

RU-486

Q. Mr. President, the abortion drug RU-486 was approved for sale today. Is that fight finally over? And why did it take so long?

The President. Well, first of all, this administration treated that issue as purely one of science and medicine. And the decision to be made under our law is whether the drug should be approved by the FDA on the grounds of safety. And I think that they bent over backwards to do a lot of serious inquiries.

And Secretary Shalala can explain it in greater detail than me, but there's a long history here about why it took so long. But the FDA is basically doing its job. It's now done its job. And I regret that some members of the other party apparently have already tried to politicize it. I note Dr. Healey, who was the NIH commissioner under President Bush, said that she agreed with the decision of the FDA. And I think it ought to be treated as the scientific and medical decision it was, and we should respect the fact that it was a nonpolitical inquiry

and that they took so long to try to make sure they were making a good decision.

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. Thank you very much. Thank you; thank you.

Q. How do you think that affects the debate over abortion? And do you think a Bush administration will try to overturn it?

The President. Why don't you ask him that question? You should ask him that question, not me. I think that's for the people that are out there running to answer.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:05 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Yugoslav opposition candidate Vojislav Kostunica; Serbian Patriarch Pavel, president of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church; former National Institutes of Health Director Bernadine P. Healey; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Election in Yugoslavia September 28, 2000

The people of Yugoslavia have spoken loud and clear in support of democratic change.

The opposition's claims to an absolute majority are backed up by certified results from the polling places. The Government's commission acted in secret and excluded the opposition. One of its top officials has resigned. The Serb Orthodox Church has recognized Mr. Kostunica as Yugoslavia's new President.

It is time for Mr. Milosevic to heed the call of the Serb people, step down, and allow a peaceful democratic transition to take place.

We have said before that as soon as a democratic government is in place, we will immediately take steps to remove economic sanctions and help Serbia with its transition.

NOTE: The statement referred to Yugoslav opposition candidate Vojislav Kostunica, and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Sept. 28 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

Statement on the Circuit Court Decision on Affirmative Action in Federal Transportation Construction Contracting September 28, 2000

This week in *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Slater*, the tenth circuit upheld the constitutionality of a major affirmative action program dealing with Federal transportation construction contracting. I am very pleased with the court's decision. It strongly affirms what I have consistently stated: Federal affirmative action programs

are still needed to remedy past and present discrimination and can be implemented in a constitutional manner. My administration has worked very hard to mend, but not end, Federal affirmative action programs, and we are gratified that the court has validated our efforts.

Statement on Progress in Providing Health Insurance Coverage September 28, 2000

New data released today by the Census Bureau show that the number of Americans without health insurance dropped significantly last year—the first such decline in 12 years. The 1.7 million decline in the uninsured—including over 1 million children—is making a real difference in these Americans' lives. It means that they are likely to receive needed medical care, less likely to be hospitalized for avoidable conditions like pneumonia or uncontrolled diabetes, and less likely to rely on an emergency room as their primary source of care. Clearly, access to affordable, high-quality insurance makes a difference.

I am extremely pleased with today's announcement. I believe it validates our health care and economic policies, which have helped the country begin to reverse the unacceptable numbers of uninsured in this country. I am particularly proud that the enactment of the Children's Health Insurance Program and our success in maintaining a strong economy—which led to increases in employer-based coverage—have laid the foundation for this turnaround.

Although I am pleased with today's development, there is much work to be done. The data from this report well document that the States that most aggressively conducted outreach campaigns to eligible populations have been the most successful at enrolling children. We need to encourage States that are not doing as well to accelerate their activities in reaching out to uninsured children. And we need to provide targeted programs to build on our success.

Today I want to once again call on the Congress to pass my bipartisan health care coverage initiative, including the Vice President's proposal to expand coverage to parents, as well as our initiatives that would expand coverage to 55- to 65-year-olds, workers between jobs, employees of small businesses, and legal immigrants. My balanced budget shows that we have the resources to do this while still paying down the debt by 2012. It's long past time that we take the next step towards expanding coverage and making the Nation's uninsured one of our top priorities.

Statement on the Death of Pierre Trudeau September 28, 2000

I was deeply saddened to learn today of the death of Pierre Trudeau. As Prime Minister for nearly a generation, Pierre Trudeau opened a

dynamic new era in Canadian politics and helped establish Canada's unique imprint on the global stage. I know his passing will be felt