

This is not a day for credit. It's a day for celebration. But as always, when freedom triumphs, the number one responsible element are the people, just like in this country.

Thank you.

Vice Presidential Debate

Q. Did you watch any of the Vice Presidential debate, any part of it?

The President. Just a little bit. Unfortunately I was in transit and couldn't watch it. I liked what I saw.

Q. Did you read something about it?

The President. No, I haven't read anything yet about it. I've been working on this today.

Q. Was this your version of the debate?

The President. No. [Laughter] No.

Remember what I said about that, what I said about that, about not withdrawal. We've got to stick with the Stability Pact. That's my message. This is not about politics. This is about sticking with the Stability Pact.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Vojislav Kostunica, who was sworn in on October 7, and former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and President Vladimir Putin of Russia; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Statement on Signing the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000

October 6, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2909, the "Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000." This Act will implement the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. I am pleased that the Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on September 20, 2000.

The United States and 65 other countries came together to negotiate the Convention in response to abuses in the intercountry adoption process, including illegal child trafficking. By setting uniform standards, the Convention better protects the rights and interests of children, birth parents, and adoptive parents involved in intercountry adoption.

In its preamble, the Convention recognizes that children should grow up in a family environment and that properly safeguarded intercountry adoption offers the advantage of a permanent family to children who cannot readily be placed with a suitable family in their country of origin. The United States actively participated in the preparation and negotiation of this Convention, with the guidance and participation of representatives of U.S. adoption and family law

interests. Since the United States signed the Convention in 1994, several ratifying countries have expressed the view that they would prefer that their children emigrate only to countries that have agreed to comply with the Hague Convention's safeguards and procedures. As a result, the U.S. adoption community has supported U.S. implementing legislation. This bill will ensure the full and uniform implementation of the Convention throughout the United States.

Adoption is an emotional event. With the complexities of international law and procedures, these cases are often overwhelming for the families involved. The Hague Convention and the implementing legislation will provide protections for children and parents engaged in intercountry adoption and will help ensure a standard of service that all families deserve.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 6, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 2909, approved October 6, was assigned Public Law No. 106-279.

Statement on Signing the Second Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001

October 6, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.J. Res. 110, the second short-term continuing resolution for FY 2001.

The Act provides 2001 appropriations for continuing projects and activities of the Federal Government through October 14, 2000, except those funded by the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2001, and the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2001, which I have signed into law.

In February, I sent a budget to the Congress that funded critical investments in our future. I urge the Congress to fund these important national initiatives, including investing in education so that we can stay on a path to hiring 100,000 teachers and reduce class size, modernize and repair our schools, and expand our efforts to strengthen the quality of teachers, the performance of schools, and the accomplishments of our students.

It is also essential that we strengthen our efforts to protect and preserve the environment. Our national security must be provided for, both at home and abroad. Putting more police on the street, and fighting gun violence, helps make this Nation safer for its citizens. Similarly, supporting global leadership and the Nation's diplo-

macy helps make the world safer and more secure for all Americans.

It is important that we fund scientific research and technology, upon which advancements in our economy and sustained prosperity depend. Our Nation's priorities must include the expansion of this current wave of prosperity to all Americans. I urge the Congress to support my efforts to expand this prosperity, including closing the digital divide and funding efforts to bring economic development to underserved areas. I also urge the Congress to support the Equal Pay initiative and civil rights enforcement.

The health of our Nation must not be neglected, and I urge the Congress to act accordingly, including by supporting efforts to help family planning for low-income women.

I urge the Congress to continue to work with my Administration to come to mutually acceptable agreements on the remaining 2001 spending bills and to do so as quickly as possible.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 6, 2000.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 110, approved October 6, was assigned Public Law No. 106-282.

Statement on the National Economy *October 6, 2000*

Today, thanks to our economic strategy and the hard work of the American people, we reached another dramatic milestone in our unprecedented economic expansion—the unemployment rate has fallen to 3.9 percent, matching the lowest level in 30 years. Unemployment for African-Americans fell to the lowest level

ever recorded, and for Hispanics it remains at historic lows. This is more good news for the American people and another reminder that those who advocate irresponsible tax plans that would jeopardize our fiscal progress are taking America down the wrong economic path.