

to have to work across party lines on a bipartisan bill. We don't need the kind of one-party vote we had last night, especially without allowing us to even bring up our substitute and see how many Republican votes we could get for a real bill.

So I haven't given up, and we're still working. Thank you all very much.

*Middle East Peace Process*

*Q.* Mr. President, do you expect Secretary Albright to recommend a summit in the near-term, or are you just going to take a couple more weeks before that's a possibility?

*The President.* I just don't know because I haven't talked to her. I want her to come back and visit. Obviously, I've been spending a major amount of time thinking about this, working on it, talking to all the parties. But I really wanted her to go there and get a sense of it, come back, and then we'll decide where to go from here.

But I actually don't know the answer to your question. This is not one of those deals where I'm just not ready to announce it; I just don't know. And I'm going to do whatever I can in the time I have left to help them make peace. So whatever I do or don't do will be based on my calculation that it will maximize the possibilities of ultimate success. But I don't know yet.

*Q.* Do you expect any kind of decision today or tomorrow?

*The President.* No.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:11 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to author Helen Zia and her book, "Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People"; and John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-designate Mineta.

## Statement on Congressional Action on Reporting and Disclosure Requirements for Political Action Committees

*June 29, 2000*

The Vice President and I applaud the House and Senate for the broad, bipartisan approval of legislation to establish reporting and disclosure requirements for section 527 organizations, the so-called stealth PAC's. I commend the sponsors from both sides of the aisle and from both Chambers of Congress—including, Senators McCain, Lieberman, and Feingold and Representatives Doggett, Moore, Castle, and Houghton—for their leadership in addressing backdoor spending by these outside organizations.

Passage of this bill proves that public interest can triumph over special interests, and I look forward to signing it as a first step toward meaningful campaign finance reform. There is still time this year to enact more comprehensive reform, and I renew my call to Congress for immediate action on the Shays-Meehan bill in the House and the McCain-Feingold bill in the Senate to restore the public's faith in the integrity of our election system.

## Statement on Senate Action To Protect Medicare Surpluses

*June 29, 2000*

I am pleased that the Senate followed the leadership of Vice President Gore by agreeing to lock away Medicare surpluses for debt reduction to help prepare for Medicare's future chal-

lenges. Before we make any other major budget decisions this year, we should agree that Medicare funds should not be used to finance tax cuts or other spending. Walling off Medicare

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will further strengthen our fiscal discipline by locking in \$400 billion of additional debt reduction and help keep our economy strong. The Conrad-Lautenberg amendment passed by the Senate today would truly protect Medicare and enhance our fiscal discipline. This amendment takes Medicare fully off budget, as the Vice President proposed, and as we have done with Social Security. I look forward to working with Congress on a Medicare off-budget lockbox bill that I can sign this summer.

Earlier this week, I made an offer for bipartisan cooperation on America's priorities. I called for establishing a foundation of fiscal discipline—the Conrad-Lautenberg amendment would accomplish that. I urge Congress to pass a plan that gives real, voluntary Medicare prescription drug coverage that is available and affordable for all seniors. Only if Congress does this, would I then be willing to sign broader marriage penalty relief legislation.

## Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Supplemental Appropriations Request

*June 29, 2000*

I am pleased that the House passed with overwhelming support my emergency funding request for a range of essential and time-sensitive needs. It has been 4 months since I first sent this request to Capitol Hill, and the needs are all the greater today.

With this funding, we will be able to support the courageous antidrug efforts of Colombia which can, in turn, help curb the flow of drugs in our Nation; we will help build homes for those still deprived of permanent housing by Hurricane Floyd; we will have funds available for low-income Americans to pay for home cool-

ing in the event of a dangerous summer heat wave; and we will provide support for our troops and efforts to build stability in Kosovo.

I am also pleased that Congress has, at our urging, dropped several deeply problematic anti-environmental riders along with the tobacco rider which would block Federal Government litigation against tobacco companies to recover costs to taxpayers of smoking related illnesses.

While it contains certain flaws, in total this bill will make our Nation safer and more secure by meeting essential and long-overdue needs at home and abroad.

## Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 2000

*June 29, 2000*

I am pleased and proud to join my fellow Americans across the nation and around the world in celebrating Independence Day.

When our Founders set their hands to the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and gave life to the United States of America, they took an enormous leap of faith. They placed a great trust not only in their fellow citizens, but also in all Americans who would follow in their footsteps. That trust has been passed from generation to generation, and it has been honored by millions of men and women whose hard work, sacrifice, generous spirit, and love of country

have seen us safely through more than two centuries of great challenge and change.

As we come together once again to celebrate the birth of our great nation, we reflect on the remarkable achievements that have placed us in a position of unparalleled world leadership. For the peace and prosperity we enjoy today, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the great patriots who have come before us. As 21st century Americans, we are not only the beneficiaries of their courage and vision—we are also the stewards of their sacrifice.

It is up to us to preserve the freedom that so many brave Americans risked their lives to