

July 23 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

judgment, when the Japan-U.S. security partnership requires no presence of the United States forces in northern Asia.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:20 a.m. in the lobby at the Manza Beach Hotel. In his remarks,

the President referred to Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan; Chizuko Obuchi, widow of former Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan; Gov. Keiichi Inamine of Okinawa; and former Senator Bob Dole. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Department of Health and Human Services Report on the Decline in Youth Gun Deaths

July 24, 2000

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released promising new data today showing that the number of children killed by gunfire in America continues to decline. The HHS report shows that 3,792 children and teens were killed with guns in 1998—a 10 percent decline from the year before. The reduction is even more significant when compared to 1994: 2,000 fewer young people were killed by gunfire in 1998 than in 1994—a 35 percent decrease. Our combined efforts to reduce gun violence and save lives are indeed having an impact.

While these figures are encouraging, there is no question that gun violence is still far too prevalent in our Nation. Despite our progress, 10 young people are killed with guns every day in America. All of us must work together toward a solution. Parents must ensure that guns are

stored safely to prevent accidental shootings. Schools and communities must give children positive alternatives to steer them away from guns and violence. Law enforcement must crack down on gun traffickers who supply young people with firearms and armed criminals who commit violence against our children. And the gun industry must responsibly design, distribute, and market its products to make sure that they do not fall into the wrong hands.

Congress has an important role to play as well by fully funding my \$280 million national gun enforcement initiative and by passing the stalled commonsense gun safety legislation that can help keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals. Working together, we can keep gun violence on the decline and the prospects for our children's future going up.

Statement on the Selection of Zell Miller To Be Senator From Georgia

July 24, 2000

Georgia Governor Roy Barnes has exercised great wisdom in selecting former Governor Zell Miller to fill the Senate seat of the late Paul Coverdell. Zell Miller will continue to demonstrate the same devotion to the citizens of Georgia and our Nation that was the hallmark of Senator Coverdell's Senate career. Having established himself as one of the greatest Governors in Georgia history, Zell returned to his first love, teaching college. He now comes to Washington out of a profound sense of duty to his Nation and the people of his State.

His commitment and accomplishments in education have rightly earned him the title, "the education Governor." I was so impressed with the HOPE scholarships he began in Georgia that I took the program national, giving millions of young people the opportunity to pursue their dream of a college education. Zell Miller has also been a leader in the areas of economic development, crime prevention, and social justice. In every job he has ever held—as a U.S. marine, college professor, Lieutenant Governor, and Governor—Zell Miller has put the interest of hard working families first. I believe he will