, approved April 14, was assigned Public Law No. 106–184.

Statement on Russian State Duma Action on the START II Treaty *April 14, 2000*

I am very pleased that the Russian State Duma today approved the START II Treaty—a critical step toward the treaty’s entering into force. This action builds on decades of cooperation between the United States and Russia to reduce nuclear arms and clearly advances the interests of both countries. Together with the START I Treaty, it will result in a two-thirds reduction in the strategic nuclear weapons that the Soviet Union and the United States maintained at the height of the cold war. START II will make our people safer and our partnership with a democratic Russia stronger. It will open the door to further significant steps to reduce nuclear arms and the nuclear danger,

a course that is strongly supported by the international community and has strong bipartisan support in the United States.

I congratulate President-elect Putin and his government, members of the State Duma, and Russian citizens who supported this giant step toward a safer future. I look forward to prompt action on the treaty by the Federation Council. Now, we and Russia can and must seize this opportunity to intensify our discussions on both START III and the ABM Treaty, so we can take further concrete steps this year to strengthen the security of the United States, Russia, and indeed the whole world.