

*Aug. 9 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000*

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:42 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and

Montenegro); former Senator Bob Dole; and Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean, Simon Wiesenthal Center.

## Statement on the Surgeon General's Report on Tobacco *August 9, 2000*

A new report today by the Surgeon General demonstrating that we can cut tobacco use in half over the next decade lends strong new impetus to our fight against the dangers of cigarette smoking. Over 400,000 Americans die every year from tobacco-related diseases. Every day, 3,000 children under the age of 18 start smoking, and 1,000 will have their lives cut short as a result. Today's report not only underscores the urgency of reducing tobacco use—the single leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States—but also provides powerful scientific evidence about the wide range of effective tools available to get the job done.

Vice President Gore and I have worked hard to protect our Nation's children from the dangers of tobacco. Today I again urge Congress to provide FDA with the authority to protect our Nation's children and to fund my budget

initiatives to reduce youth smoking. I also call on Congress to support the Department of Justice lawsuit to recover the taxpayer costs of tobacco-related illness by holding the tobacco industry accountable for the harm it has caused. When Congress returns in September, it will have another opportunity to join us in making the health of our children a priority by rejecting the interests of big tobacco and letting the American taxpayers have their day in court.

Today's report also reinforces the importance of comprehensive State tobacco control efforts, which have demonstrated powerful results in reducing tobacco use in leading States. I renew my call for more States to use the resources available from the State tobacco settlement on efforts to reduce smoking among our young people.

## Statement on Terrorist Attacks in Spain *August 9, 2000*

On behalf of all Americans, I wish to express my condolences to the families of the recent victims of terrorist violence in Spain. We stand with the people of Spain who condemn these

cowardly acts and hope the perpetrators will be brought swiftly to justice. There is no place for violence and terrorism in the pursuit of political goals.

## Statement on Signing the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, FY 2001

*August 9, 2000*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4576, the "Department of Defense Appropriations Act, FY 2001." The bill approves funds to cover the Department's most critical needs, consistent with

my request that reflected my strong commitment to our Nation's security. Our high military readiness must remain our top national security priority.

H.R. 4576 provides funding for all critical Defense activities—pay and other quality of life programs, readiness, and weapons modernization. The bill fully funds key compensation initiatives, including my request for a 3.7 percent pay increase for military personnel. I am pleased that the conferees agreed to provide full funding for a new pharmacy benefit for military retirees over the age of 65. This funding will ensure that those who dedicated their lives to military service benefit from comprehensive prescription drug coverage. I urge the Congress to provide a similar benefit to all retirees through the Medicare program. Additionally, the bill funds my requests for training, spare parts, equipment maintenance, and base operations—all items essential to military readiness.

I am also pleased that H.R. 4576 fully funds key modernization programs such as the F-22 fighter aircraft, the CVN-77 Nuclear Aircraft Carrier, and National Missile Defense. Finally, Public Law 106-246, the Emergency Supplemental Act, FY 2000, repealed provisions that were contained in the 1997 bipartisan budget agreement that would have shifted certain VA and SSI payments from FY 2000 to FY 2001. I am pleased that the bill does not reverse the repeal of these provisions and thus ensures that recipients will receive their payments on time.

Unfortunately, H.R. 4576 goes beyond what is necessary, providing funding for a host of unrequested programs at the expense of other core Government activities. It provides \$287.5 billion in discretionary budget authority for programs funded by this bill. This funding level is \$3.2 billion above my request, and \$17.5 billion above the FY 2000 enacted level. My budget correctly addressed our most important FY 2001 military needs. Additionally, while the bill, in its entirety, provides sufficient funds to meet known contingency operations costs for FY 2001, it resorts to an emergency funding technique to meet the Appropriations Subcommittee allocation; it includes about \$1.8 billion of standard operation and maintenance funding, which was requested in the FY 2001 Budget on a non-

emergency basis, as FY 2000 emergency supplemental funding, of which \$1.1 billion will be used to forward fund FY 2001 contingency operations in Kosovo, Bosnia, and Southwest Asia. Moreover, half of the funding for the pharmacy benefits for military retirees over the age of 65 is designated as an emergency.

Regrettably, the bill also denies or reduces the necessary funds for key programs included in my request. The resulting cuts are troubling. I am disappointed that the bill does not fund the chemical weapons destruction facility at Shchuch'ye, Russia, which is vital to our security and international nonproliferation efforts. The significant cuts in the bill to both our Cooperative Threat Reduction Defense and Military Contacts program and the Partnership for Peace program will noticeably undermine these initiatives. I am also concerned that the bill makes reductions to my request for the Joint Strike Fighter and LPD-17 amphibious ship program.

Lastly, the bill does not fund the \$324 million a year required for wage credits to Social Security for certain military, nontaxable income. I urge the Congress to adopt legislation I proposed, which would eliminate the requirement for the payments.

While I am disappointed that the Congress has funded FY 2001 activities through FY 2000 emergency funds—an approach that should not be repeated—I will designate as emergency requirements the FY 2000 funds in the Act that the Congress has so designated.

I have signed this bill because, on balance, it demonstrates our commitment to the military, meets our obligations to the troops, maintains readiness, and funds modernization efforts that will ensure our technological edge in the 21st Century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,  
August 9, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4576, approved August 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-259.

## Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton in McLean, Virginia August 9, 2000

Thank you very much, Claire. Thank you for your wonderful words, and I thank you and Al once again for being so generous. And I want to say to all of you what I said to them at dinner: I apologize that we had to reschedule this, but it worked out very well. I was involved in the Camp David peace talks at the time we were going to have this dinner before. I think that—believe it or not, we still might get there, and at least we headed off a disaster and got them talking about the fundamental issues, really for the first time in an official setting. So it was very good.

Claire asked me if I'd be willing to answer a couple of questions, and I have to go on to another event tonight because we had to double up since we rescheduled, but what I think I'll do is abbreviate my remarks and then maybe answer some questions.

I would just like to say a couple of things. In 1992 the country was in trouble, and I heard it in the stories of individuals all over the country. A lot of people have forgotten it now. And I ran for President because I thought that there was no plan for getting us out of the trouble we were in and maximizing the opportunities that were before the country. So I put together a plan.

And some of you who are political junkies may even remember that when I went to New Hampshire, only Paul Tsongas and I put out little detailed books of exactly where we stood on the issues, and people actually, a lot of them, made fun of us. "Nobody is so wonky they're going to read this 30- or 40-page book." But it turned out we got the biggest crowds at the town meetings because people knew America was in trouble, and they wanted to know exactly what we were going to do.

And when I got elected with Vice President Gore on the commitment to put people first and restore the principles of opportunity, responsibility, and community to our national life, we actually implemented an economic plan and a crime plan and a welfare reform plan and an education plan and an environmental plan and a plan to down-size the Government in a way that would enable us to be more active but less oppressive in the way the Federal Gov-

ernment operated, and health care initiatives—right across the board.

And the country has benefited. Whenever a democracy does well, most of the credit goes to the people who live there, not the politicians who serve. But it is clearly true that what we did was to establish the conditions and give the people the tools with which they have made astonishing progress in the last 8 years.

So the question before the American people is, now what? My strong conviction is that the American people should not be lulled into a sense of complacency because of our prosperity and our social progress but instead should realize that this might be the most important chance in our entire lifetime that we ever get as a people—any of us in this room—to really build the future of our dreams for our kids; that change is the only constant in the global information society, nothing stays the same forever; and we need to be focused on what the big challenges, the big opportunities are. We ought to vote for people we believe will help to make the most of this magic moment.

And essentially, that's why Hillary decided to run for the Senate—that and the fact that half a dozen or more New York House Members came and asked her to run. And then she went up to New York and spent some time, and we talked about it. She was, frankly, reluctant to give up our last year in the White House and all the fun and enjoyment, the relaxation, the savoring of successes. But she knew that the things that can be done now are the things that she's worked on and dreamed about for 30 years, ever since I first met her.

When we met in law school, she took another year—she took a fourth year in law school so she could work at the Yale hospital in the child study center on legal and health issues affecting children. When we went home to Arkansas, she led the move to build our first neonatal nursery at the Children's Hospital and then organized a group called the Arkansas Advocates for Families and Children. By the time I was elected President—and our little State was what my predecessor used to affectionately call a small southern State of which I was Governor—